

## South Somerset District Council

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held at the **Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT on Tuesday 1 August 2017.**

(10.00 am - 11.35 am)

**Present:**

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

Jason Baker	David Norris
Dave Bulmer	Alan Smith
John Clark	Rob Stickland
John Field	Gerard Tucker
Carol Goodall	Colin Winder
Tony Lock	

**Also Present:**

Ric Pallister	Angie Singleton
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**Officers**

Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager
Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
Becky Sanders	Democratic Services Officer
Catherine Hood	Finance Manager
Clare Pestell	Director (Commercial Services & Income Generation)

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Maxwell and Martin Wale.

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

Councillor Gerard Tucker declared a personal interest for Scrutiny Agenda item 8 – Reports to be considered by District Executive on 3 August 2017, regarding District Executive agenda item 6, as he had recently been appointed to the Huish Episcopi Leisure Centre Board, although he hadn't yet attended a meeting.

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

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

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

There were no issues raised from previous meetings.

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

There were no announcements from the Chairman.

**36. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 6 July 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.

**37. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 3 August 2017 (Agenda Item 8)**

Members considered the reports within the District Executive agenda for 3 August 2017 and made the following comments:

**Notification of an Urgent Executive Decision – Huish Episcopi Academy Swimming Pool Project (Agenda item 6)**

- Members raised concern that the project scope had kept changing
- Members noted at the Scrutiny Committee meeting that the Leader referred to the lessons learned from the project. Will the lessons be shared more widely for future reference?
- SSDC funding support to the project is now approx. 33% but it was only 20% at the start of the project. Scrutiny queried if SSDC had had 33% input into the project design etc.
- Members sought clarification about the percentage use that will be available to the community.

**2017/18 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30 June 2017 (Agenda item 7)**

- Page 9 – Para 7 – regarding overspend for Westlands Project – Scrutiny noted that the comment referred to a project report being made to August District Executive but was not on the agenda. When would the report be due? Scrutiny queried what assurance was there that there wouldn't be further overspends in future years.
- Page 15 – Transformation - Members sought clarification about the detail of the Transformation Reserve.

**2017/18 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30 June 2017 (Agenda item 8)**

- Scrutiny noted the report and were content that the recommendations go forward.

**Corporate Grants Report 2016 - 2017 (Agenda item 9)**

- Scrutiny made no comments.

**District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda item 10)**

- Scrutiny made no comments.

### **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).

### **Commercial Land and Property Review and Strategy (Confidential) (Agenda item 13)**

- Members made a number of comments in confidential session.

### **38. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Agenda Item 9)**

Members noted the updates provided by the Scrutiny Manager on each of the Task and Finish Groups currently in progress:

**Council Tax Support** - Revenues Officers have been notified that the software provider could supply an add-on to help calculate the impact and costs of moving to a discount based scheme. The software should make the exploration of moving to a discount scheme much easier. A new Task and Finish Group would commence in November and an email requesting volunteers would be circulated in the near future.

**Homefinder Somerset** – recommendations made by the last Task and Finish Group regarding layout and structure of the policy had been well received. A new revised version was being worked up for the Task and Finish Group to consider.

**Local Discretionary (Business Rates) Relief Scheme** – The Task and Finish group had discussed at length and made some conclusions. The final report was currently being drafted and checks being made with the software provider that they could deliver the required changes.

### **39. Update on matters of interest (Agenda Item 10)**

The Scrutiny Manager noted a number of members had indicated an interest in attending some training courses being organised by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS). As so many members were interested in the training regarding Performance Indicators, it was suggested to investigate hosting a training session in South Somerset.

The Scrutiny Manager suggested if arranging a bespoke training session it may be possible to also include training about performance of investments. The idea was received positively by members and it was agreed that the Scrutiny Manager draft a specification for the training and establish the costs involved.

### **40. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 11)**

The Scrutiny Manager informed members that she had replied to Mr Gurner about the suggestion that there be a Task and Finish review regarding SSDC becoming a Fairtrade Authority, and to explain the reasons why this was not possible.

She noted that in conversation at the previous meeting, phase 2 at the Innovation Centre had been mentioned and she queried if members wished to see a formal report come forward. In response, members agreed they would like a report to be added to the Work Programme.

She also noted, that several times at previous meetings there had been comments raised about when the public would be involved with Transformation, for example through consultation or to test online services. Members agreed it would be useful to have a report or presentation from Dave Chubb (Technology Implementation Manager) at a future meeting.

In response to a comment raised in discussion, the Scrutiny Manager noted that regarding locality working, District Executive had indicated they would be interested in Scrutiny involvement and there was an appetite from members. However, there were no timescales at the moment and involvement would be informed by the Ignite programme.

During discussion, another member noted they would like a date assigned to the review of the Economic Development Strategy, and this was agreed by other members.

The Scrutiny Manager referred to car parking charges, noting it had been suggested when looking at the peer review that the matter could be a Task and Finish Review. She noted that given the importance of the review it would be good to have volunteers representing each area on the Task and Finish Group, and this was agreed. Councillors John Clark, Carol Goodall, David Norris, and David Bulmer expressed an interest in being part of the group, and it was noted Martin Wale would probably also be interested.

**41. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 12)**

Members noted the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee would be held at 10.00am on 5 September 2017, in Council Chamber B.

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Chairman