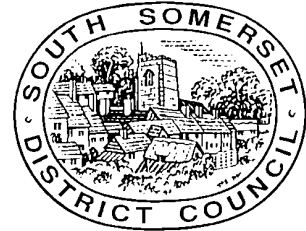


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



Scrutiny Committee

Making a difference where it counts

Tuesday 4th September 2018

10.00 am

**Chamber B, 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

John Field
Carol Goodall
Mike Lock
Tony Lock

David Norris
Alan Smith
Rob Stickland
Gerard Tucker

Martin Wale
Colin Winder
Vacancy

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

This Agenda was issued on Friday 24 August 2018.

Alex Parmley, *Chief Executive Officer*

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 4 September 2018

Agenda

Preliminary Items

1. Minutes (Pages 4 - 7)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 31 July 2018.

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 2 August 2018 (Page 8)

8. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 6 September 2018 (Page 9)

9. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Page 10)

10. Update on matters of interest (Page 11)

11. Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 12 - 13)

12. Date of next meeting (Page 14)

Agenda Item 1

South Somerset District Council

Draft Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held in the **Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil on Tuesday 31 July 2018.**

(10.05 am - 11.10 am)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Jason Baker	Carol Goodall
Dave Bulmer	Mike Lock
John Clark	Tony Lock
John Field	Gerard Tucker

Also Present:

Jo Roundell Greene

Officers

Charlotte Jones	People, Performance & Change Lead
Nicola Hix	Lead Specialist (Finance)
Brendan Downes	Specialist (Procurement)
Becky Sanders	Case Services Officer (Support Services)

27. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Norris, Alan Smith, Rob Stickland, Martin Wale and Colin Winder.

29. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest.

30. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

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

No issues were raised from previous meetings.

32. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Tony Lock back to Scrutiny Committee. She also welcomed some graduate interns who were present to observe the meeting.

33. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 5 July 2018 (Agenda Item 7)

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

34. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 2 August 2018 (Agenda Item 8)

Members considered the reports within the District Executive agenda for 2 August and made comments as detailed below. Responses to most comments and questions were provided at the Scrutiny Committee by the relevant officer or Deputy Leader.

Corporate Grants Report 2017-2018 (Agenda item 6)

- Page 4, table 1 – Members noted the differences across the four areas regarding the percentage awarded against project costs and the town / parish council contributions. Members asked if the variation in figures was due to the types of grant (e.g. revenue, capital or Service Level Agreement) or if there was another reason, and queried what had been different in Area North to achieve the figures?

2018/19 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30 June 2018 (Agenda item 7)

- Page 13, table 2 – Members queried if the virement of £61,610 to the regeneration budgets for Chard, Wincanton and Yeovil had been evenly split between the schemes?
- Page 17 – Building Control Income – members queried what could be done about the predicted shortfall in fee income, and whether the charges need to be reviewed?
- Page 16 and 28 – Westlands – Members acknowledged there was annual reporting but asked if it would be possible to have a verbal update on how it's going mid-term.
- Page 27 – Some members asked if the income from property investments could be more clearly reported.
- Page 28 – Westlands – members asked for further detail regarding the issue with utilities (as detailed in the comment).
- Appendix C, page 31 – The Closed Churchyards Reserve is showing a positive figure – members queried if this meant no further funding will be available?
- Scrutiny made a general observation that the comments in both budget reports contained several acronyms and some readers may be unsure of their meaning.

2018/19 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the Quarter Ending 30 June 2018 (Agenda item 8)

- Members sought clarity about the frequency of reporting for the progress of investments (Commercial Strategy)

Corporate Performance Report 2018-19: 1st Quarter (Agenda item 9)

- Some members expressed concern that they had experienced long waits on the telephone when ringing the main number. They acknowledged there was a recorded message encouraging people to go online, but they had concerns about vulnerable people who may not be able to get online or did not have the confidence to do so.
- Page 51, para 12 – The topic titles listed in the table seemed inappropriate for SSDC and seem more applicable to a County Authority.
- Members queried what tolerance levels were being used to give the amber RAG rating e.g. +/- 10%.
- Past performance figures – members queried which figures were being used in this report – is it the previous quarter, the same period last year or an average of the previous year? It was felt a key or brief narrative would be useful.
- Members acknowledged there were better metrics now but noted a number of indicators were in the red, and queried if SSDC were doing enough to explain Transformation to the public in order to manage expectations.
- Members raised several queries regarding specific indicators including:
 - Page 57, indicators 1.12, 1.13 and 1.14 – How do the figures relate to the comment? Is the current backlog of applications excluded or included within the figures? Do the statistics only relate to the process once a planning application has been validated? Members also asked if the backlog of applications awaiting validation was increasing.
 - Page 60, indicator 3.03 – Household recycling rates – members asked for clarity that this indicator was for kerbside recycling only.
 - Page 61, indicator 4.03 – How long is it expected that the Housing Advice Centre will have extended opening hours in order to catch up with case work? Members commented an actual figure as well as a % would be useful for this indicator.

District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda item 10)

No comments.

35. Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews (Agenda Item 9)

There were no updates since the last meeting for any of the Task and Finish reviews.

- Customer Accessibility
 - Council tax Support Scheme 2019
 - Homefinder Somerset Plain English
-

36. Update on matters of interest (Agenda Item 10)

There were no updates on matters of interest.

37. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 11)

One member suggested an update on the Lyde Road Cycleway as he believed some of the funding may be time limited.

The Chairman reminded members that at a previous meeting a member had suggested that Scrutiny look at the impact Business Rates are having on Yeovil Town Centre and if there is anything that SSDC might be able to do. She asked members if they wished to progress the idea to the scoping stage, which was agreed. During a brief discussion it was suggested that the impact for all of the market town centres in the district should be considered in the scoping report. The Chairman suggested that a draft scoping report be prepared for discussion at the next meeting of the Committee.

The Chairman asked if a date could be arranged for an update regarding the Precepting for the Somerset Rivers Authority as the Bill going through Parliament had been delayed.

38. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 4 September 2018 at 10.00am in Council Chamber B, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

.....
Chairman

Agenda Item 7

Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 2 August 2018

The Chairman will update members on the issues raised by Scrutiny members at the District Executive meeting held on 2 August 2018.

The draft minutes from the District Executive meeting held on 2 August 2018 have been circulated with the District Executive agenda.

Agenda Item 8

Reports to be considered by District Executive on 6 September 2018

Lead Officer: Jo Gale, Scrutiny Specialist
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 6 September 2018.

Members are asked to read the reports and bring any concerns/issues from the reports to be discussed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 4 September 2018.

The Chairman will take forward any views raised by Scrutiny members to the District Executive meeting on 6 September 2018.

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 Specialist will give a brief verbal update on progress made.

Current Task & Finish Reviews

- Customer Accessibility
- Council Tax Support Scheme 2019
- Homefinder Somerset Plain English Policy

Agenda Item 10

Update on matters of interest

Lead Officers: Jo Gale, Scrutiny Specialist
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 Specialist.

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 Specialist to verbally update members on any ongoing matters.

Scrutiny Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Background/Description	Lead Officer/ Lead Member
Oct '18	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.	Peter Paddon / Jan Gammon / Cllr Jo Roundell Greene.
Dec '18 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.	Simon Fox/ Nigel Marston/ Cllr Angie Singleton
TBC	Precepting for Somerset Rivers Authority	Scrutiny Committee requested at their 30 th January meeting a progress report on the precepting arrangements for the Somerset Rivers Authority.	
TBC	Overview of Yeovil Refresh	Following a report to District Executive with regard to Yeovil Market at the beginning of January 2018, Scrutiny Committee members raised questions with regard to Yeovil Vision and felt they needed a better understanding of it to effectively scrutinise the governance, investment and strategic impact/relationship with the Council.	Helen Rutter/ Natalie Fortt /Cllr Peter Gubbins
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
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	<p>Accessible Homefinder Common Lettings Policy</p> <p>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.</p>	Cllrs Sue Steele, Carol Goodall
October 2017	Council Tax Support 2019/20 - Consider the merits/risks of moving towards a discount based policy.	Cllrs Sue Steele, Carol Goodall, David Norris, Rob Stickland, Anna Groskop, Sue Osborne
February 2018	Working with the Transformation Team to identify, and deliver, Best Practice to provide accessible on-line information and services for all.	Cllrs Dave Bulmer, David Norris, Colin Winder, Carol Goodall, Sue Steele.
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.	
TBC	Review of the rural economy and identifying business needs that SSDC could support or help facilitate to further growth and or diversification.	Agreed at 30 Jan Scrutiny Committee, no project scope has been developed at this stage.
<p>If you have any suggested topics for Scrutiny Committee to consider please contact Scrutiny Specialist – joanna.gale@southsomerset.gov.uk</p>		
<p>(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).</p>		

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 2 October 2018 at 10.00am in Council Chamber B, Brympton Way, Yeovil.
