

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 February 2013 at 3.30 pm**

**Present:**

Councillor K J Ross .....Chairman  
Councillor G S Dowding..... Vice-Chairman

Councillor M J Chilcott  
Councillor B Heywood

Councillor P N Grierson  
Councillor R P Lillis

**Members in Attendance:**

Councillor K V Kravis  
Councillor D J Sanders  
Councillor T Taylor  
Councillor D J Westcott

Councillor E May  
Councillor M A Smith  
Councillor K H Turner

**Officers in Attendance:**

Corporate Director (B Lang)  
Corporate Manager - Housing, Welfare & Economy (I Timms)  
Efficiencies and Performance Manager (K Batchelor)  
Section 151 Officer (S Campbell)  
Principal Accountant (S Plenty)  
Administrative Support (H Dobson)

**SC71 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M O A Dewdney, J Freeman and D D Ross.

**SC72 Minutes**

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 21 January 2013 – circulated with the Agenda).

**RESOLVED** that, subject to an amendment to minute no. SC68, the third bullet point to include the ‘Scrutiny Committee were unable to fully scrutinise the budget as the budget had not yet been set’, the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 21 January 2013, be confirmed as a correct record.

**SC73 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 or Disclosable Pecuniary	Action Taken
Cllr P N Grierson	All Items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr K J Ross	All Items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr K H Turner	All Items	Brompton Ralph	Personal	Spoke
Cllr D J Westcott	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke

**SC74 Public Participation**

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

**SC75 Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points**

(Copy of Notes of Cabinet Decisions/Action Points, circulated with the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points for 6 February 2013, be noted.

**SC76 Cabinet Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward published 18 January 2013, circulated with the agenda).

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet Forward published 18 January 2013, be noted.

**SC77 Corporate Performance Report April to December 2012/13**

(Report No. WSC 21/13, circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering the corporate priorities, performance of council services including budgetary information and customer satisfaction covering the period from 1 April 2012 to 31 December 2012.

During the course of the debate the following main points were raised:

- Noted that the action status for Key Task 1.1.2, delivery of 20 affordable homes in Carhampton, should be amber: the plans had changed during the year which would result in the delivery of the homes being completed in the year 2013/14.
- Members noted that the number of affordable homes delivered in West Somerset this year was a remarkable achievement.
- It was confirmed that the target percentage relating to key task 4.1.1, West Somerset businesses gaining contracts within the supply chain for Hinkley Point C, would be increased.
- It was requested that there be firmer targets relating to key task 4.1.3, maximising job opportunities for West Somerset during the Hinkley C construction phase. Members noted that work relating to economic development was difficult to measure and that any suggestions would be welcomed. Further, that progress was presented and discussed at the Economic Development and Tourism Policy Advisory Group meetings.

- Concern was raised that with the forthcoming change to benefits system, some of the residents of West Somerset could be struggling financially which could in turn increase the 'number of households making applications' and adversely affect KPI 45.
- Members were advised that once the trends relating to car park fines and income and CPE could be measured, it would be easier to predict future income levels.
- The Committee requested that the following information be provided after the meeting:
  - A break down of the Seaward Way Housing annual budget of £140,000, as shown in table 5 of the report.
  - To confirm whether the empty properties, relating to key task 1.2.3 and 1.2.4, that were brought back into use were rented properties.
  - A report on the work and progress relating to Objective 4, Key Task 4.1 which increases the opportunities for training and skills.
  - A full break down of savings relating to grass cutting.
  - A break down of 'off street' parking tickets issued in 2012/13 to date.
  - How the car parks were monitored regarding the issuing of excess fines.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the Committee thank all those involved for their hard work;

**RESOLVED (2)** that the Committee note the progress in delivering the corporate priorities for 2012/13 as set out in the report;

**RESOLVED (3)** that the Committee note the performance against Group and Service Indicators, including the budget monitoring indicators as set out in the report;

**RESOLVED (4)** that Cabinet be advised of the points raised by the Committee as set out above.

## **SC78 Draft 2013-14 Service Plans**

(Report No. WSC 19/13, circulated with the Agenda).

The purpose of the report was to provide Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity of scrutinising the draft Service Plans for 2013/14 prior to their approval in the light of the refreshed Corporate Priorities currently being considered by Council

The Leader of Council presented the report and advised that due to the Council's financial position it was proposed that there would be two corporate priorities for 2013-16.

With regard to concerns raised, the Corporate Manager - Housing, Welfare & Economy confirmed that a report would be presented to Council that would provide an update on the Family Focus programme.

It was noted that with regard to Objective 4 – the economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximized – the actions to deliver the tasks would be made clearer.

During the debate the Committee requested the following actions:

- It was suggested that the Corporate Plan could clearly state that the provision of housing would also benefit the current residents in West Somerset.
- Members suggested that a report to the Scrutiny Committee regarding the progress of the Minehead Visioning Group, and the Watchet 2025 and Williton Regeneration Forum would be welcomed.
- More detail was requested regarding the private health care scheme provided by the council. The Committee noted that the scheme could be reported to the Corporate Policy Advisory Group.
- That the first page of Part B of the service plans include a sentence to explain the content.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the Draft 2013/14 Service Plans be noted.

**RESOLVED (2)** that informal Cabinet be advised of the points raised by the Committee as set out above.

**SC79**     **Verbal Update on Countywide Scrutiny of Flood Events**

The Vice Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee provided a verbal update on the meeting of the Somerset authorities held the previous week regarding a countywide scrutiny of flood events. He informed that as a result a conference would be held on 15 March 2013 at the Somerset County Cricket Club in Taunton. The conference will concentrate on trying to find out why the flooding happened and how to tackle the issues in the future. All the Somerset authorities will be attending with parishes, along with the Environment Agency, emergency services, local MPs etc.

**SC80**     **Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review**

(Scrutiny Committee Workplan, circulated with the Agenda).

**RESOLVED (1)** that a report on the work and progress relating to the economic regeneration of West Somerset that shows how the opportunities for training and skills can be/have been increased, and the progress of the Minehead Visioning Group, and the Watchet 2025 and Williton Regeneration Forum, be scheduled to report to the Scrutiny Committee for May/June 2013.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the Workplan be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.44 pm.