

## Scrutiny Committee

This report summarises the work of the Scrutiny Committee since the last report to Full Council. The Committee met on 8 January 2019 and 5 February to consider:

**8 January 2019**

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### **Monitoring SSDC Council Tax Support Scheme - Draft Report of the Task and Finish Group**

Update since the Scrutiny meeting of 8 January 2019 – A report on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/20 was considered and agreed at Council on 17 January 2019. Comments made at the Scrutiny Committee meeting are detailed in the minutes of that meeting and can be viewed at <http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=141&Year=0>

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### **Reports to be considered by District Executive on 10 January 2019**

Members considered the reports within the District Executive agenda for 10 January 2019 and made comments, as detailed in the minutes (available via this link). <http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=2543&Ver=4> Responses to most of the comments were provided at the Scrutiny Committee by the relevant officer or Portfolio Holder who were present at the committee meeting.

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### **Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews**

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

**Homefinder Somerset Plain English policy** - No updates since the last meeting – all Councils have postponed work on this primarily due to Transformation type related activities.

**Customer Accessibility** – Website and portal services were continuing to be developed and testing with the task and finish groups will take place shortly.

**Council Tax Support Scheme 2020** – Task and Finish meetings are likely to commence following the local elections in May.

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### **Scrutiny Work Programme**

The Scrutiny Specialist noted there was little progress regarding the Precepting for Somerset Rivers Authority as the Bill was still awaiting passage through Parliament.

During a brief discussion members requested that the Scrutiny Specialist arrange for:

- A progress update regarding Yeovil Refresh to the February or March meeting if possible.

- A brief update on the Troubled Families Programme.
- A presentation by Somerset Waste Partnership to provide an overview to new members and provide an update on the Avonmouth facility – June onwards.

Members were content to note the Scrutiny Work Programme.

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## 5 February 2019

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### **Reports to be considered by District Executive on 7 February 2019**

Members considered the reports within the District Executive agenda for 7 February 2019 and made comments as detailed in the minutes (available via this link). <http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MIId=2431&Ver=4>  
Responses to comments were provided at the Scrutiny Committee by the relevant officer or Portfolio Holder.

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### **Verbal update on Task and Finish reviews**

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

**Homefinder Somerset Plain English Policy** – No updates since the last meeting.

**Customer Accessibility** – No updates since last the last meeting.

**Council Tax Support Scheme 19/20** – the report on the 19/20 scheme had been agreed by Council in January. Task and Finish meetings to consider the 20/21 scheme would commence in the next few months picking up on the recommendations in the previous Scrutiny report.

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### **Scrutiny Work Programme**

Scrutiny Committee agreed not to add a review of fees and charges to their Work programme to assist the Income and Opportunities manager as he had successfully obtained a grant for £7,000 from the Local Government Association (LGA), to bring in consultancy expertise regarding productivity and to support an internal team at SSDC to review the council's fees and charges. The Committee felt they would not be able to add value to the work already planned.

The Scrutiny Specialist reminded members that she had circulated two emails - one with an update regarding the Troubled Families Programme, and the other some links to information about the Yeovil Refresh. Members will consider the information circulated and email any further comments or concerns to her to follow up if necessary.

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Cllr Sue Steele  
Chairman of Scrutiny Committee