

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **District Executive** held at the **Council Chamber, Brympton Way, Yeovil, Somerset. on Thursday 2 August 2018.**

(9.30 - 10.41 am)

Present:

Councillor Ric Pallister (Chairman)

Peter Gubbins	Sylvia Seal
Henry Hobhouse	Angie Singleton
Graham Middleton	Nick Weeks
Jo Roundell Greene	

Also Present:

Mike Lewis	Tony Lock
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Officers:

Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Nicola Hix	Lead Specialist (Finance)
David Crisfield	Third Sector and Equalities Co-ordinator
Charlotte Jones	People, Performance & Change Lead
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Specialist

Note: All decisions were approved without dissent unless shown otherwise.

At the beginning of the meeting, the Chairman asked for all present to stand for a moment of silence in memory of Gary Russ, Procurement Manager and ex-District Councillor John V Chainey who had both passed away the previous week. Members and officers joined him in standing for a moment of silence in their memory.

29. Minutes of Previous Meeting (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the District Executive meeting held on 5th July 2018, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and, having been approved as a correct record, were signed by the Chairman.

30. Apologies for Absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Val Keitch, Peter Seib and Sue Steele (Chairman of Scrutiny Committee) and Netta Meadows, Director.

31. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

32. Public Question Time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of the public present.

33. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 5)

The Chairman welcomed the new graduate officers who were observing the meeting.

The Chairman paid tribute to the staff who had helped to arrange the very successful playday at the Yeovil Country Park the previous day.

34. Corporate Grants report 2017 - 2018 (Agenda Item 6)

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Culture advised that the Council was fortunate that it was still able to grant fund local voluntary and charitable organisations and she paid tribute to the Finance Team for their good management of the Council's finances which enabling this to continue.

In response to a question from the Scrutiny Committee, the Third Sector and Partnerships Co-ordinator advised that the higher Parish Council contributions towards community grants in Area North was due to one exceptionally high contribution by Martock Parish Council towards the Our Place scheme.

During a brief discussion it was noted that other Town and Parish Councils also precepted to support local voluntary and charitable organisations.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the Corporate Grants report 2017 – 2018.

RESOLVED: That the District Executive noted the Corporate Grants report 2017 - 2018

Reason: To note the overall spend awarded on voluntary sector grants in 2017/2018

35. 2018/19 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30th June 2018 (Agenda Item 7)

The Leader of Council, in the absence of the Portfolio Holder, introduced the report, noting that as this was a first quarter report, it was only an indication of the Council's revenue finance position. He drew Members attention to several points in the report and concluded that the Council was overall in a strong financial position

The Lead Specialist – Finance advised that the Specialist Finance Officers had recently focussed on the year end reports but would now focus on the quarter 2 monitoring reports.

It was noted that the questions raised at the Scrutiny Committee had been answered at the meeting by the Lead Specialist – Finance. The questions included virement to the regeneration budgets for Chard, Wincanton and Yeovil, predicted shortfall in Building Control income, mid-term reporting on the Westland Venue, income from property investments, the Closed Churchyards Reserve and the use of acronyms in the report.

The Chief Executive confirmed that a new business plan was being developed for the Building Control service to be competitive and provide a good service to the

development community in the future. He did note that the service was only allowed to break even and not to make a profit.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the current revenue position of the council for 2018/19.

RESOLVED: That District Executive agreed to:-

- a. Note the current 2018/19 financial position of the Council
- b. Note the reasons for variations to the previously approved Directorate Budgets as detailed in paragraph 8, Table 1;
- c. Note the transfers made to and from reserves outlined in paragraph 26, Table 4 and the position of the Area Reserves as detailed in Appendix B and the Corporate Reserves as detailed in Appendix C;

Reason: To note the early projection of the forecast spending and income (“outturn”) against the Council’s approved Revenue Budget for the financial year, and to explain projected variations against budget.

36. 2018/19 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the quarter ending 30th June 2018 (Agenda Item 8)

The Lead Specialist – Finance advised that the Council’s external auditors had required a late to the 2017/18 accounts on the Marlborough investment which required a revision to the 2017/18 capital outturn figures previously reported to Members.

It was noted that the question raised at the Scrutiny Committee regarding the frequency of reporting for the progress of investments (Commercial Strategy) was now on the Executive Forward Plan. It was also clarified that the Castle Cary Fairfield Project would benefit from Section 106 funding.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the current capital position of the council for 2018/19 and approve the revised capital programme spend as detailed in paragraph 6, Table 1.

RESOLVED: That District Executive agreed to:-

- a. Note the content of the 2018/19 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the quarter ending 30th June 2018
- b. Approve the revised capital programme spend as detailed in paragraph 6, Table 1

Reason: To note the early projection in 2018/19 of the forecast spending (“outturn”) against the Council’s approved Capital Programme Budget, and to explain projected variations against individual projects and the Programme as a whole.

37. Corporate Performance Report 2018-19: 1st Quarter (Agenda Item 9)

The Chairman advised that the layout of the reporting had changed to make the information more meaningful and easier to read. He noted that there had been an increase in the number of missed refuse collection calls to the contact centre as the Waste Partnership struggled with recruiting collection staff and vehicle breakdowns. Also, the new duty planner service was experiencing some issues which may continue into September.

The People Performance and Change Lead advised that some services were facing challenges as new ways of working were introduced and staff were becoming accustomed to them. She noted that several points had been raised by the Scrutiny Committee relating to past performance comparisons and some of the indicators and these would be taken into account in the next quarterly report. She noted that performance in the planning service was good compared to other Local Authorities however there were issues in the validation of new planning applications which were currently being addressed.

Councillor Nick Weeks asked for clarification on the prioritisation of outstanding planning issues, particularly the completion of the Section 106 Agreement for Henstridge Airfield. The Chief Executive agreed to follow this up.

At the conclusion of the debate, Members were content to note the Corporate Performance Report 2018-19: 1st Quarter.

RESOLVED: That the District Executive noted the Corporate Performance Report 2018-19: 1st Quarter

Reason: To note the current position of the Council's agreed Key Performance Indicators covering the period from April to June 2018 (quarter 1).

38. District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda Item 10)

In response to a question, the Chairman agreed to circulate a briefing note to Town and Parish Councils on the availability of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding and to clarify the 123 list, ahead of the parishes precept setting meetings.

During discussion, it was also noted that some commercial drinks companies were offering landowners funding to remove cider apple orchards with standard trees as they were using less apples in the production of cider. Whilst it was appreciated that there was little the District Council could do to protect the cider apple orchards, their removal could affect the local character and landscape of the district.

RESOLVED: That the District Executive:-

1. approved the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A, with the following additional reports;
 - Council Plan Priority Setting - October 2018
 - Council Plan Agreed Priorities with Outcomes – November 2018
 - Draft Council Plan 2019/20 – December 2018

- Approval of Council Plan 2019/20 – January 2019
2. noted the contents of the Consultation Database as shown at Appendix B with the following additional consultations:-
- Local government finance settlement 2019 to 2020: technical consultation
 - Independent review of planning appeal inquiries: call for evidence
 - Parliamentary Select Committee call for evidence on the Rural Economy

Reason: The Forward Plan is a statutory document.

39. Date of Next Meeting (Agenda Item 11)

Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the District Executive would take place on Thursday 6th September 2018 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 9.30 a.m.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Councillor Mike Lewis expressed his appreciation to the Chairman on his chairing of the District Executive meetings over the past 7 years, this being his final meeting as Chairman.

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Chairman

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Date