

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 February 2016 at 3.30 pm

Present:

Councillor P H MurphyChairman

Councillor R Lillis.....Vice-Chairman

Councillor D Archer
Councillor G S Dowding
Councillor J Parbrook

Councillor R Clifford
Councillor B Maitland-Walker
Councillor R Woods

Members in Attendance:

Councillor I Aldridge
Councillor M Dewdney
Councillor K Mills

Councillor M Chilcott
Councillor B Heywood
Councillor A Trollope-Bellew

Officers in Attendance:

Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer – (B Lang)

Assistant Director – Resources (P Fitzgerald)

Democratic Services Coordinator (E McGuinness)

HR and OD Manger (F Wills)

Parking and Community Safety Manager (T Ann-Biss)

Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny (M Prouse)

Democratic Services Officer (A Randell)

SC150 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor A Behan.

SC151 Minutes

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 14 January 2016 – circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 14 January 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

SC152 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:

WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL
Scrutiny Committee 11.02.16

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary	Action Taken
Cllr B Maitland -Walker	All Items	Carhampton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P H Murphy	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr R Thomas	All items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr N Thwaites	All items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and voted

SC153 Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points

(Copy of Notes of Cabinet Decisions/Action Points, circulated at the meeting.)

RESOLVED that the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3 February 2016, be noted.

SC154 Cabinet Forward Plan

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward Plan published 3 February 2016, circulated with the agenda.)

It was requested that when items were included on the forward plan for the Cabinet, consideration be given as to whether they should be submitted first to the Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Plan published on 3 February 2016, be noted.

SC155 Dulverton Off-Street Parking Fees and Charges.

The Committee considered the report, WSC 15/16 circulated with the agenda, introduced by Cllr K Mills and presented by Tracey Ann-Biss.

The purpose of the report was to set out proposals to be considered for the increase in off-street parking fees and permits for WSC car parks located within Dulverton. This had been requested by Dulverton Town Council in the support of traffic management of the tourist industry by seeking to influence driver behavior with the following outcomes:

- Provision of additional short stay parking bays for tourists
- Continued investment in parking assets.

It also identified that ongoing investment is needed to improve the assets, the customer experience and convenience.

During the course of discussion the following points were made:-

- The situation re: the lighting provision in the car parks was raised. Members were informed that work is currently being undertaken by Property services to confirm who owned the lighting in the car park.
- The lighting and maintenance was part of a wider ongoing survey.
- It was discussed if asset transfer would be considered for the site.
- There would be a negotiated exit of the management agreement which was proposed to be taken thorough Full Council, prior to the original intended contract end in 2017.
- Members questioned if any increased charges had to be cost neutral. On-Street parking had to be used for transport improvement, as opposed to Off-Street.
- It was determined that the transport Strategy is a West Somerset appointed strategy and not linked or contributed to by Somerset County Council.
- It was asked why the compensation figure of £2500 was being offered to Dulverton Town Council. This was due to the early exit from the agreement.
- As part of the budget setting process, changes to fees following the exit would be implemented from 1st April 2016.
- Assurance was given that any signage replacement and lighting would be done with the minimum cost needed.
- Dulverton Town Council were thanked for their cooperation and agreeing to the proposals.
- The committee were to be provided with a written answer after asking for clarification as to whether there are any restrictions placed on how a council could spend any surplus income generated from off street parking.

Resolved that:-

- (1) The Scrutiny Committee support the proposed increase in off-street parking fees.
- (2) The Scrutiny Committee support the proposed increase to six months and yearly permits.

SC156 Tarr Steps Off-Street Parking Fees and Charges

The Committee considered the report, WSC 17/16, presented by Cllr K Mills, which had been previously circulated.

The purpose of the report was to set out a proposal to be considered for the increase in off-street parking fees and charges for Tarr Steps car park as requested by Exmoor National Park to support continued investment in the parking asset.

During the course of the discussion the following points were made:-

- It was confirmed to members that the Exmoor National Park Authority maintained the car park.
- Further detail could be requested from the Exmoor National Park Authority to show that the increases could be justified.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Committee support the proposed increase in the Tarr Steps car park tariff as requested by Exmoor National Park.

SC157 Staff Severance/Compensation Policies Updates and Pay Policy Statement 2016/17.

The Committee considered the report, WSC 16/16, presented by Cllr Chilcott, which had been previously circulated.

During the course of discussion the following points were made:-

- It was questioned how the high proportion of staff not in the UNISON would be represented in the consultation.
- Members considered in future instances that paying for a UNISON regional officer to ensure a consistence of approach from the Union should be considered to avoid delays to achieving agreements from occurring.
- In terms of any future ballot action it was requested if it could be ensured that Union membership lists were up to date so that any future ballots or action be undertaken by recognised Union members in line with changing legislation.
- Both authorities achieved the living wage for all staff.
- Councillors requested that assurance to be given to protect employees with long service that could be effected by pension changes.
- Written responses were to be given to the committee relating to new pension discretions, jobs with contrast to NJC Pay Scales and UNISON membership figures.

Resolved that the Scrutiny committee support the changes to the West Somerset Council's Severance Policy and Taunton Deane Borough Council's Compensation Policy as set out in the Redundancy and Retirement policies.

NOTE: the Assistant Chief Executive and Assistant Director – Resources were not present during this item to avoid a potential conflict of interest.

SC158 Scrutiny Committee Work Plan.

(Copy of the Forward Plan for 2015/16, circulated with the agenda.)

An update relating to the Ambulance Service was provided. Additional data had been requested in connection with response times but, to date, no response had been received. This would be pursued and the matter has been scheduled for the March Scrutiny committee meeting.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Forward Plan published on 13 January 2015 be noted.

The meeting closed at 4.42 pm.