

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held in **Council Chamber B, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT** on **Thursday 1 June 2017**.

(10.00 am - 12.10 pm)

**Present:**

**Members:** Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Dave Bulmer	Rob Stickland
John Clark	Gerard Tucker
Tony Lock	Martin Wale
David Norris	Colin Winder

**Also Present:**

Peter Gubbins	Angie Singleton
Henry Hobhouse	

**Officers**

Andrew Gillespie	Performance Manager
Anna-Maria Lenz	Performance Officer
Laurence Willis	Assistant Director (Environment)
Alasdair Bell	Environmental Health Manager
Paul Rayson	General Manager, Yeovil Crematorium
Paul Fitzgerald	Section 151 Officer
Anthony Robins	Management Accountant
Nigel Marston	Licensing Manager
Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager
Becky Sanders	Democratic Services Officer

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**1. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)**

The minutes of the meetings held on 4 April 2017 and 18 April 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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**2. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jason Baker, Carol Goodall, Paul Maxwell and Alan Smith.

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**3. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)**

There were no declarations of interest.

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**4. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)**

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

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**5. Issues arising from previous meetings (Agenda Item 5)**

There were no issues raised from previous meetings.

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**6. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)**

No announcements were made by the Chairman.

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**7. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 6th and 18th April 2017 (Agenda Item 7)**

The Chairman noted that the Scrutiny comments had been considered and were included in the District Executive minutes which had been circulated.

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**8. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 1st June 2017 (Agenda Item 8)**

Members considered the reports within the District Executive agenda for 1 June 2017 and made the following comments:

**SSDC Annual Performance Report 2016/17 (Agenda item 6)**

- Scrutiny members raised concerns that we would not have accurate performance reporting for collection of waste for the South Somerset District. Collection of waste is an SSDC duty and we need to ensure that high standards and satisfaction rates are maintained and we need to be able to address any issues that prevent this promptly.
- Members were unaware of the food events referred to under C2.09 of the Annual monitoring report 2016/17 and have requested a brief overview or briefing note is provided.
- Members commented on the current Corporate Performance Indicators; PI008 – Requests for action from the Streetscene team – members noted that it was not clear that the target is less than 3,100; targets should be reviewed once the previous year's outturn is known or even in year to ensure we are striving for continual improvement.
- Members stressed we need some continuity in data reporting to compare pre and post transformation stats/performance information.
- Performance Officers will be working with Scrutiny Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017 to begin to review the current suite of performance indicators and consider what adjustments need to be made to ensure effective monitoring for the new Council Plan and throughout Transformation.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Disposal of third party properties (Agenda item 7)**

- The recommendations were fully supported by Scrutiny Committee.

## **District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda item 8)**

- Members questioned if there should be a report with regard to the Boundary Commission review and why the Quarterly reports on Transformation were absent from the forward plan.

## **CONFIDENTIAL – Exclusion of the Press and Public**

In accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the Committee resolved that the press and public be excluded from the following items in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, i.e. "Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

## **Refurbishment and Development of Yeovil Crematorium (Confidential) (Agenda item 11)**

Members made a number of comments in confidential session.

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## **9. Street Trading Policy - Draft Report of the Task and Finish Group (Agenda Item 9)**

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group introduced the report and provided a brief overview of the review of the SSDC Street Trading Policy. He highlighted some of the recommendations within the report and summarised how the Task and Finish Group had reached their conclusions. Due to the timing regarding carnival committees, he suggested that the report go to Licensing Committee and then direct to Council.

The Licensing Manager explained the process for the review and other aspects in more detail, and noted the existing policy had been in place for seven years. He noted that whilst the proposed revised policy was substantially unchanged, some elements were clarified in more detail that previously may have been open to some interpretation.

During a short discussion the Licensing Manager responded to points of detail regarding carnival committees, mobile ice cream sellers and mobile sandwich sales.

Members suggested a small amendment to the report regarding the membership of the Task and Finish Group. Subject to the minor change being made the Scrutiny Committee endorsed the report and recommendations. It was noted the Licensing Committee would consider the report at a meeting on 13 June prior to the report going to Council in July.

The Chairman formally thanked all those involved with the review of the Street Trading Policy for the work they had done.

**ACTION:** That the final report of the Task and Finish Group for the review of the SSDC Street Trading Policy be recommended by Scrutiny Committee to Licensing Committee and Council. Officers - Nigel Marston and Jo Gale.

**10. Appointment of Members to Somerset Waste Board Informal Joint Scrutiny Panel (Agenda Item 10)**

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the report and noted that in the previous year Councillors Jason Baker and Val Keitch had been the Scrutiny members appointed to the Somerset Waste Board Informal Joint Scrutiny Panel.

In response to a question she explained that legislation did not recognise Joint Scrutiny Committees hence why it was called Informal Panel.

During a brief discussion, Councillor Martin Wale tentatively volunteered to be a member on the Panel. Members noted that a number of councillors were absent at the current meeting and it was agreed to defer making the appointment of the second member and substitute until the next meeting and to obtain more information regarding the frequency and dates of future Panel meetings.

**ACTION:** Place an item on the agenda for the next meeting, and obtain further information about meetings of the Panel. Officer – Jo Gale.

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**11. Appointment of Members to Somerset Rivers Authority Scrutiny Panel (Agenda Item 11)**

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the report and asked for volunteers to be appointed to the Somerset Rivers Authority Scrutiny Panel.

Councillors Gerard Tucker and Sue Steele expressed an interest in being the appointed members, and their appointment to the Panel was agreed by the Scrutiny Committee.

**ACTION:** That the SRA Scrutiny Panel be informed that Councillors Gerard Tucker and Sue Steele are the appointed members from the SSDC Scrutiny Committee. Officer – Jo Gale.

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**12. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Agenda Item 12)**

Members noted the updates provided by the Scrutiny Manager on each of the Task and Finish groups currently in progress or recently completed:

**Disposal of Third Party Properties** - In April 2016 a Task and Finish group commenced a review into the process surrounding the disposal of third party properties (where consent was being sought from a Housing Association to dispose of a property that was formerly owned by the Council). This piece of work has now concluded. District Executive agreed with the recommendations, the process will now be amended going forward.

**Street Trading** – The work has been completed, the final report will now proceed to the Licensing Committee and Council for consideration.

**Council Tax Support** – Revenues Officers have been:

- Reviewing data and information received from both South Gloucester and Bath and North East District Council with regard to operating a discount based scheme.
- Identifying potential savings that could be made in terms of administration costs without altering the scheme.

Once this information has been reviewed with the portfolio Holder for Finance task and finish members will meet to discuss and agree the ambitions and priorities specifically for this review.

**Local Discretionary (Business Rate) Relief Scheme** – Scrutiny Committee members agreed its meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> June to set up a Task and Finish review group to work with business rate officers to consider how best to allocate a limited amount of funding from Central Government to help businesses who as a result of the Business Rate (National Non Domestic Rate) Revaluation 2017 have been adversely affected (Rateable value has increased significantly with effect from 01 April 2017).

The outcome of the review is to produce a Local Discretionary (Business Rate) Relief Scheme.

**Rural Allocations Policy** – The Disposal of Third Party properties had highlighted issues with the Rural Allocations Policy and some work now needs to be done to review the policy, no start date has been agreed for this as yet.

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### 13. **Update on matters of interest (Agenda Item 13)**

The Scrutiny Manager reminded members of a draft document that had been circulated by email outside of the meeting regarding questioning guidelines. She asked members to consider the document and raise any comments about the document at the next committee meeting. She explained that the purpose of the document was to help members plan their questioning to ensure all aspects of the scrutiny role was effectively fulfilled.

Vice-Chairman Councillor David Bulmer, briefly updated members following a recent JLAG (Joint Leaders Advisory Group) meeting he had attended. He commented that it was the first meeting for a long time and the key message was that the strategic group is continuing. The Somerset County Plan had been discussed and also issues that both SSDC and Sedgemoor have with the County Highway Authority.

In response to the JLAG update one councillor asked if there should be an opportunity could Economic Development be raised, as the impact and opportunities relating to Hinkley were huge. It was also asked if the main Police Custody Centre being located in Bridgwater had been discussed and if the impact of the single location had been assessed. The comments were acknowledged.

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### 14. **Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 14)**

The Scrutiny Manager noted there were no updates to the Work Programme. She reminded members of the report due at the next meeting regarding Performance

Indicators and asked members to consider in advance of the meeting what information and data they would like to see recorded.

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**15. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 15)**

Members noted the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held at 10.00am on 4 July 2017, in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way.

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Chairman