

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 October 2011 at 4.30 pm

Present:

Councillor K J Ross.....Chairman
Councillor R P LillisVice-Chairman

Councillor M J Chilcott
Councillor J Freeman
Councillor D D Ross
Councillor M O A Dewdney
Councillor P N Grierson

Members in Attendance:

Councillor B Heywood
Councillor K V Kravis
Councillor D J Sanders
Councillor D J Westcott
Councillor A F Knight
Councillor E May
Councillor T Taylor

Officers in Attendance:

Corporate Director (B Lang)
Scrutiny and Performance Officer (S Rawle)
Group Manager, Resources and Central Support (G Carne)
Group Manager, Environment and Services (S Watts)
Car Parking Manager (M Lewis)
Administrative Support (H Dobson)

Also in Attendance:

Brian Cull, Group Manager – Traffic Management, Somerset County Council

SC41 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A M Chick.

SC42 Minutes of the Meeting held on 12 September 2011

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 September 2011 – circulated with the Agenda).

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 12 September 2011 be confirmed as a correct record.

SC43 Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

Name	Minute No	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial	Action Taken
Cllr P Grierson	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr K J Ross	All Items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr D J Westcott	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke

SC44 Public Participation

No member of the public had requested to speak on any item on the agenda.

SC45 Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points

RESOLVED that the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points for 5 October 2011 be noted.

SC46 Cabinet Forward Plan

(Copy of Cabinet Forward Plan No. 5, November 2011 – September 2012, circulated with the Agenda)

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Plan No. 5, November 2011 – September 2012, be noted.

SC47 Civil Parking Enforcement Update

(Copy of Report No. WSC 125/11, circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to consider the current position for the implementation of a Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) scheme within West Somerset.

The Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth informed that currently off street car parks were enforced by District Councils and income retained by them, with on street parking, such as yellow lines and obstruction, enforced by the Police with income going to HM Treasury and pay and display enforced by WSC under agreement by the Somerset County Council going to SCC. Under the CPE scheme both off street and on street car parking would be enforced and administered by one authority.

In response to questions the Group Manager – Traffic Management, Somerset County Council, advised that Mendip District Council had delayed the revised paper for consideration on 5 October 2011, which was then withdrawn. The paper would be confidential because of the financial elements contained in the paper. Should Mendip not want to join, the Somerset County Council Cabinet will need to consider the options and perhaps approach the Department for Transport for a decision. The police may also have an impact on the decision if they should decide to withdraw their part of the service. With regard to concern relating to the potential for large increases to be passed on should the scheme not be financially robust, he informed the Committee that the scheme would be indexed linked. The contract was being developed at the moment and Section 151 officers had been contacted for their input.

During the course of the debate members noted/raised the following points:

- On street residents parking permit schemes would be implemented at the request of residents or parish/town councils, once the scheme had successfully been consulted upon. The scheme would prevent commuters, tourists etc from using the designated area.
- The business case considered by SCC would be sufficient to prevent a deficit occurring and the Council being responsible for the debt.
- The rate to purchase enforcement hours was currently confidential as it had not gone out to tender yet. The chairman asked how could any authority make a decision without a full financial case.
- CPE could provide a constant level of service, the monitoring of car parking for the police was not a priority.
- Due to the rural nature of the district, concern was expressed about the cost effectiveness of time limited parking spaces. It was confirmed that the Council would receive the benefit of other areas to bring the cost down.
- It was confirmed that the enforcement route could be influenced so that visits were random.
- Having one overall control centre rather than one in each district would produce savings helping enforcement in rural areas to be cost effective. Although the hours of enforcement would be bought, travelling time would not be taken into account as part of the cost.
- Concern was expressed that there could be less management of the on street parking due to cost and therefore the likelihood of reduced income.
- Concern was expressed that it was difficult to come to a conclusion about the scheme before the financial implications were available.

RESOLVED (1) that the contents of a CPE bulletin produced by Somerset County Council dated August 2011, be noted.

RESOLVED (2) that it be acknowledged that there were still several outstanding issues of concern requiring clarification relating to the proposed CPE scheme and it be recommended that Scrutiny Committee be presented with the final cost implications of a CPE scheme prior to the matter being considered by Cabinet and Council.

SC48 Somerset Waste Board – Joint Scrutiny Arrangements Update

(Copy of Report No. WSC 128/11, circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to report on progress made to date on the development of the improved scrutiny arrangements of the Somerset Waste Board following recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on 12 September 2011.

The Scrutiny and Performance Officer referred to the resolutions made at the previous meeting of the Scrutiny Committee and advised that a reply from the Secretary of State, regarding the request to establish a fully empowered Joint Scrutiny Committee for Somerset, had not yet been received. She had put forward, to scrutiny officers in Somerset, the proposal that all Scrutiny Committees in Somerset meet in December 2011 and June 2012. To date, South Somerset had responded and believed that logistically it would be too

difficult and costly and, therefore, were not in agreement. Responses were still to be received from the other authorities in Somerset.

She advised that the first meeting of the Joint Panel would be held in January 2012. The panel would be scrutinising the budget figures for the waste partnership going forward. Further information would be available at a later date.

RESOLVED that the action taken to date and the current position be noted.

SC49 **Street Cleansing Task & Finish Group Progress Report**

(Copy of Report No. WSC 127/11, circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to update Members on progress made by the Street Cleansing Task & Finish Group.

The Scrutiny and Performance Officer informed that an initial meeting of the group had been held on 8 September. Recently, the Group Manager for Environment and Services had met with the group and advised them of the current contract and its history. The group had looked at the timeline of scheduled work and when the contract would end, and they visited the Brunel Way and Roughmoor depots. The next meeting of the group would be held later in the week when it would deliberate their findings and decide upon actions for going forward. The devolution and delegation meetings would be crucial in terms of what the district will be left with regarding street cleaning: an important facet before the group can move forward.

Members noted that the contractor's vehicles were now tracked and it was, therefore, possible to obtain details of the route and streets cleaned in the previous six months. Also, fuel consumption had been reduced by 10%, which was significant when considering that 40% of the total cost to run the vehicles was due to fuel costs.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

SC50 **Scrutiny Committee Workplan**

(Scrutiny Committee Workplan, circulated with the Agenda).

RESOLVED (1) that a review of the Complaints Procedure be inserted for December 2011.

RESOLVED (2) that an update of the Redundancy packages for all the Somerset authorities be inserted for December 2011

RESOLVED (3) that the Draft Capital Programme 2012 – 13 & Capital Strategy be moved to December 2011.

The meeting closed at 6.35 pm.