

South Somerset District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the **Scrutiny Committee** held at the **Council Chamber B - Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil** on **Tuesday 2 October 2018**.

(10.00 am - 11.20 am)

Present:

Members: Councillor Sue Steele (Chairman)

Dave Bulmer	Stephen Page
John Clark	Alan Smith
John Field	Rob Stickland
Mike Lock	Martin Wale
Tony Lock	

Also Present:

Ric Pallister	Sylvia Seal
Jo Roundell Greene	Angie Singleton

Officers:

Jo Gale	Scrutiny Specialist
Jan Gamon	Lead Specialist (Strategic Planning)
Alice Knight	Acting Welfare & Careline Manager
Jo Manley	Specialist (Strategic Planning)
Caron Starkey	Strategic Lead for Transformation
Angela Cox	Democratic Services Specialist

51. Minutes (Agenda Item 1)

The minutes of the meeting held on 04 September 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

52. Apologies for absence (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Neil Bloomfield, Carol Goodall, David Norris and Gerard Tucker. Councillor Stephen Page attended as substitute for Councillor Neil Bloomfield.

53. Declarations of Interest (Agenda Item 3)

There were no declarations of interest made by Members of the Committee.

54. Public question time (Agenda Item 4)

There were no members of the public present.

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

No issues were raised from previous meetings.

56. Chairman's Announcements (Agenda Item 6)

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Stephen Page as substitute member for Councillor Neil Bloomfield.

57. Verbal update on reports considered by District Executive on 6 September 2018 (Agenda Item 7)

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

58. Reports to be considered by District Executive on 4 October 2018 (Agenda Item 8)

Members considered the reports within the District Executive agenda for 04 October 2018 and made comments as detailed below. Responses to most comments and questions were provided at the Scrutiny Committee by the relevant officer, Director or Portfolio Holder.

Direct Hostel Provision, Move-on Accommodation and Support (Agenda item 6)

Members received a short presentation on the homeless service in South Somerset and the support available to vulnerable homeless people by the Portfolio Holder and the Acting Welfare & Careline Manager.

- Scrutiny supported the recommendations of the report.
- Members queried what they could do and who to contact if they found someone sleeping outside.
- Members suggested a small business card with the contact details of the SSDC Homeless Service to hand to vulnerable individuals to encourage them to contact the service.
- Clarification on the sources of the grants received was sought and explained by the Acting Welfare & Careline Manager.
- An explanation of the Tenancy Accreditation Scheme was given which helped individuals to complete modules on subjects such as cooking, good relations and maintaining a tenancy to help them in permanent rented accommodation.
- It was suggested that the financial information in paragraph 45 could be separated into a more readable format or table.

The Chairman thanked the Acting Welfare & Careline Manager and her team of staff for their work in assisting single adults in need of accommodation.

Update on the Development Consent Order Application for the dualling of the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester (Agenda item 7)

The Specialist for Strategic Planning explained the progress made since her last report in July 2018 and the need to delegate authority for the Council's Relevant Representations to the Lead Specialist for Strategic Planning in consultation with the Portfolio Holders due to time pressures. She noted they were not progressing the Planning Performance Agreement to attempt to reimburse some of the costs any further also due to time issues. The public examination was due to start in December 2018 but Highway England now wanted it to start at the end of November.

- Members expressed concern that the process should not be delayed.
- Members expressed concern that officers were stretched and the Lead Specialist for Strategic Planning acknowledged that additional support was needed.

SSDC Transformation Programme (Agenda item 8)

The Portfolio Holder for Transformation and the Strategic Lead for Transformation provided an update on the current position of the transformation Programme. They confirmed that a communication plan for Councillors and officers had been agreed and the work with Civica on the final processes was progressing at pace. There would also be a Members Workshop on 10th October to look at the Members Portal.

- Members asked if the Locality Teams would be fully operational in January 2019 and it was confirmed that this was imbedded in the plans and was integral to the new ways of working however, as with any new system, it would take time to bed in and develop over time.
- Members asked for the position of the Streetscene service and it was confirmed that in order to deliver the business plans, there would be some restructuring required in the Streetscene service but the majority of roles would be assimilated.
- Members asked if more roles were to be scoped and it was confirmed that some roles within Commercial Services and Income Generation still had to be scoped.
- It was also confirmed the programme was still running to schedule.
- Members asked about morale with respect to internal communications and it was confirmed that there was a weekly Transformation Tuesday bulletin to all staff. The focus was now on ways of working and services to customers.
- Members asked about support to the Area Committees in the future and it was confirmed that the Members working group were looking at this. No firm decision had been made on the future IT requirements for Members other than they would be provided and supported in house.
- Members asked if there any issues with the Civica software following the outturn report from South Hams Scrutiny Committee and it was confirmed that SSDC had purchased a different suite of IT as it already had a number of Civica systems in place and so work was progressing to link the systems.

At the conclusion of the debate, the Strategic Lead for Transformation confirmed that they would be showcasing the new IT to staff and Members very shortly.

The Chairman thanked the Strategic Lead for Transformation and her team for work in bringing the project forward.

District Executive Forward Plan (Agenda item 9)

In response to a question, the Lead Specialist for Strategic Planning confirmed that they would be shortly be holding Member Workshops on the Local Plan Review Preferred Options prior to its approval at District Executive and Council in February 2019. She also confirmed that the Leisure Contracts were due to be reviewed in 2021.

59. 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.

Customer Accessibility – some members had been involved in testing the new website and some work had been done on content to achieve a consistency of language.

Council Tax Support Scheme 2019 – there was a meeting at 1.00pm that day to discuss the comments received during the public consultation which ended on 2 September 2018.

Homefinder Somerset Plain English – no updates since the last meeting and the Scrutiny Manager would follow this up for the next meeting.

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

There were no updates on matters of interest.

61. Scrutiny Work Programme (Agenda Item 11)

The Scrutiny Manager advised that the Strategy and Commissioning team had requested to hold a workshop with all Scrutiny Committee members at the conclusion of their next meeting on 30th October. The workshop would last approximately 1 ½ hours and refreshments would be provided.

The Chairman asked that a reminder of the workshop be circulated to all Scrutiny Committee members.

62. Date of next meeting (Agenda Item 12)

Members noted that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for Tuesday 30 October 2018 at 10.00am in the Main Committee Room, Brympton Way, Yeovil.

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Chairman

