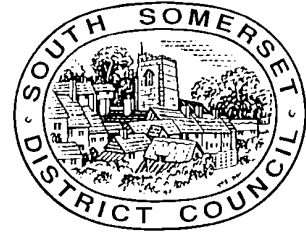


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Scrutiny Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Tuesday 3rd October 2017

10.00 am

**Main Committee Room, Council Offices
Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT**

(disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue)



The following members are requested to attend this meeting.

Chairman: Sue Steele
Vice-chairmen: Dave Bulmer and John Clark

Jason Baker
John Field
Carol Goodall
Tony Lock

Paul Maxwell
David Norris
Alan Smith
Rob Stickland

Gerard Tucker
Martin Wale
Colin Winder

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please contact the Democratic Services Officer on 01935 462596 or democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Monday 25 September 2017.

Ian Clarke, Director (Support Services)

This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk and via the mod.govapp



Information for the Public

What is Scrutiny?

The Local Government Act 2000 requires all councils in England and Wales to introduce new political structures which provide a clear role for the Council, the Executive and non-executive councillors.

One of the key roles for non-executive councillors is to undertake an overview and scrutiny role for the council. In this Council the overview and scrutiny role involves reviewing and developing, scrutinising organisations external to the council and holding the executive to account

Scrutiny also has an important role to play in organisational performance management.

The Scrutiny Committee is made up of 14 non-executive members and meets monthly to consider items where executive decisions need to be reviewed before or after their implementation, and to commission reviews of policy or other public interest.

Members of the public are able to:

- attend meetings of the Scrutiny Committee except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- speak at Scrutiny Committee meetings (limited to up to 3 minutes per person and at the Chairman's discretion usually no more than a total of 15 minutes is allocated for public speaking); and
- see agenda reports.

Meetings of the Scrutiny Committee are held monthly on the Tuesday prior to meetings of the District Executive at 10.00am in the Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

Agendas and minutes of these meetings are published on the Council's website www.southsomerset.gov.uk.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the agenda co-ordinator named on the front page.

Recording and photography at council meetings

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 3 October 2017

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes (Pages 4 - 9)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 September 2017.

2. Apologies for absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the Agenda for this meeting.

4. Public question time

5. Issues arising from previous meetings

This is an opportunity for Members to question the progress on issues arising from previous meetings. However, this does not allow for the re-opening of a debate on any item not forming part of this agenda.

6. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

7. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 7 September 2017
(Page 10)

8. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 5 October 2017 (Page 11)

9. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Page 12)

10. Update on matters of interest (Page 13)

11. Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 14 - 16)

12. Date of next meeting (Page 17)

Agenda Item 1

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held at the **Council Chamber B, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil BA20 2HT** on **Tuesday 5 September 2017**.

(10.00 am - 1.20 pm)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Jason Baker	David Norris
Dave Bulmer	Alan Smith
John Clark	Martin Wale
John Field	Colin Winder
Carol Goodall	

Also Present:

Ric Pallister	Sylvia Seal
Jo Roundell Greene	Val Keitch

Officers

Alex Parmley	Chief Executive
David Chubb	Technology implementation Manager
Andrew Gillespie	Performance Manager
Sharon Jones	Revenues Team Leader
Ashley Smalley	Business Rates Officer
Jo Gale	Scrutiny Manager
Becky Sanders	Democratic Services Officer

42. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 August 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

43. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rob Stickland and Gerard Tucker.

44. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

45. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of public present at the meeting.

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

There were no issues raised from previous meetings.

47. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman informed members that she and Councillor Gerard Tucker had recently attended a meeting of the Somerset Rivers Authority Scrutiny Panel. She provided some feedback including that no complaints had been received about collection of the precept.

She also noted, in her role as a governor, that Taunton Park Musgrove Hospital had recently had an unexpected inspection by the Care Quality Commission, and the inspection report was awaited.

48. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 3 August 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.

49. Technology Implementation Update (Agenda Item 8)

The Chairman welcomed Dave Chubb (Technology Implementation Manager) and Darren Cole (Consultant) to the meeting, who were present to answer questions from members about implementation of the technology required to support the Transformation programme.

During discussion members asked questions and requested more information about several elements including:

- Were the officers (Technology Implementation Manager and Consultant) happy with progress, and were enough staff and resources assigned to the work at this stage?
- Had there been any feedback from customers to date, or planned in the future to inform the programme?
- Civica system – clarity about whether it's an upgrade to something already in use or a new system.
- What's happening about a portal for members?
- How were systems tested before going live?
- Would live web chat be implemented?

The officers responded to comments made and explained some aspects in more detail, including:

- The projects required to implement the vision for Transformation were grouped into six workstreams, and leads for each workstream were working together to ensure all IT was integrated.
- There were always lessons to be learned from authorities who have gone, or are going, through similar processes. What is important is that the project progresses through each stage smoothly.

- Need to make sure solutions are well planned and much time has been taken doing this.
- Implementation of the technology is exactly where it was expected to be at this stage in the programme.
- Upgrade of the Civica software in preparation for use by Support Services had gone well. There had been no negative feedback from customers or staff as a result of implementing the software.
- A further explanation of the Civica software was provided and it was explained that it was an upgrade to what is already in use by Revenues and Benefits. Other services hadn't commenced use of the software as yet, but the platform was now available.
- In future, use of online forms would speed up processes for the customer by automating parts of the process and so making some service requests accessible 24/7.
- Regarding a portal for members – it was envisaged members could track progress and analyse information at ward level. However this would not be fully operational until all services are brought online through Transformation, so would be a gradual process.
- Test systems were trialled initially before going live.
- Use of live web chat was being explored, and also possibilities of integrating with Facebook and other social media.
- There were adequate resources at the current time for implementing the technology aspect of the Transformation programme.

At the conclusion of discussion, it was agreed that a future update report would be made to Scrutiny Committee when there were specific points of interest to inform members, whether good or bad, or milestones reached.

50. Non Domestic Rate (Business Rates) Revaluation Support Relief Policy - Report of the Task and Finish Group (Agenda Item 9)

The Chairman welcomed the Revenues Team Leader and Business Rates Officer to the meeting, who had worked with members on the Task and Finish Group and were present to respond to any questions.

The Chairman noted the work had been undertaken in a short timeframe and had been an intensive and interesting Task and Finish Group. She hoped Scrutiny members would agree with the outcome and endorse the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.

Officers noted all information was in the report and they had no further comments to add.

There was no further discussion and members were content to endorse the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group.

51. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 7 September 2017 (Agenda Item 10)

Members considered the reports within the District Executive agenda for 7 September 2017 and made the following comments:

Corporate Performance and Complaints Monitoring Report 2017/18 – 1st Quarter (Agenda item 6)

- Para 8 - Scrutiny noted that there was still no reference to performance monitoring from a customer perspective. There is a need to know when changes are implemented if and how it is affecting the public.
- It was acknowledged during the transition through Transformation it would be difficult to produce statistics at 'in between' stages. Members sought reassurance that there would be more Performance Indicators in the future, and that indicators should be easily understood.
- It was felt the indicators need to be reviewed and perhaps using the Council Plan as a starting point. Outputs, especially regarding customer service, need to be monitored.
- Members were pleased that baseline measures will be maintained to be able to monitor trends.

Westlands Entertainment and Conference Centre Refurbishment Project (Agenda item 7)

- Scrutiny sought clarification that Westlands is projected to be cost neutral or better, and queried the timeframes envisaged until the facility breaks even or makes a surplus.
- It was noted this report was the first statement of actual overspend and members commented it would be useful to see a full reconciliation to indicate how the overspend affects the overall SSDC accounts.
- Members sought clarity about whether the following were included in the project spend as detailed in para 41:
 - Dealing with aspects of vandalism which had not been possible to claim under insurance
 - Work to the first floor to enable office space to be let to a tenant.
 - Work to the sports hall and fitness suite
 - Artists Walkway
- Members sought reassurance that the risk management is up to date.
- Members express disappointment that Bingo groups were still awaiting a licence to use Westlands.

Business Rates Relief – New Local Discretionary relief (Agenda item 8)

- Scrutiny endorsed the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group. No further comments were made.

Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan (Agenda item 9)

- Para 15 – the table refers to service prioritisation as TBC. Scrutiny queried that as there is a wish to not cut services, how are the savings going to be identified?
- Referring to a recent LGA Enterprising Councils document, members noted that key learning points from other authorities in particular Sevenoaks that had gone through similar transformation processes, had been to talk and engage with the public. This didn't seem to have been done yet here, and it was queried if there was intention to consult with the public, and if so how and when?

- Regarding an increase in fees and charges, members queried what would happen regarding fees where there is less opportunity to make changes due to legislation?
- Scrutiny sought reassurance that Transformation is on target to deliver the projected savings.
- Members raised concern that changes to car parking fees were being considered at a time when many 'pay and display' spaces in Yeovil seemed to be under-used during peak weekday lunch break hours.

District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda item 10)

- Members queried the report due to October regarding 'Consideration of Local Plan Review Issues and Options Document for Consultation'. Scrutiny members were unclear about the purpose of the report and requested that all members be kept informed about reports due to come forward regarding the Local Plan.
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52. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Agenda Item 11)

Members noted the updates provided by the Scrutiny Manager on each of the Task and Finish Groups currently in progress or commencing in the near future.

Council Tax Support – there were no updates since the last meeting.

Homefinder Somerset – there were no updates since the last meeting.

Car Parking – the Scrutiny Manager had met with the Engineering & Property Services Manager to draft a One Page Strategy for the proposed Task and Finish review for car parking, and the Chief Executive had also viewed the document. Members were asked to review the document and they suggested some amendments. Councillor Carol Goodall also expressed an interest to be involved with the Task and Finish Group.

Locality Working – the Scrutiny Manager noted no further information had come forward about timescales or, how and when, Scrutiny would be involved in the process.

There was a short discussion about locality working during which members expressed mixed opinions about how they felt locality working would, or could, be in the future. Due to the 'unknowns' about locality working, it was suggested and agreed, that the Communities Lead be invited to have an informal discussion with Scrutiny Committee following a Committee meeting.

53. Update on matters of interest (Agenda Item 12)

There were no updates on matters of interest.

54. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 13)

The Scrutiny Manager reminded members that at the previous meeting they had agreed that a report about phase 2 at the Yeovil Innovation Centre should be requested and added to the Work Programme. She asked members to highlight the scope and detail required in the report, and this was agreed during discussion. Members also felt an

update on Lufton 2000 was needed, and suggested that the report should be requested for the November meeting. The Scrutiny Manager noted she would draft a report request and circulate to members for comment.

Members noted the Scrutiny Work Programme as detailed in the agenda.

55. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 14)

Members noted the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for 10.00am on 3 October 2017, in the Main Committee Room.

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Chairman

Agenda Item 7

Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 7 September 2017

The Chairman will update members on the issues raised by Scrutiny members at the District Executive meeting held on 7 September 2017.

The draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 7 September 2017 have been circulated with the District Executive agenda.

Agenda Item 8

Reports to be considered by District Executive on 5 October 2017

Lead Officer: Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager
Contact Details: joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462077

Scrutiny Committee members will receive a copy of the District Executive agenda containing the reports to be considered at the meeting on 5 October 2017.

Members are asked to read the reports and bring any concerns/issues from the reports to be discussed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 3 October 2017.

The Chairman will take forward any views raised by Scrutiny members to the District Executive meeting on 5 October 2017.

Please note:

The Press and Public will be excluded from the meeting when a report or appendix on the District Executive agenda has been classed as confidential, Scrutiny Committee will consider this in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under paragraph 3 (or for any other reason as stated in the District Executive agenda):

“Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).”

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption from the Access to Information Rules outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Agenda Item 9

Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews

The Task and Finish Review Chairs or Scrutiny Manager will give a brief verbal update on progress made.

Current Task & Finish Reviews

- Council Tax Support
- Homefinder Somerset

Task and Finish Reviews due to commence shortly

- Car Parking
- Locality Working

Agenda Item 10

Update on matters of interest

Lead Officers: Jo Gale, Scrutiny Manager
Contact Details: joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462077

Action Required

That members of the Scrutiny Committee note the verbal updates as presented by the Scrutiny Manager.

Purpose of Report

This report is submitted for information to update members of the committee on any recent information regarding matters of interest to the Scrutiny Committee, and for the Scrutiny Manager to verbally update members on any ongoing matters:

Scrutiny Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Budget	Background/Description	Lead Officer/ Lead Member
Nov TBC	Discretionary Housing Payment policy monitoring	✓		An update report on the implementation and outcomes of the revised Discretionary Housing Payment Policy that came in to effect on 1 April 2017 following a Task and Finish review.	Ian Potter
Dec TBC	Yeovil Innovation Centre	✓		An update report on the Innovation Centre's performance including progress of phase 2. With a brief overview of the work to achieve the related Economic focussed Council plan targets and related strategies.	David Julian
October 2017	Council Tax Penalties and Civil Penalties in Housing Benefit			In April 2017 the council agreed to introduce penalties for those who have failed to notify the Council of change of circumstances that has resulted in them continuing to receive a Council Tax exemption, discount, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support award that they are not entitled. Scrutiny Committee agreed at their meeting on 4 th April 2017 for an item to be added to the forward plan for October to monitor the effectiveness of the policy. Figures with regard to the cost of issuing and collecting penalties have been specifically requested.	Ian Potter
Feb TBC	Monitoring of the implementation of Charges for Pre-Application Development Control Advice	✓		In April 2017 Scrutiny Committee supported the introduction of charging for Pre- Application Development Advice and requested a monitoring report is brought forward to establish the effectiveness of recouping costs and to consider the re-evaluation of fees.	David Norris
TBC	Troubled Families Programme	✓		Members requested an update report on the progress of the troubled families following a report covering the work of South Somerset Together, Local Strategic Partnership. A specific report request needs to be compiled.	Helen Rutter

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Issue for Main Scrutiny Cttee	Budget	Background/Description	Lead Officer/ Lead Member
TBC	Review of Economic Development Strategy	✓		This Strategy is due for review and Scrutiny members have previously been involved in the review and development of this Policy. The Lead Officer has agreed that Scrutiny involvement will be factored in to the review process and we will be kept informed regarding the most appropriate point for effective Scrutiny engagement.	David Julian / Cllr Jo Roundell Greene.
TBC	Increased Joint Working Between Police Forces			At the meeting of Scrutiny Committee on 30 August 2016, the SSDC representative on the Police and Crime Panel requested that there be a report looking at the proposals for increased joint working between police forces across the South West.	

The Somerset Waste Board and Somerset Waste Partnership Forward Plan of key decisions can be viewed at:
<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=196&RD=0>

Current Task & Finish Reviews

Date Commenced	Title and Purpose	Members
February 2017	Council Tax Support 2018/19 Monitoring the effectiveness of the current scheme and how best to manage the reductions in the Administration grant as part of efficiency savings and as a consequence of the changes with Universal Credit	Cllrs Jason Baker, Val Keitch, Andy Kendall, David Norris, Sue Osborne, Sue Steele, Alan Smith, Rob Stickland, Derek Yeomans
February 2017	Accessible Homefinder Common Lettings Policy A review of the policy to ensure it is accessible for customers/the general public. Phase 1 completed with comments re style, layout and terminology fed back, phase 2 to commence June 2017 or later.	Cllrs Sue Steele, Carol Goodall

Date Commenced	Title and Purpose	Members
October 2017	Council Tax Support 2019/20 Consider the merits/risks of moving towards a discount based policy.	Cllrs Carol Goodall, David Norris
TBC	Car Parking Charging/Strategy To ensure we have a strategy and policy that encourages an effective and efficient use of car parks for generating an appropriate surplus. To make sure the provision of car parking in terms of location, layout and cost helps to support the Objectives in the Council Plan and related strategies, for example Economic Development, Regeneration and Commercial Property. To ensure consistency across the District.	
TBC	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.	
The Overview and Scrutiny Committee are committed to ensuring they have capacity to contribute to the Council's Transformation programme and therefore fewer Task and Finish reviews may be conducted during the Transformation period.		

Agenda Item 12

Date of next meeting

Members are requested to note that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee will be held on Tuesday 31 October 2017 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.
