

MENDIP DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on Thursday, 18 March 2021 held online via Microsoft Teams commencing at 6.30 pm.

SCRUTINY BOARD COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Councillors Alison Barkshire, Adam Boyden, Nick Cottle, Michael Dunk, Philip Ham, Chris Inchley (Deputy Chair), Barbi Lund, Janine Nash, Sam Phripp and Nigel Woollcombe-Adams

OTHER COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Councillors Shannon Brooke, Josh Burr, John Clarke, Michael Dunk, Drew Gardner, Michael Gay, Francis Hayden, Bente Height, Garfield Kennedy, Tom Killen, Liz Leyshon, Lindsay MacDougall, Barry O'Leary and Alan Townsend

OFFICERS PRESENT:

Tracy Aarons	Deputy Chief Executive and Lead Officer
Richard Bates	Section 151 Officer
Dave Burn	Interim Democratic Services Manager
David Clark	Head of Service, Law and Governance Services
Gavin Fear	Contracts and Assets Maintenance Manager
Sarah Gooding	Democratic Services Officer
Julie Jackson	Performance and Improvement Officer
Kelly Knight	Economic Development and Scrutiny Officer
Duncan Moss	Deputy Corporate Finance Advisor
Sara Skirton	Head of Corporate Services
Ben Sugg	Democratic Services Officer
Haylee Wilkins	Deputy Chief Executive and Head of Neighbourhood Services

ALSO PRESENT:

Mickey Green	Somerset Waste Partnership
Matthew Canning	Suez Recycling and Recovery UK
James Pike	Suez Recycling and Recovery UK
Michael Cowdell	Suez Recycling and Recovery UK

Agenda Item	Subject	Actioned By
1	Chair's Announcements The Deputy Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the established rules for virtual meetings would be followed.	

	<p>The Deputy Chair explained the process for the appointment of the Chair and Deputy Chair for this Board would have to be re-run.</p> <p>He advised that he would ask the Deputy Chief Executive to oversee the election of Chair, following consideration of items 1-5.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Terry Napper and Councillor Helen Sprawson-White</p>	
3	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>None</p>	
4	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>a. Items on the agenda:</p> <p>Mr Tony Martin had registered to speak on Item 6, Electric Vehicle Charging Points on MDC Land. A summary of Mr Martin's comments is set out below.</p> <p>Mr Martin advised the Board that he was pleased to hear about the charging points. He said he was a full time Frome resident and had been driving an electric vehicle for the last year and noted that electric vehicle (EV) cars had increased in popularity. He felt the number of charging facilities was not keeping up with the exponential increase in EV vehicles. In addition, he was worried that the infrastructure may not be able to cope with the additional usage, as some current charging facilities were very slow.</p> <p>He felt rapid charging facilities would provide the best solution as they would be quicker. In addition, . they would help stimulate local economies as people would buy shopping whilst charging their vehicles.</p> <p>The Deputy Chair thanked Mr Martin for his contribution.</p> <p>b. Items not on the agenda:</p> <p>There were none.</p>	

<p>5</p>	<p>Previous Minutes</p> <p>Councillor Nigel Woollcombe-Adams moved the motion and Councillor Sam Phripp seconded that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted. The motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2021 be approved as an accurate record of the proceedings.</p>	<p>Sarah Gooding</p>
	<p>Election of Chair and Deputy Chair to Scrutiny Board</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the election of Chair and Deputy Chair of the Board held on 25 January 2021, was void. The process would therefore need to be re-run. Consequently, Councillor Chris Inchley had retained the position of Deputy Chair, prior to the appointments being re-run at this meeting.</p> <p>At this point Councillor Chris Inchley withdrew from the proceedings whilst the election of Chair was held.</p> <p>The Deputy Chief Executive sought nominations for the election of the Chair of the Scrutiny Board.</p> <p>Councillor Sam Phripp proposed Councillor Chris Inchley for Chair, which was seconded by Councillor Nick Cottle. There were no other nominations. The motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That Councillor Chris Inchley be appointed Chair of the Scrutiny Board.</p> <p>Councillor Chris Inchley returned to the meeting and took his position as Chair.</p> <p>The Chair sought nominations for the election of the Deputy Chair.</p> <p>Councillor Philip Ham proposed Councillor Barbi Lund as Deputy Chair, which was seconded by Councillor Michael Dunk. There were no other nominations.</p>	<p>Sarah Gooding</p>

	<p>The motion was put to the vote and declared to be carried.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That Councillor Barbi Lund be appointed Deputy Chair of the Scrutiny Board.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Electric Vehicle Charging Points on MDC Land</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services introduced the report, which gave the results of the procurement exercise undertaken to seek suppliers willing to supply EV charging infrastructure at no cost to the Council. It also identified the preferred supplier selected through the procurement exercise.</p> <p>Following the paper to Cabinet in July 2020, a procurement exercise based on a specification had been undertaken to identify potential suppliers to install Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs), in Mendip District Council car parks.</p> <p>The report had been prepared so as to update the Scrutiny Board on the EVCP position, the negotiations to date and the likely positive impacts to Mendip's Communities.</p> <p>During the discussion several points were made, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members felt the payment method across the Network in the UK was confusing and disjointed. Members noted that the use of bank cards was being considered as an alternative payment method. • There was concern we were entering into a contract and it may become outdated too soon. The Officer confirmed that any contract would need to be future proofed. • Members remained concerned that there was only one supplier at this stage. • Members were also concerned about exclusivity to one company and whether the Council would have control over future units. • The Officer confirmed that rapid chargers would be determined in the next stage of the process. She was unable to give a categorical answer on infrastructure costs, or any form of incentivisation as this would form part of 	<p>Haylee Wilkins</p>

	<p>ongoing discussions at the contract stage with Franklin Energy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members queried why the grid supply had not identified first. Members noted that a survey would be carried out.• Members asked how many chargers would be provided.• Members queried whether the car parking fees could be reduced for EV users• Ensure EV chargers are located in the villages as well as the towns.• Members suggested that the Council collaborate with supermarkets to supply/install chargers. <p>Members welcomed the proposal. They said it should be seen as creating opportunities to change behaviours and to encourage people to think about changing to EV cars.</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services stated if Members wanted to attend meetings of the Mendip Access and Parking Strategy Working Group (MAPS) they could ask. A survey had been completed through MAPS for market research. Feedback through the process would be reported to MAPS. It was not the intention that the issue should be reported to the Scrutiny Board again, but rather decisions about the report would be dealt with under delegations.</p> <p>In response to further questions, the Portfolio Holder said the project was part of a wider strategy and we were still waiting for a countywide strategy.</p> <p>He went on to say the Council was in conversations with Parish Councils. Meanwhile, he suggested that Councillor Philip Ham speak to Somerset County Council with a view to getting further updates on their EV charger plans.</p> <p>With regard to the current negotiations, the Portfolio Holder advised that he was currently unable to give any more detail on the proposal so far. However, he welcomed the comments from the Scrutiny Board and advised that they would be report them back to MAPS.</p>	
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	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the progress to date regarding the suggested infrastructure for the district to support current and future EVCP requirements, be noted.</p>	
7	<p>Somerset Waste Partnership Service Disruption</p> <p>The Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhood Services introduced the report. The report provided the Scrutiny Board with details of the underlying causes and actions taken in response to Covid-19 disruptions to recycling services across the district in 2021, and the steps being taken to recover and ensure resilience.</p> <p>Mickey Green, Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP), gave a presentation on service disruption during the Pandemic.</p> <p>He apologised for the service disruption in Mendip. He stated whilst there had been a high level of driver absence, he was pleased to report there had been no incomplete or withdrawn rounds in the last 2 weeks. He explained the measures being taken to bring services back to normal levels.</p> <p>Members noted that the crews operating on the ground were key workers, providing an essential service, under increasingly difficult and challenging conditions. Equally it was noted that the efforts of staff extended from the front-line collection crews into the Council's Contact Centre and Neighbourhood Services team, and teams at the Somerset Waste Partnership. Members were keen to emphasise that their comments did not look to question the considerable efforts of staff in any way.</p> <p>During the discussion that followed, Mickey Green reassured members that at SWP had not been on furlough during this pandemic. He accepted that people have had enough of the disruption caused by the pandemic and failed to appreciate the difficulties of providing a service in such challenging circumstances.</p> <p>In response to queries regarding the self-isolation criteria for refuse workers, the Board was advised that whole crews were required to isolate until tests come back to say they were negative. In addition, staff may be required to self-isolate if a family</p>	Haylee Wilkins

member was ill. Members were informed that the service carried out 47 rounds every day from Evercreech. That required a total of 135 people to work each day.

Mickey Green said there was some difficulty when agency staff were used to provide cover due to unfamiliarity with parts of some rounds, particularly where some addresses were tucked away.

In response to queries about communal waste collections, Mr Green agreed to look into the reasons for the number of delays reported at the meeting. He did however advise that the communal collection arrangements had recently changed.

Mr Green explained that the SWP had a new communications team who were very passionate about social media. He further explained that training would be rolled out for crews on customer care.

It was acknowledged that the blue bag scheme for missed collections had not been designed with the Covid disruption in mind.

In response to concerns about spillage of litter from the lorries, Matt Canning from Suez Recycling and Recovery UK advised that video footage on the refuse vehicles would be reviewed to assess the spillage incidents and that training would be set up for crews using 'toolbox talks' to remind staff to close hatches.

Members were advised to refer any other queries directly to SWP outside of the meeting separately.

It was reported that the presentation from SWP would be circulated to members following the meeting.

Members welcomed the measures that SWP were taking to resolve disruption to the service.

RESOLVED:

The content of the report and presentation be noted.

8	<p>Five Councils Corporate Services Contract Update</p> <p>A report had been produced which updated the Scrutiny Board on the progress of bringing the Procurement and Exchequer Services back in-house.</p> <p>The two services would be returned to Mendip District Council to be delivered in-house from 1 January 2021 and 1 April 2021 respectively.</p> <p>At the September meeting, the Scrutiny Board asked for regular reports to be brought back to them to keep them apprised of progress. This paper represented the second such report and was the final opportunity to update the Board before the Exchequer Service returned to the Council in approximately 2 weeks' time.</p> <p>The Board was advised that a temporary appointment had been sought to provide flexibility. An initial assessment would need to be made on the type of service required, hence the approach taken.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the progress t made in respect of exiting both the Procurement and Exchequer Services from the Five Councils Corporate Services Contract, be noted.</p>	David Clark
9	<p>Review of Scrutiny Working Groups</p> <p>It was clarified that Item 9 had been inadvertently included on the agenda summons.</p>	
10	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>There was none</p>	

The meeting finished at approximately 9.00 pm.