

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 April 2018 at 3.30 pm

Present:

Councillor P H MurphyChairman
Councillor N ThwaitesVice-Chairman

Councillor I Aldridge
Councillor G S Dowding
Councillor B Maitland-Walker

Councillor J Parbrook
Councillor P Pilkington

Members in Attendance:

Councillor M Dewdney
Councillor B Heywood
Councillor K Mills
Councillor K Turner

Councillor A Hadley
Councillor A Kingston-James
Councillor A Trollope-Bellew

Officers in Attendance:

Assistant Director – Resources and Support (P Carter)
Assistant Director – Business and Development (I Timms)
Strategy and Partnership Lead (M Leeman)
Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny (M Prouse)

Others:

Catherine Falconer – Public Health
Matt Barrow – Connecting Devon and Somerset

SC 77 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors R Clifford and R Woods.

SC 78 Minutes

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 15 February 2018 – circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 15 February 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

SC 79 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 19.04.18

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary	Action Taken
Cllr I Aldridge	All items	Williton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr B Maitland-Walker	All items	Carhampton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Murphy	All items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P Pilkington	All items	Timberscombe	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr N Thwaites	All items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr A Kingston-James	All items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke
Cllr A Trollope-Bellew	All items	Crowcombe	Personal	Spoke
Cllr K Turner	All items	Brompton Ralph	Personal	Spoke

Councillor Pilkington further declared a personal interest on agenda item 12, as a customer of Airband.

Councillor Aldridge further declared a personal interest on agenda item 9, as a member of the Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

SC 80 Public Participation

No members of public spoke at the meeting on any items on the agenda.

SC 81 Cabinet Key Decisions and Actions

(Copy of the Cabinet Key Decisions from the meeting held on 7 March 2018, circulated at the meeting)

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Key Decisions from the meeting held on 7 March 2018, be noted.

SC 82 Cabinet Forward Plan

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward Plan published 3 April 2018, circulated at the meeting).

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Plan published on 3 April 2018 be noted.

SC 83 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman raised four items. These were:-

- Agenda item 8, Homelessness Strategy, would be deferred until the next Committee meeting which was scheduled for 14 June 2018. This was due to officer availability;
- The Scrutiny Officer distributed a questionnaire for Members to complete and return;
- Members were reminded that there was a briefing being held after the Scrutiny Committee on the new General Data Protection Regulations; and
- The A39 at Carhampton would be closed from 6.30pm and therefore Members were reminded if they were due to travel after that time, they would need to follow the diversion via Raleigh's Cross.

SC 84 Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The report WSC 34/18 was introduced by Councillor K Turner and presented by Catherine Falconer from Public Health.

The purpose of the report was to update the Committee on the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Somerset.

The Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board was made up of Members from the following Authorities:-

- NHS England;
- NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (SCCG);
- Mendip District Council;
- Sedgemoor District Council;
- South Somerset District Council;
- Taunton Deane Borough Council;
- West Somerset Council; and
- Somerset County Council.

The Members shared a vision for the residents of Somerset and that was to live healthy and independent lives that were supported by connected communities that thrived and were provided with timely and easy access to high-quality and efficient public services when they needed them.

From the shared vision, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2019 was broken down into three themes:-

- People, families and communities that took responsibility for their own health and wellbeing;
- Families and communities that were resilient and thrived; and
- Somerset people that were able to live independently.

When the Members looked at the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2019-2029, they found out that the life expectancy gap between the most and least deprived areas in the United Kingdom was 19 years and 10% of the population's health and wellbeing was linked to access to healthcare. The following were some of the attributes:-

- Good work;
- Surroundings;
- Money and resources;
- Housing;
- Good diet;
- Transport;
- Education and skills; and
- Family, friends and communities.

From the research, the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-2029 priorities were:-

- A county infrastructure that drove productivity, supported economic prosperity and sustainable public services;
- Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities that were able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment;
- Fairer life chances and opportunity for all; and

- Improved health and wellbeing and more people that had lived healthy and independent lives for longer.

The priorities were reportable to the following boards, who had developed the relevant strategies and policies that would drive the strategy over the upcoming years:-

- Somerset Growth Board;
- Safer Somerset Partnership;
- Adults and Children's Safeguarding Boards;
- Children's Trust Board; and
- Health and Social Care Board.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Members queried how long the public consultation would run for?
It was expected to run for 10 weeks.
- Members requested clarification on what the consultation was about and who would be consulted.
Public Health planned to consult on what the strategy was and how it would relate to members of the public. They would look for responses and feedback from their stakeholders and also from the public.
- Member queried why the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) was not mentioned in the presentation.
The STP was not part of the Board, so only the SCCG and NHS England were mentioned.
- Concern was raised on the figures used for bed blocking within the report.
The Officer shared the concern expressed on the delayed transfers of care and gave detail on the complex situation.
- Concern was raised on the link to coastal towns, drug related deaths and areas of deprivation.
The Officer mentioned that this was a timely topic of discussion. The national news had reported that some statistics had been released that related to the link but that no Somerset towns were in the top ten places of deprivation linked to drug related deaths.
- The Chairman confirmed that the STP was on the work plan for the June Scrutiny Committee meeting.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee noted the officer's report.

SC 85 **Somerset Strategic Housing Framework**

The report WSC 35/18 was presented by Councillor K Turner.

The purpose of the report was to highlight the key facts and challenges within the local housing market, for the proposal of a vision for homes and housing across Somerset that embraced strong and effective strategic leadership; a local economy that provided opportunity for all; homes in Somerset were good for your health; and a society that supported the vulnerable.

The current Somerset Strategic Housing Framework (SSHF) was prepared in 2013 and had an end-date of 2016, and was due for a review. It contained priorities that related to the availability of affordable housing, making best use

of the existing housing stock and supported the vulnerable.

The SSHF was prepared by the Somerset Strategic Housing Officers Group (SSHOG) which reported to the Somerset Strategic Housing Partnership (SSHP). The West Somerset representatives were Councillor Keith Turner and Mark Leeman (Strategy and Partnership Lead Officer).

The process of the review had begun in 2016. There was work being carried out behind the scenes which involved conversations with the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Clinical Commissioning Group, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Somerset Strategic Planning Conference and the Somerset Academy.

The revised draft SSHF was published in February 2018 and was subject to consultation until 30 April 2018. After the consultation period closed, officers would prepare a report that responded to any feedback (by early summer 2018) and sought to adopt the SSHF by late summer 2018. The officers would also develop a multi-agency delivery plan that was focused on key activity and would be monitored by SSHP.

The corporate strategy had five key themes:-

- 1) Our Communities – the draft SSHF sought to increase the availability of affordable housing (all tenures); to deliver more housing options for rural communities, single people, young people and the elderly; to support our most vulnerable residents; and to develop employment opportunities.
- 2) Business and Enterprise – the draft SSHF sought the removal of barriers to housing growth. This included both the provision of infrastructure and skills development within the construction sector.
- 3) Our Place and Infrastructure – the draft SSHF sought to maximize the legacy of Hinkley Point C.
- 4) An Efficient and Modern Council – the draft SSHF challenged the Council to think creatively and radically about how it delivered housing related services, which included the provision of new housing. It also challenged the Council to develop ‘asset’ based models of service delivery i.e. problem solving by working with talent and ideas generated within local communities.
- 5) People, Place and Prosperity – the draft SSHF was consistent with the Council’s aims for Transformation. It sought to support vulnerable people and families, to adopt a creative place-based approach to a service delivery, and to aspire to an economy that worked for the benefit of all. The draft SSHF would help the Council deliver integrated systems leadership that would enable the Transformation of service delivery for the benefit of our communities and local business.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Concern was raised on two risks highlighted in the risk assessment on staff and resources.

Unfortunately the outcome of the Transformation Project was unknown. The Strategy and Partnership Lead believed that the future of the SSHP should be stable for the next couple of months, but if this was to change for the worse, then it would be up to the Portfolio Holders and the SSHOG to seek resource from within the Partnership.

- Members queried the ambitions mentioned and wanted reassurance that the ambitions would be more detailed and robust.
At present the document was at the draft consultation stage and was open for feedback and amendments.
- Concern was raised on what control the SSHP had over private developers and how they measured the effectiveness of the previous strategy.
It was difficult to monitor or state how effective the previous strategy was and would need to be addressed for the future. The Officer confirmed that the Housing Strategy covered all forms of housing and not just new builds.
- Members queried whether low cost ownership schemes could be promoted within the area.
Yes they could, however, the mortgages were not easily obtained for those schemes.
- Concern was raised on the Housing Sector as a whole.
National policy dictated the majority of what happened within the sector. The Elphicke House Report detailed the challenges faced by Councils and how to stimulate the housing market for all types of tenure. The report would be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee:-

- a) Provided 'in principle' support, with the assurance that the resources would be in place to deliver, the vision, priorities and ambitions of the draft SSHF;
- b) Challenged and scrutinised the detail and identity content that might require further clarity or amendment. Provided a view on whether Scrutiny considered some of the priorities and ambitions were more important than others; and
- c) Challenged the content of the draft Equalities Impact Assessment and suggested any further additions and amendments.

SC 86 **Health and Wellbeing Task and Finish Report**

The report WSC 36/18 was presented by Councillor A Kingston-James.

The purpose of the report was to set out the findings of the Task and Finish Group, established by the Scrutiny Committee to look into the matter of Health and Wellbeing in West Somerset.

There had been enormous changes in the roles and structures of government bodies and in their capacity to deliver in recent years. The health scene had been particularly challenged by very fundamental change and was faced with complex resource issues. This was especially true of an aging and rurally isolated population with West Somerset's population in fact having the oldest age profile in the country.

The Group worked effectively together, well supported by officers, to understand the changes that had occurred and were still to come, to listen to the evidence presented and interrogate it, and to engage with the concerns and issues presented by all the organisations they had met, both statutory and voluntary. There was a real concern to ensure the most vulnerable were supported and to reduce the disparity of benefit.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- The Chairman thanked the Task and Finish Group for their work on the project and requested more information on the Pilot Project mentioned in recommendation f) iii).

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet the following:-

- 1) To commit to developing a Health and Wellbeing Action Plan in 2018 once in the position capacity-wise to do so which would feed in and provide support to the county-wide Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- 2) The Council addressed the Priority Areas established in the report and in particular with reference to the Action Plan, recommended that the Authority initially included the following items:-
 - a) The Authority was committed to ensuring that there was a rolling programme of Housing Needs Surveys undertaken to ensure that information was robust and updated regularly. The surveys could be carried out in-house or by continuing to work closely with our partners at the Community Council for Somerset and Exmoor Rural Housing Network;
 - b) The Authority continued to work closely with our partners to promote Homefinder as the route of access to affordable rented housing and to build a better reflection of housing need;
 - c) That the District Council Planning Policy Department investigated the policy of Lifetime Homes further, but that its implementation and the evidence was looked at through the proper structure of the next planned review of the Local Plan, which would necessarily involve Members;
 - d) The Authority supported the Planning Policy's bid for additional planning capacity funds for joint working whenever further opportunity arose to do so, to enable the ability of the department to do more background work and addressed some of the questions and issues raised by the Group, put a cost to some of the things wished for and established good practice, for example, the Group felt all new buildings should meet the Category 2 Standard with 10% built to Category 3 (wheelchair accessible design) and the Government's Nationally Described Space Standard;
 - e) The Authority delivered the actions of the Somerset Prevention Charter, to ensure that our staff and Members were trained and had the skills necessary to make every contact count in addressing risks to health, and to ensure that people were signposted to ensure they got the right service at the right time, and that prevention was done systematically and considered in how we organised and delivered all our services;
 - f) The Authority worked alongside local communities and helped to identify local talent and creativity, designed solutions together to resolve health inequalities; To achieve this we would:-
 - i) Work with partners to identify health inequalities across West Somerset that were defined by people, place and prosperity;
 - ii) Work with the CCG, Adult Social Care and Public Health to support a prevention focused approach to commissioning arrangements through the review of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Health and Care Plan. To ensure that commissioning plans met the needs of our local people,

- families and communities. To ensure that commissioning plans drove social value and a social return on investment, in order to support the local community and voluntary sector where appropriate to do so; and
- iii) When capacity allowed, considered the health inequalities data/insight and prioritised a target population/geographic community for action. To convene a meeting of all relevant agencies (which included community groups) to discuss health related issues and to coproduce solutions and action.

SC 87 Update on Superfast Broadband Programme

The report WSC 37/18 was presented by Councillor A Hadley.

The purpose of the report was to update Members on the rollout of the Superfast Broadband Programme in West Somerset.

The Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) Partnership had been working to improve broadband coverage specifically at superfast speeds across the area. The project had been broken down into three phases. In phase one, the project aimed to deliver the Government led target of 90% of all premises being enabled to access superfast broadband. That equated to 278,000 premises across the project area and meant that within West Somerset, 16,400 premises would be able to access superfast broadband.

Phase two was broken down into seven lots. The initial lot was targeted at Dartmoor and Exmoor National Park areas and had been awarded to Airband. On Exmoor 1200 premises had been targeted via a wireless broadband network that comprised of 52 masts, poles and relays.

West Somerset was included in lot two and had been awarded to Gigaclear who had commenced rollout late 2017. The vast majority of the work in phase two would be completed during 2018 and 2019, with some outlying areas being completed in 2020. In West Somerset, Gigaclear's coverage plans offered 1800 premises access to superfast-plus speeds, which represented an investment of £870,600.

Phase three was being planned and sought to deliver to 100% of all premises to complete the programme. This would target very remote or isolated dwellings and any holes in the network that existed on completion of phase two.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:-

- Members queried what services required high speeds of 24 mg per second.
With an increased amount of devices per household being used to access the internet, the higher speed would enable that type of use. It would also enable live streaming on devices.
- Concern was raised on the money that had been spent to install superfast broadband.
The National Strategic Priorities were set by Central Government, so there was little control over what had been set. However, the majority of residents wanted superfast broadband.

- Concerns were raised over some restrictions on being able to connect to a local internet cabinet.
This could be for several reasons and clarification was given.
- Members praised the work that had been carried out on the programme.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report along with the continued delivery programme and endorsed the need to promote the use of the network.

SC 88 **Scrutiny Committee Work Plan**

The following items were highlighted on the Forward Plan for the next meeting:-

- Q4 Performance Report;
- Revenue and Capital Outturn Report;
- STP; and
- Homelessness Strategy.

Members were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Scrutiny Officer.

RESOLVED that the content of the Work Plan be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.15pm.