

# Swindon Borough Council

## Scrutiny Committee

**Monday, 26 October 2020**

Microsoft Teams Meeting

At 6.00 p.m.

### **Conservative Councillors**

Steve Weisinger (Vice-Chair)  
Matthew Courtliff  
Barbara Parry  
Kevin Parry  
Roger Smith  
Timothy Swinyard  
Rahul Tarar

### **Labour Councillors**

James Robbins (Chair)  
Junab Ali  
Emma Bushell  
Jim Grant  
Jane Milner-Barry

### **Liberal Democrat Councillors**

Andy Spry

**Committee Officer:** Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, [CommitteeServices@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:CommitteeServices@swindon.gov.uk)

Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street, Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

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## **AGENDA**

### **NOTE**

The link for the public session of the meeting is here: [Link for the public to watch Scrutiny Committee on 26th October 2020.](#)

This link will only work from 6.00pm on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020. For help on viewing the meeting, please visit: [Link for help on using Microsoft Teams.](#)

Please note that if Members resolve to go in to a private and confidential session the public link will be closed.

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

**3. Minutes (Pages 5 - 10)**

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

#### **4. Public Question Time**

See explanatory note below. Please contact the Committee Officer whose details appear at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

During Covid-19, questions must be submitted by 3.00pm two days before the meeting.

#### **5. Consideration of Cabinet Decisions (Pages 11 - 12)**

#### **6. Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session - Cabinet Member for Children's Services (Pages 13 - 20)**

#### **7. Work Programme 2020/2021 (Pages 21 - 34)**

#### **8. Status of Requests for Action and / or Information (Pages 35 - 42)**

**Date of Despatch:** 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020

**Access Arrangements:** If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size, please contact the Committee Officer as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

**Public Question Time:** Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). We will give priority to those who submit questions in writing at least two working days before the meeting. Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements.

The deadline for submitting questions for this meeting is 3.00pm on 21 October 2020.

Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Chief Legal Officer. We will publish it, along with the answer, alongside the Minutes. The process associated with asking a public question is set out in the [Public Question Time at Council Meetings Protocol and Guidance](#), which is available on the Council website or from the Committee Officer named above. A privacy note about how we record Public Questions is available here: [Publication of public questions and questioners](#)

#### **Terms of Reference:**

- To meet at regular intervals to review the policies, process and implications of Cabinet, Cabinet Member and Officer decision making and the way in which Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions are made;
- To consider requests for "Call-in" as defined in the Council's "Call-in" Procedure;
- To refer decisions back to Cabinet (or the decision maker) for reconsideration. It may do this once for any individual decision, after which if there is no agreement the decision will be referred to the full Council for determination;
- To refer Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for investigation without delaying the implementation of the decision concerned;

- To receive a report by the Leader of the Council at its first meeting after each Annual Council Meeting (or at such a meeting as is agreed by the Chair of the Committee and the Leader of the Council) on the service issues for the year ahead, the Leader of the Council's priorities for the coming year and on the Council's performance in the previous year;
- To oversee the arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny within the Council, including determining (i) where matters fall within the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which of those Committees will assume responsibility for any particular issue, (ii) a system to ensure that referrals from Committees to the Cabinet, either by way of report or for reconsideration are managed efficiently and do not exceed any limits set out in the Council's Constitution, and (iii) in the event of reports to the Cabinet exceeding any limits in this Constitution or if the volume of such reports creates difficulty for the management of Cabinet business or jeopardises the efficient running of Council business, at the request of the Cabinet to make decisions about the priority of referrals made.
- To carry out any investigation into the business and functions of the Council and to call in any Cabinet Member or senior officer of the Council so that they can offer advice, support or answer any question that will assist the Committee in carrying out its functions.
- To carry out an external scrutiny function, particularly in relation to corporate issues and issues falling into the remit of a number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

To fulfil all the functions of an overview and scrutiny committee as they relate to –

- the review, scrutiny and development of policy recommendations;
- the management of performance,
- the monitoring of progress against corporate priorities and
- the formulation of advice for the Cabinet, Council and other partners and stakeholders.

To have specific responsibility (but not limited to)

- Good governance
- The Budget Scrutiny function.

**Quorum:** The quorum for this meeting is at least one quarter of the whole number of the Committee, which is four Councillors.

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## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MONDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2020**

PRESENT: Councillors James Robbins (Chair), Steve Weisinger (Vice-Chair), Emma Bushell, Matthew Courtliff, Paul Dixon, Jim Grant, Jane Milner-Barry, Barbara Parry, Kevin Parry, Roger Smith, Andy Spry, Timothy Swinyard and Rahul Tarar.

Also in attendance were: Councillors David Renard (Leader of the Council), Russell Holland (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills), Brian Ford (Cabinet Member for Adults and Health), Dale Heenan (Cabinet Member for Town Centre, Culture and Heritage), Rob Jandy (Cabinet Member for Organisational Excellence), Mary Martin (Cabinet Member for Children's Services), Cathy Martyn (Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety), Maureen Penny (Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Waste Services) and Gary Sumner (Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport and Planning).

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Junab Ali.

### **14. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. The following declarations were made:

- Councillor Barbara Parry made a personal, non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of agenda item 5 (Consideration of Cabinet Decisions) as she is employed at The Ridgeway School (part of the White Horse Federation).
- Councillor Kevin Parry made a personal, non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of agenda item 6 (Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session - Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety) as he is the owner of a rented property.
- Councillor Barbara Parry made a personal, non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of agenda item 6 (Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session - Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety) as she is the owner of a rented property.

### **15. Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **16. Public Question Time**

There were no questions submitted under this item.

### **17. Consideration of Cabinet Decisions**

The Committee considered a report introducing decisions arising from the Cabinet meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

*Minute 17. Swindon Borough Council Covid-19 Recovery Update*

Councillors David Renard (Leader of the Council) and Rob Jandy (Cabinet Member for Organisational Excellence), responded to questions put by Councillors Emma Bushell, Jim Grant, Jane Milner-Barry, Barbara Parry and Rahul Tarar on the following matters:

- The differing Covid league tables being published in the media, with the national watch list being the one used by Government to determine what measures are needed in a given area, and Swindon's position on those tables.
- The analysis undertaken on the economic recovery from the Covid crisis by Centre for Cities, which has identified that Swindon is a robust place compared to others in the area.
- The Leader's challenge to the Centre for Cities report in January 2020 regarding air quality in Swindon, the details of which will be circulated to members of the Committee subsequent to the meeting.
- Covid testing capacity issues and its potential impact on the accuracy of case rate figures within Swindon.
- The plans for maximising local media opportunities, as well as national communications to parents, regarding Covid symptoms of children at school and guidance on what to do.
- That potential savings from officers working at home have not been calculated.
- The engagement with staff during lockdown which has included: a staff survey around two or three weeks in to lockdown regarding mental health; a risk assessment questionnaire around eight weeks ago regarding working from home, mental health, and any equipment needs; a 'Click and Collect' service for Display Screen Equipment, and; a survey that will be going out this week regarding working from home and looking at a hybrid model of office space in the future.
- How the £930k allocated by Government to the Council for supporting the implementation of the Local Outbreak Management Plan has been allocated and spent.
- The latest status with regards to booking Covid tests in Swindon, which is being impacted by national testing capacity issues, and the issues residents are experiencing such as IT glitches and being referred to testing centres outside a reasonable travelling distance. The Committee noted that a new testing site will be coming online this week in Swindon which will provide additional capacity.
- How the laboratory testing is a national programme delivered at a local level with the Council having little influence over the ability to increase capacity. Concerns are, however, fed into regional and national chains.
- The communications in place, such as the Council's media feeds and the 'Your Swindon Newsletter', which provide regular updates to residents on these matters.
- The work being done with bus companies to reinforce public safety messages and requirements. The Committee noted that a driver would be entitled to tell passengers to wear a mask but has no enforcement ability.

Resolved – (1) That Minute 17 of the Cabinet be noted.

(2) That information requested by members during the course of the Committee's consideration of this item be forwarded to them via the Committee Clerk.

*Minute 18. Budget Management Update (September)*

Councillors Renard and Russell Holland (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for

Commercialisation, Education and Skills) responded to questions put by Councillor Jim Grant and the Chair on the following matters:

- The total cost pressures arising from responding to Covid (a combination of actual spending plus loss of anticipated income) being £18.7m, of which £13m has been received from Government leaving a gap of £5.7m. The Committee noted that a further Government grant is expected but the value is as yet unknown.
- Projections for the cost of responding to a second wave of Covid, which is difficult to predict but the figures are reviewed and updated constantly.
- The possible use of Reserves in responding to the Covid crisis and managing additional demand on services. The Committee noted that in previous years the Reserves has been balanced or underspent.
- Spend to date against the Emergency Active Travel Fund, the details of which will be circulated to members subsequent to the meeting.
- The Swindon Advertiser interviews in August with Councillors David Renard and Maureen Penny regarding the Emergency Active Travel Fund, which had appeared to contradict each other.

Resolved – (1) That Minute 18 of the Cabinet be noted.

(2) That information requested by members during the course of the Committee's consideration of this item be forwarded to them via the Committee Clerk.

#### *Minute 19. Capital Monitoring Quarter 1 update*

Councillors Renard and Holland responded to questions put by Councillor Jim Grant on the following matters:

- The Capital Financing Requirement (in total) being distinct from actual levels of debt, with the borrowing requirement being £494m and the actual debt being £247m (General Fund) and £104m (Housing Revenue Account).
- How the spend on projects, as set out in the Capital Budget, is presented to Council in February each year for decision, is accessible via the Council's website, and indicates how debt has accrued.
- The reasoning for the allocation of £25,000 for traffic calming measures in Thames Avenue.

Resolved – That Minute 19 of the Cabinet be noted.

#### *Minute 20. Swindon Borough Local Development Scheme Review 2020*

Councillor Gary Sumner (Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport and Planning) responded to questions put by Councillors Emma Bushell and Jane Milner-Barry on the following matters:

- The adequacy of the staffing levels within the planning department and examples of non-essential work streams that are at risk of being minimised as stated in the report. The Committee noted that additional resources have been placed in the planning policy and planning enforcement teams, and that a restructure is planned to move resources into the areas of most need.
- The recent legislation, which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, allowing changes of use within different Use Classes of commercial properties (for example)

without planning consent, as compared to permitted development rights for office conversions which has been in place for some time.

- Proposed changes to Government planning policy (currently out for consultation), some highlights from which include:
  - The possibility of amending permitted development rights to include the necessity to make contributions through the infrastructure levy.
  - Changes to Local Plans and large outline planning consents.
  - The viability of funding schemes in an environment where public money is scarce.
- The possibility of office buildings within Swindon being at risk of demolition where they have been unoccupied for more than six months.
- The potential impact from Government revising the standard methodology used to calculate housing requirements, and the expectation that around 1450 houses per annum may have to be planned for within Swindon as a result.
- The transitional period for Local Authorities at the Regulation 19 stage of the Local Plan Review during which the Local Plan will be used prior to the adoption of any new planning requirements set out by Government.

Resolved – That Minute 20 of the Cabinet be noted.

*Minute 21. School Place Planning Study 2020*

Resolved – That Minute 21 of the Cabinet be noted.

## **18. Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session - Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety**

Councillor Cathy Martyn (Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety) was in attendance and presented to the Committee a report summarising progress and performance in respect of the key objectives of her role, which are to:

- Provide the strategic direction for the management of all aspects of the Council's social housing.
- Provide strategic direction to reduce and prevent homelessness where possible.
- Promote partnership engagement to address rough sleeping.
- Provide strategic leadership to promote safe public areas.
- Set the strategic vision for the Borough's continuing social development.
- To work with other Cabinet Members to Manage Demand within the portfolio.
- Ensure that the Council's agreed priorities within the portfolio are delivered.

The Cabinet Member is responsible for securing the following Vision Pledge:

- Pledge 26: To prevent homelessness where possible using additional measures including the temporary winter housing provision and enabling a day centre to prevent rough sleepers from returning to the streets.

The Cabinet Member also has delegated responsibility for:

- Allocations and Advice Services
- Empty Homes
- Estate and Tenancy Management
- Housing Enabling and Strategic Services



- Homeline Services
- Homelessness
- Housing Right to Buy/Sales Services
- Neighbourhood Wardens
- Private Sector Housing Renovation Grants
- Sheltered Accommodation
- Environmental and Public Protection Services Gypsies, Travellers and Unauthorised Encampments
- Reducing Drugs, Alcohol and Substance misuse
- Control Room Operations
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- Reducing domestic abuse
- Community Safety Partnership
- Licensing
- Trading Standards
- Environmental Health
- Parishes

Councillor Martyn responded to questions put by Councillors Emma Bushell, Paul Dixon, Jim Grant, Jane Milner-Barry, Kevin Parry and the Chair on the following matters:

- The current number of residents on the waiting list for a council property, the details of which are to be circulated to members subsequent to the meeting.
- The impact on demand for social housing as a result of the financial fallout from Covid and the forthcoming end of the moratorium on private sector evictions and whether the Council's development programme of 300 affordable new homes will adequately meet any increased need.
- The expected introduction of Covid Enforcement Marshals and the similar work already being undertaken by Public Health Officers in conjunction with Environmental Health and Police colleagues. The Committee noted that it is unlikely the Marshals will have enforcement powers, that extra funding will not be provided for local authorities to employ them, and that further guidance is awaited from Government.
- The cohort of clients that have been booking and using The Haven via the appointments system, the details of which will be circulated to members of the Committee subsequent to the meeting.
- The predicted number of residents (both private and public sector) who are at risk of homelessness when the Government extension to Section 21 is lifted after 20 September 2020, and what the Council is doing to manage and help those in rent arrears and other financial difficulties.
- The support provided by the Housing Team to those who have recently contacted the Council in relation to their potential eviction, or ongoing problems they are having with paying their rent and requesting additional support. The Committee noted that this includes creating Personal Development Plans, and making sure there is a strong housing supply from private landlords willing to partner with the Council should there be a lack of temporary accommodation once the moratorium is lifted.
- The reduction in the number of complaints received relating to bonfires following the re-opening of the Household Waste Recycling Centre and lockdown easing, with an

appropriate response planned should further lockdown restrictions be imposed and bonfires become an issue again.

- The number of patients being discharged from health and care facilities in to Council-provided supported housing.
- The cohort involved in the Harm Reduction Programme, the details of which will be circulated to members of the Committee subsequent to the meeting.
- Proposals for the St Ives Court site, which is not classed as a priority from a housing improvement point of view, which had previously included £495k allocated for remedial works.
- The restrictions to the services usually supplied by the homelessness voluntary sector as a result of Covid, and the actions taken by the Council to ensure that main operational activities have continued and that any gaps are being identified and filled where possible.
- The covert and non-covert activities undertaken by Licensing Officers during lockdown to monitor premises suspected of breaking the rules, such as providing advice and serving Prohibition Notices, the details of which will be circulated to members of the Committee subsequent to the meeting.
- The criminal activities and public disorder currently being experienced in the Pinehurst and Penhill communities, and the engagement work being undertaken with local Ward Councillors and the Police to address these matters.
- The potential for passive house accreditation at the sites being developed by the Council but which will remain as low carbon projects due to the large difference in building costs, the details of which will be circulated to members of the Committee subsequent to the meeting.
- The Council's plans to achieve its commitment to reach zero carbon by 2030 which include different types of heating systems and internal wall insulation.

Resolved – (1) That Councillor Martyn be thanked for attending the meeting to present her performance report and for her full and open responses to members' questions and observations on the issues raised.

(2) That information requested by members during the course of the Committee's consideration of this item be forwarded to them via the Committee Clerk.

## **19. Work Programme 2020/2021**

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Legal Officer setting out the topics for inclusion in the 2020/2021 Scrutiny Work Programme, as agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020, and updated during the course of the Municipal Year.

## **20. Status of Requests for Action and / or Information**

The Committee received an updated report advising on the status of outstanding issues and member requests for information.

Resolved – That the report on the status of outstanding issues and member requests for information be noted.

## Consideration of Cabinet Decisions

**Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

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Author: Chief Legal Officer

Wards: All Wards

Parishes Affected: All Parish Areas

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### **1. Purpose and Reasons**

- 1.1 To allow the Scrutiny Committee to consider the decisions arising from the meeting of the Cabinet on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference include the review of the Cabinet decision making process and the way in which Cabinet decisions are made. As part of the Scrutiny function the Scrutiny Committee is able to refer decisions back to Cabinet for reconsideration. It may do this once for any individual decision, after which, if there is no agreement, the decision will be referred to the full Council for determination.
- 1.3 The Scrutiny Committee is also able to refer Cabinet decisions to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Review the process of Cabinet decision-making and the decisions made.

### **3. Detail**

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Committee is invited to review the decisions of the Cabinet to be held on the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020. The minutes of the meeting will be forwarded to Members as soon as they become available.

### **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 None.

### **5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management**

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 This report has no financial or procurement implications. Such implications are set out in the original reports previously circulated to all Councillors with the Cabinet Agenda.

## Consideration of Cabinet Decisions

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human Rights considerations have been fully taken into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with convention rights.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 None.

### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 No Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) is required at this stage. Any DIA that is required during review of topics included within the Work Programme will be identified at the appropriate stage.

### Risk Management

- 5.5 No risk management issues have been identified at this stage. Any risk management issues will be identified at the appropriate time when a topic is under review by the Scrutiny Committee and if it makes any recommendations.

## **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 None.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 None.

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Draft minutes of the meeting of Cabinet to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020 (to follow).

## Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session

### Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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Author: Corporate Director of Children Services

Wards: All

Parishes Affected: All

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#### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report sets out key successes and progress improvements against the Portfolio for the Cabinet Member for Children's Services which includes Children's Social Care, Early Intervention and Prevention, Children's Community Health and SEND.
- 1.2 A key purpose of the Scrutiny function is to hold the Cabinet to account and ensure that Council priorities and performance are being delivered. The Scrutiny Committee partly fulfils this requirement through the use of question and answer sessions with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services. The purpose of the Question and Answer session is to ensure that the Cabinet Member provides the Scrutiny Committee with progress and areas of improvement relative to their portfolio responsibilities.
- 1.3 Children's Services early prevention and social care is central to the delivery of the Council's priority to protect vulnerable children and young people. The service also contributes significantly to the delivery of the Council pledges 20, 21 and 22 which focus on increasing the capacity of local foster provision, safeguarding children and young people and the provision of effective early help intervention including through working within the Troubled Families Programme.

#### 2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Take note of and scrutinise the report by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services Early Help, Social Care and Community Health Services; to put appropriate questions to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and to decide if any further action is required.

#### 3. Detail

Innovative Projects

- 3.1 **Introduction of the Family Safeguarding Model:** Swindon was one of 18 Local authorities to have been successful in a bid to Department for Education for innovation funding totalling £85m across the whole programme. The Swindon Programme goes live in April 2022. The Family Safeguarding Model primarily requires a redesign of services

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Jo Ash, [jash@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:jash@swindon.gov.uk).

## Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session

### Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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for children in need and children in need of protection. This is achieved by bringing together children's social workers with specialists in adult mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse. Through this integrated support and the use of motivational interviewing techniques, it is expected to reduce the numbers of children coming into care and costs across public services. Work is currently in place to establish the steering group and project team so the service is placed to lead on this change throughout 2021. The Family Safeguarding Model forms part of the Strengths Based Working cross cutting theme for the Council. The cross cutting themes of Transitions and Placed Based Working will also support the delivery of the Family Safeguarding Model and provide the foundations for joined up council approaches to service delivery going forwards.

- 3.2 **Social Workers in School Project (SWIS):** Swindon has been successful in the bid for the Social Workers in School Project and will receive £455,000 in funding. The pilot project will involve 8 social workers and team manager who will be based in schools until July 2021 in order to strengthen inter-agency working between schools and social care. The recruitment has attracted 4 new permanent social workers to Swindon. Further information can be accessed here: [Social Workers in Schools Project](#)

What has gone well?

- 3.3 **Successful commissioning of short breaks Hop Skip and Jump Provision:** Hop Skip and Jump had been a provider of short break social activities in Swindon for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities for 9 years until the Local Authority were given notice that it was going into administration in February 2020. The Council took swift action and commissioned an alternative provider. The Brunel MAT in partnership with the Uplands Enterprise Trust (UET) were offered the contract in July 2020. Collaborative working during July enabled the continued provision of a range of activities at alternative venues over the summer holidays. The service offers a variety of activities with an emphasis on fun, self-development and discovery. The initial feedback from children, young people and their families has been overwhelmingly positive.
- 3.4 **Early Help Hub management of increased demand:** The number of referrals to Early Help has increased during the pandemic and June and July were well above average. This is directly linked to lower level domestic abuse referrals to MASH that do not meet the threshold for social work intervention, but where the family would benefit from an Early Help Offer. The timeliness of response was good, with 95.6% opened within 2 working days of MASH triage and 100% had an outcome or management review within 5 working days. The performance is positive and provides assurance that responsiveness to families is timely in order to engage them in early help services at the right time.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Jo Ash, [jash@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:jash@swindon.gov.uk).

## Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session

### Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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- 3.5 **Effective multi agency working within localities:** There has been an increase in the number of referrals into MASH for children and young people who may be being criminally exploited in the last 12 months. This is in part due to raised awareness of the issue and therefore more families and professionals seeking help and support. It is also linked to joint working with Wiltshire Police who are undertaking operations to ensure early identification of children. This includes the SWIFT (Swindon and Wiltshire intervention for families to thrive), early intervention team from Wiltshire Police. The service has implemented reporting systems to enable activity monitoring. The appointment of a police child criminal exploitation officer has strengthened relationships and joined-up working with social work teams. There has been specific training delivered to partner agencies to raise awareness of exploitation to improve knowledge about County Lines, child criminal exploitation, radicalisation, trafficking and modern day slavery. This has enabled professionals and partner agencies to spot the signs earlier and to make a timely referral in to MASH. There are regular meetings that involve key professionals from across agencies, this includes Parish Councillors to provide operational oversight of criminal exploitation locally.
- 3.6 Young people involved in peer related criminal activity are being referred to the DIVERT project funded by the Swindon Community Safety Partnership, a programme aimed at those at risk of criminal exploitation. The programme provides mentoring opportunities whilst undertaking outdoor diversionary activities, designed to inspire and give confidence.
- 3.7 **Implementation of Care Director Social Care Case Management System:** Care Director was implemented on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2020. There were no delays to the project as a result of COVID 19 and staff were supported with team training sessions and E learning to facilitate familiarisation with the system. The system has included a re-design of forms and functionality and was developed in collaboration with practice experts to ensure it assists staff in frontline service delivery and management oversight of cases to monitor progress and outcomes for families worked with.
- 3.8 **Recruitment and Retention of the Workforce:** The service has a current establishment of 124.7 qualified Social Worker posts. The agency profile is a significant challenge and currently represents about a third of our case-holding social work workforce. This is a significant reduction over the last 18 months when nearly two-thirds of our social workers were agency, this is a significant decrease and is linked to 17 new Assessed and Supported First Year in Practice (AYSE), Social Workers starting in the service as well as securing more permanent experienced Social Workers. The service is acutely aware of the impact of the turnover of staff on changes of Social Worker for children, and managers work to mitigate the impact of this wherever possible. There are a number of initiatives in progress to further improve recruitment and retention of permanent staff.
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Jo Ash,  
jash@swindon.gov.uk.

# Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session

## Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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A "Temp to Perm" strategy, and efforts to support more locums to take up permanent positions has continued. Investment in staff early in their career, for example student placements, Step-Up to Social Work and Frontline students is in place.

- 3.9 The service had recruitment stalls two recruitment fairs during the last 12 months. These events enabled the promotion of the Swindon offer to Social Workers at all levels of experience from students to experienced Social Workers and managers. It was also an arena to raise awareness of Swindon's rating as a good authority and to inform of the developments underway to support social work including the Social Work and Leadership Academy which was launched in November 2019. Alongside these recruitment events there remains a rolling externally advertised programme with a monthly schedule of interviewing in place to ensure applications are considered in a timely manner. There has been an internal drive for permanent staff to take the opportunity to apply for promotional posts and 13 staff were successful to June 2020. This has assisted with the retention of permanent staff. A programme of overseas recruitment has taken place with the support of an agency and in July 2020, 6 workers have been offered posts. Children's Services managers have been actively involved in the wider corporate work reviewing the new work-based apprenticeship programme, and with the Open University have implemented a Social Work Apprentice programme, enabling 3 existing staff to train 'on the job' to qualify as a Social Worker commencing in February 2020.
- 3.10 **Improvements to Corporate Parenting Board (CPB):** The Lead Member, who chairs the CPB, has increased Councillor Membership to ensure resilience and promote meaningful Corporate Parenting. The Chief Executive joined the CPB in March 2020, demonstrating her commitment to Corporate Parenting. Further evidence of this is reflected in the resounding endorsement of the Council decision to amend the Council's Diversity Impact Assessment process in favour of children looked after and care leavers having protected characteristics. The Local Government Association began bespoke work with the Corporate Parenting Board in February 2020, building on the 2019 training programme. Councillors have attended two sessions to support the delivery of their Corporate Parenting role. These sessions have challenged Elected Members to be curious, and have promoted discussion and action. The CPB agenda now includes themes to give Members the opportunity to interrogate, challenge and determine priorities. The themes have included Mental and Emotional Health of Care Leavers, Educational attainment and Participation. A revised dataset to inform performance monitoring has been well-received by the Corporate Parenting Board. This has enabled better challenge and an increased understanding of the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Profile.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Jo Ash, [jash@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:jash@swindon.gov.uk).



# Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session

## Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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### Issues identified for improvement over the last 12 months and Progress to date

- 3.11 **Local Placement Sufficiency and more children being placed within 20 miles of home:**  
The progress against the implementation of the Sufficiency Strategy is demonstrating impact with increased placements being made locally for children. At the end of August 2020, 27% of children looked after were placed more than 20 miles from home which is an improvement from 34% in July 2019. Increasingly placements are made locally within Swindon whenever that is in the best interests of the child. There has been a focussed recruitment campaign for local authority foster carers and 13 are currently in the assessment process. There is a dedicated task group focusing on the placement demand and financial forecasting aspects for children looked after.
- 3.12 **YOT (Youth Offending Team):** During 2019/2020 the Youth Offending Team (YOT) were subject to both a Peer Review by Essex in November 2019 and also a comprehensive audit programme that provided a quality assurance benchmark. More recently this year a full self-assessment has also been undertaken in relation to the National Standards that provide the framework for the delivery of YOT's. Progress has been made in staffing with locum management stability over the last ten months and the appointment to a number of posts including the Volunteer Coordinator and Reparation Worker. Operational delivery has improved in relation to pre and post court work with an expansion of the staff undertaking pre-sentence reports, an expansion in the role of the YOT education welfare officer, improved risk assessment, more staff trained in the use of the Child View recording system, a new quality assurance process and improved performance data. Work has also taken place to improve the attendance of professionals at the Youth Restorative Intervention Panel focusing on out of court disposal. Moving forward work will continue in relation to involving young people and families in this panel process, along with victims.
- 3.13 **SEND Written Statement of Action (WSOA) Progress:** In November 2018 Ofsted and CQC Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Swindon to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the special educational needs and disability (SEND) reforms. The inspection raised a number of strengths but also concerns about the effectiveness of the local area. These are being addressed and delivered through a Written Statement of Action [WSOA] which sets out how the local area will tackle the areas of significant weakness against 8 priority areas over 18 months.
- 3.14 Significant progress has been seen in a number of areas including a strengthened position regarding co-production with our parent carer forum Swindon SEND Families Voice, which has a clear governance model. The new co-produced Local Offer has been well received and increased awareness. Capacity has also been increased with a

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Jo Ash,  
jash@swindon.gov.uk.

# Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session

## Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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Designated Medical and Clinical officer. The quality of Education, Health and Care Plans has improved and is monitored with a Quality Assurance Framework. There is continued focus on the priorities related to persistent absence and exclusion, assessments and waiting times. There are a range of methods to measure impact including a Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement Board, use of benchmarking data, surveys, focus groups, compliments and complaints. Gathering parental and child voice is key to understanding impact of services. A two week virtual Local Offer Roadshow is being held between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> October and feedback from this will be valuable in gaining additional intelligence. Further focus groups are planned for the rest of the year.

- 3.15 **Engagement and Participation of Children and Young People:** The voices of children and young people are central to outcome focussed practice. The service has refreshed Practice Standards, guidance and workforce development make it clear the child's voice must be captured and recorded. Quality assurance activity demonstrates improving consistency of recorded practice in relation to capturing and responding to the child's perspective and there are some good examples of this. The Challenge and Participation team has developed a number of work strands including participation champions. The Children in Care Council (CiC), has been strengthened and consists of approximately 13 young people and new members continued to join in the lockdown period. The CiC Council has developed their own scrutiny of how the Corporate Parenting Board develops the Pledges. Young people have produced a video where the Lead Member for Children's Services has been challenged on a number of issues important to them.
- 3.16 **Emotional Health and Well-being of Young People – introduction of mental health in schools programme:** The Wellbeing for education grant (£31,000) for Swindon is being implemented by working with the Barnardo's Mental Health in Schools Trail Blazer. Plans are in place for implementation during September – December 2020. Local experts have received national training and are now adjusting the materials for Swindon delivery. This will provide schools with support to manage children's well-being during their return to school. The programme of support will run until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

#### 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options in relation to this report.

#### 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

##### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The Children, Families and Community Health net budget for 2020/21 is £42.2m. The High Needs block DSG net budget for 2020/21 is £35.5m.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Jo Ash,  
jash@swindon.gov.uk.

## Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session

### Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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- 5.2 The Head of Finance for Children Services has been consulted, in relation to this report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.3 There are no legal and human rights implications associated with this report. Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) requires every Local Authority to establish an overview and scrutiny function to hold the Executive to account, undertake policy development and review, monitor, and improve performance.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.4 There are no other direct implications arising from this report. Any further implications will be identified when a topic is reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee and in any recommendation made by the Scrutiny Committee.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 No Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) is required at this stage as this report proposes no changes to services. Any DIA that is required during review of topics included within the work programme will be identified at the appropriate stage.

Risk Management

- 5.6 No risk management issues have been identified at this stage. Any risk management issues will be identified at the appropriate time when a topic is under review by the Scrutiny Committee and if it makes any recommendations.

## 6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets (s151 officer) and Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

## 7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

## 8. Appendices

- 8.1 None.

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## Work Programme 2020/2021

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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Author: Chief Legal Officer

Wards: All Wards

Parishes Affected: All Parish Areas

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### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report sets out details of the topics for the Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2020/2021, as agreed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and revised at subsequent meetings throughout the year.
- 1.2 The Work Programme details the various topics and issues that each Committee intends to look into during the coming year with the aim of producing evidence based recommendations intended to provide service improvements for Cabinet and external agencies / bodies to consider.
- 1.3 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to have a Work Programme that details the activities that it will be undertaking during the Municipal Year.

### 2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the approved Work Programme for the Scrutiny Committee for the 2020/2021 Municipal Year.

### 3. Detail

The Work Programme

- 3.1 Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to have a Work Programme that details the activities that it will be undertaking during the Municipal Year.
- 3.2 Under the Council's Constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Committees are required to agree a Work Programme at the start of the Municipal Year outlining their priorities and likely outcomes of considering these issues. This task was completed by this Committee at its first meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- 3.3 The Work Programme is developed taking into account:
  - 3.3.1 Corporate priorities and objectives, including the Cabinet Forward Plan.
  - 3.3.2 Partnership strategic priorities and objectives.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, [vyull@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:vyull@swindon.gov.uk).

# Work Programme 2020/2021

## Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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- 3.3.3 The interests and concerns of Members, Council officers, members of the public, and other stakeholders such as community and voluntary groups and local businesses.
  - 3.4 Committees are encouraged to review the Work Programme on a regular basis to ensure it remains relevant and to prioritise the workload of the Committee.
  - 3.5 Members are reminded that the Work Programme must also take into account:
    - 3.5.1 The workload of the Committee and of individual members.
    - 3.5.2 The capacity of officers to support a review.
    - 3.5.3 The resource implications of carrying out a review.
    - 3.5.4 The timescales for a review.
    - 3.5.5 The most appropriate method of carrying out a review e.g. Committee meeting, Task Group, Member Champion review.

### Developing the Work Programme – The Executive

- 3.6 It is important that Overview and Scrutiny adds value to the work of the Council and its partner agencies, and produces tangible outcomes for local people that result in real service improvements. Selecting the right topics is crucial to ensure that scrutiny will be effective.
- 3.7 Members of the Scrutiny Committee are encouraged to work with Cabinet in the best interests of the Borough and to take into account the priorities and suggestions of Cabinet as detailed in the Cabinet Work Programme and Forward plan, attached at Appendix 2, when considering the contents for the Work Programme.
- 3.8 In addition, Members attention is drawn to the Scrutiny Process Flowchart, attached at Appendix 3, which is aimed at assisting Members in identifying how they could influence policy development.

### Standard Work Programme Items

- 3.9 In addition to selecting various topics and issues for inclusion in the Work Programme, the Scrutiny Committee has a number of additional items that it has incorporated into its Work Programme, such as:
  - 3.9.1 Cabinet Member Question and Answer Sessions. Each Cabinet Member will be expected to appear before the Scrutiny Committee to answer questions relating to their portfolio responsibilities, performance and future plans.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, [vyull@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:vyull@swindon.gov.uk).

# Work Programme 2020/2021

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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- 3.9.2 Review of Cabinet Decisions. The Scrutiny Committee will be required to review the decisions taken by Cabinet.
- 3.9.3 Leader's Report. The Scrutiny Committee will receive an annual presentation and a six monthly update from the Leader of the Council on the administrations priorities for the year and performance.

## 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Committee can choose not to have a detailed Work Programme although it is recommended that it is best practice to do so.

## 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

### Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial or procurement implications arising as a result of this report. Any expenditure arising as a result of an item on the Committee's Work Programme will be met by the Overview and Scrutiny Support budget, subject to the approval of the Committee.

### Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Section 21 of the Local Government Act requires every local authority to establish an overview and scrutiny function to hold the Executive to account, undertake policy development and review, monitor and improve performance.

### All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 There are no other direct implications arising as a result of this report. Any further implications will be identified when a topic is reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee and in any recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee.

### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 No Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) is required at this stage. Any DIA that is required during review of topics included within the Work Programme will be identified at the appropriate stage.

### Risk Management

- 5.5 No risk management issues have been identified at this stage. Any risk management issues will be identified at the appropriate time when a topic is under review by the Scrutiny Committee and if it makes any recommendations.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, [vyull@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:vyull@swindon.gov.uk).

## **Work Programme 2020/2021**

**Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

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**6. Consultees**

6.1 None.

**7. Background Papers**

7.1 None.

**8. Appendices**

8.1 Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2020/2021.

8.2 Appendix 2 – Current Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan.

8.3 Appendix 3 – Scrutiny Process Flowchart.



## **Scrutiny Committee**

### **Work Programme 2020-2021**

#### **Terms of Reference of the Committee**

- To meet at regular intervals to review the policies, process and implications of Cabinet, Cabinet Member and Officer decision making, and the way in which Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions are made;
- To consider requests for “Call-in” as defined in the Council’s “Call-in” Procedure;
- To refer decisions back to Cabinet (or the decision maker) for reconsideration. It may do this once for any individual decision, after which if there is no agreement the decision will be referred to the full Council for determination;
- To refer Cabinet and Cabinet Member decisions to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for investigation without delaying the implementation of the decision concerned;
- To receive a report by the Leader of the Council at its first meeting after each Annual Council Meeting (or at such a meeting as is agreed by the Chair of the Committee and the Leader of the Council) on the service issues for the year ahead, the Leader of the Council’s priorities for the coming year, and on the Council’s performance in the previous year;
- To oversee the arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny within the Council, including determining (i) where matters fall within the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which of those Committees will assume responsibility for any particular issue, (ii) a system to ensure that referrals from Committees to the Cabinet, either by way of report or for reconsideration, are managed efficiently and do not exceed any limits set out in the Council’s Constitution, and (iii) in the event of reports to the Cabinet exceeding any limits in the Constitution, or if the volume of such reports creates difficulty for the management of Cabinet business or jeopardises the efficient running of Council business, at the request of the Cabinet to make decisions about the priority of referrals made;
- To carry out any investigation into the business and functions of the Council and to call in any Cabinet Member or senior officer of the Council so that they can offer advice, support or answer any question that will assist the Committee in carrying out its functions; and
- To carry out an external scrutiny function, particularly in relation to corporate issues and issues falling into the remit of a number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

To fulfil all the functions of an overview and scrutiny committee as they relate to –

- The review, scrutiny and development of policy recommendations,
- The management of performance,
- The monitoring of progress towards delivering corporate priorities,
- The formulation of advice for the Cabinet, Council and other partners and stakeholders, and
- Strategies to reduce or prevent Crime and Disorder.

To have specific responsibility (but not limited to)

- Good governance.
- The Budget Scrutiny function.

#### **Review of the Work Programme**

The work programme will be reviewed at every meeting of the Scrutiny Committee to ensure that it remains relevant, to ensure that Members and Officers have sufficient capacity to deliver the work programme and to include any additional items on the work programme, if appropriate.

To assist members in developing the Committee's work programme, a copy of the current Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan is attached at Appendix 2 to the covering report.

#### Contact details

Committee Officer: Vicki Yull

Email: [vyull@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:vyull@swindon.gov.uk)

Tel: 07980 752043

<b>7<sup>th</sup> July 2020</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Leader of the Council update	To receive a half yearly update from the Leader of the Council on the performance of the Council, to receive details of any major issues or problem areas and to review progress against priorities set out in annual presentation.	Councillor David Renard
Review of Cabinet Decisions	To receive the decisions taken and the process taken in making those decisions of Cabinet.	Cabinet
Work Programme 2020/21	To discuss and agree a rolling work programme for the 2020/21 Municipal Year and review the Overview Task Groups	n/a

<b>10<sup>th</sup> August 2020</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	To review the portfolio and performance of Commercialisation, Education and Skills.	Councillor Russell Holland

<b>14<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Review of Cabinet Decisions	To receive the decisions taken and the process taken in making those decisions of Cabinet.	Cabinet
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety	To review the portfolio and performance of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety.	Councillor Cathy Martyn

<b>26<sup>th</sup> October 2020</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Review of Cabinet Decisions	To receive the decisions taken and the process taken in making those decisions of Cabinet.	Cabinet
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Children's Services	To review the portfolio and performance of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.	Councillor Mary Martin

<b>9<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>

<b>9<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b>		
Review of the 2019/20 Municipal Year	To receive the Scrutiny Committee Annual Report.	Chief Legal Officer
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Organisational Excellence	To review the portfolio and performance of the Cabinet Member for Organisational Excellence.	Councillor Rob Jandy

<b>7<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Leader of the Council update	To receive a half yearly update from the Leader of the Council on the performance of the Council, to receive details of any major issues or problem areas and to review progress against priorities set out in annual presentation.	Councillor David Renard
Review of Cabinet Decisions	To receive the decisions taken and the process taken in making those decisions of Cabinet.	Cabinet

<b>11<sup>th</sup> January 2021</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Budget Scrutiny	To review the Budget proposals for 2021-2022.	Councillor Russell Holland
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport & Planning	To review the portfolio and performance of the Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport & Planning.	Councillor Gary Sumner

<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2021</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Review of Cabinet Decisions	To receive the decisions taken and the process taken in making those decisions of Cabinet.	Cabinet
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Waste Services	To review the portfolio and performance of the Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Waste Services.	Councillor Maureen Penny

<b>29<sup>th</sup> March 2021</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Review of Cabinet Decisions	To receive the decisions taken and the process taken in making those decisions of Cabinet.	Cabinet
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Adults and Health	To review the portfolio and performance of the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health.	Councillor Brian Ford

<b>26<sup>th</sup> April 2021</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Culture and Heritage	To review the portfolio and performance of the Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Culture and Heritage.	Councillor Dale Heenan

<b>26<sup>th</sup> April 2021</b>		
Cabinet Member Q&A – Cabinet Member for Climate Change	To review the portfolio and performance of the Cabinet Member for Climate Change	Councillor Keith Williams

<b>Other issues for Scrutiny Committee to consider</b>		
<b>Item</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Witnesses</b>
Averies Task Group Final Report	To receive the final report of the Task Group and make appropriate recommendations to the Cabinet and Council.	Task Group Members
Review of Scrutiny Process	To review the scrutiny procedures at Swindon Borough Council.	Task Group Members
Town Centre Task Group	To reviewing its social importance to the town as a whole, what is needed socially to increase footfall and open new businesses, and to define an overview of the Town Centre as a concept.	Task Group Members

## CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

## Proposed AGENDA ITEMS/DELEGATED DECISIONS

If you wish to make your views known on any matter set out in this work-plan, please contact the relevant Cabinet Member or the officer identified.

Councillor:	Portfolio:
David Renard	Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet
Russell Holland	Deputy Leader of the Council and Vice-Chair of Cabinet and Cabinet Member for Finance, Education, and Skills
Oliver Donachie	Cabinet Member for Economy and Place
Brian Ford	Cabinet Member for Adults and Health
Dale Heenan	Cabinet Member for the Town Centre
Mary Martin	Cabinet Member for Children' Services
Cathy Martyn	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety
Maureen Penny	Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment
Gary Sumner	Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning
Keith Williams	Cabinet Member for Corporate and Organisational Excellence

Senior Committee Clerk: Douglas Campbell, [CommitteeServices@Swindon.gov.uk](mailto:CommitteeServices@Swindon.gov.uk)

## Cabinet Member Delegated Decisions October2020

Subject	Portfolio Holder / Cabinet Member	Lead Director
Tenant Academy-incentive scheme	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety	Director of Housing
Covid-19 Response - Urgent Decision-Test & Trace Support Payments	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health	Director of Public Health Head of Revenues and Benefits

## Cabinet Meeting Date - 21st October 2020

Subject	Portfolio Holder / Cabinet Member	Lead Director
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Budget Management Update (October)	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets
Annual Review of Local Ombudsman Complaints	Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet	Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer)  Head of Customer Services, Registrars and Bereavements
Climate Change Strategy	Cabinet Member for Climate Change	Director of Economy, Growth and Place
Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Plan	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety	Director of Housing  Karl Read
The Future of Swindon's Cultural Offer	Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Culture and Heritage	Head of Town Centre Development

Cabinet Meeting Date - 2nd December 2020

Subject	Portfolio Holder / Cabinet Member	Lead Director
Budget Management Update (December)	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets
Capital Monitoring Quarter 2 Update	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets
Treasury Management - mid-year update report	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets

	Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	
Swindon Borough Council Covid-19 Recovery update	Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet	Chief Executive

Cabinet Meeting Date - 3rd February 2021

Subject	Portfolio Holder / Cabinet Member	Lead Director
Budget Management Update (February)	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets
New Capital Programme, including capital management strategy	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets
Treasury management strategy statement	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets

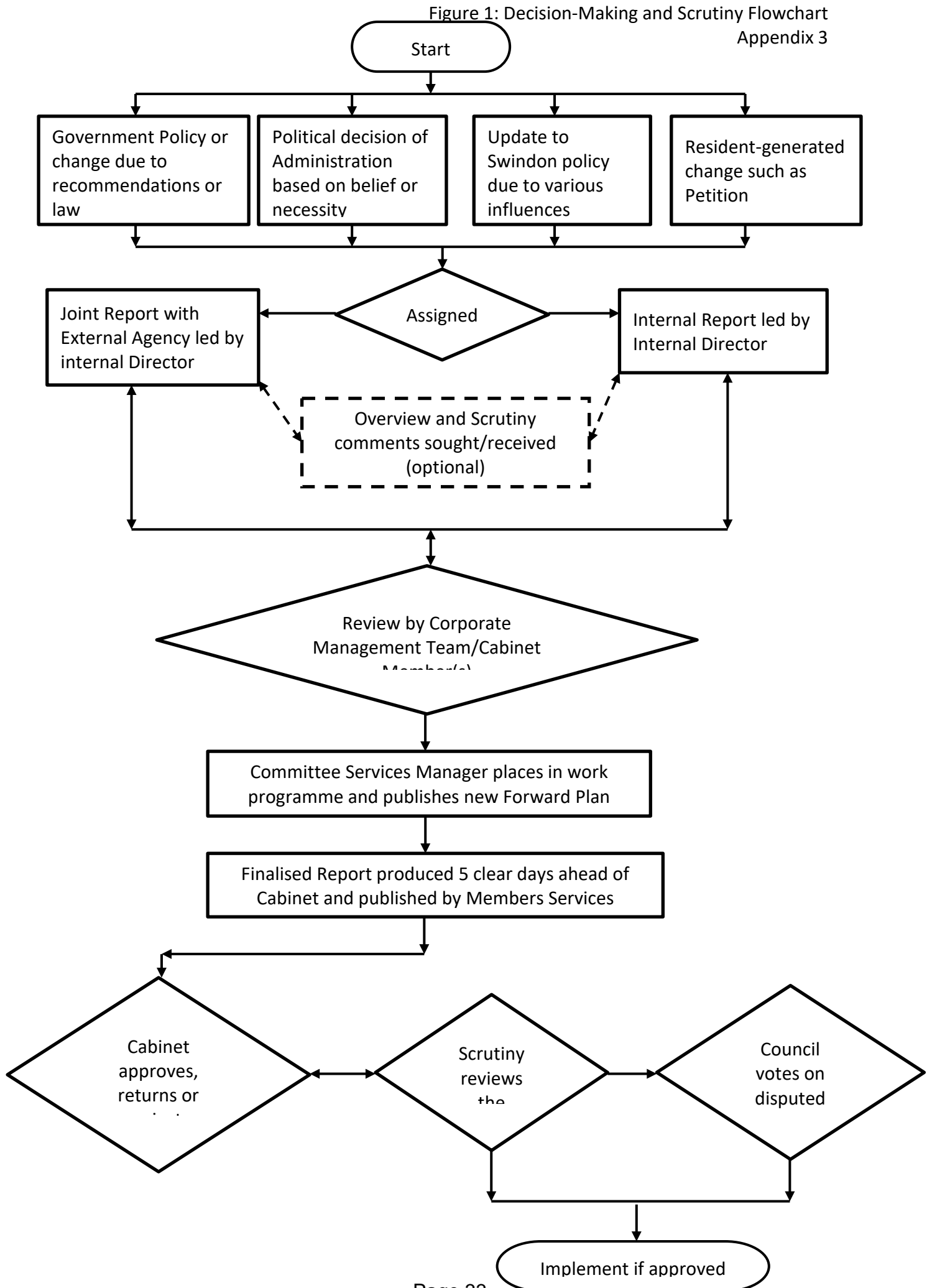
Cabinet Meeting Date - 24th March 2021

Subject	Portfolio Holder / Cabinet Member	Lead Director
Budget Management Update (March)	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets
Capital Monitoring Quarter 3 Update	Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for	Corporate Director of Finance and Assets

	Commercialisation, Education and Skills	
Public Open Space and Parish Asset Transfers - Response to Council motion	Leader of the Council	Head of Property Assets



Figure 1: Decision-Making and Scrutiny Flowchart  
Appendix 3



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## Status of requests for action and / or information

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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Author: Chief Legal Officer

Wards: All Wards

Parishes Affected: All Parish Areas

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### 1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the status of requests for action to be taken or information to be provided.

### 2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report.
- 2.2 Consider the responses provided by officers, and actions taken in relation to each issue, and determine if any further action is required.
- 2.3 Agree that, subject to the Committee's requests for further action to be taken, issues shown as being completed be removed from the status report.

### 3. Detail

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Committee has requested that a report be submitted to each meeting on the status of its earlier requests for action to be taken or information to be provided, allowing members to consider if any further action is required.

### 4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

### 5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 This report has no financial or procurement implications.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 Legal and Human Rights considerations have been fully taken into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with convention rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 None.

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Vicki Yull, 07980 752043, vyull@swindon.gov.uk.

## Status of requests for action and / or information

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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### Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 No Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) is required at this stage. Any DIA that is required during review of topics included within the Work Programme will be identified at the appropriate stage.

### Risk Management

- 5.5 No risk management issues have been identified at this stage. Any risk management issues will be identified at the appropriate time when a topic is under review by the Scrutiny Committee and if it makes any recommendations.

## **6. Consultees**

- 6.1 None.

## **7. Background Papers**

- 7.1 The Minutes of previous meetings of the Committee.

## **8. Appendices**

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Schedule of the status of requests for action to be taken or information to be provided.

<b>SUMMARY OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS REQUIRING A WRITTEN RESPONSE AND MEMBER REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>		
<b>Minute No. 17</b>	<b>Consideration of Cabinet Decisions</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
To provide the details of the letter challenging the Centre For Cities report regarding air quality in Swindon.	<p>Content of the letter sent to the Centre for Cities Director by the Leader of the Council in January 2020:</p> <p>Dear Jack,</p> <p>I write further to the release of your recent report 'Cities Outlook 2020'.</p> <p>I share your concerns, both for air quality in general across the UK, and specifically, of course, for its impacts on Swindon residents. I note that the report estimates that Swindon residents may suffer proportionately more in this area than some of our regional neighbours further South West, for instance.</p> <p>Material published by the UK Air Quality Expert Group in, 2012 and 2013 shows that, due to the distances travelled by particulate matter, a large fraction of PM2.5 in any one place is from far outside that area, and that this is particularly so the further East towards London one travels. Swindon is geographically located within the 'Greater South East' (even though it is administratively placed in the South West region) that suffers disproportionately from Particulate Matter emissions from London and Europe. In that context, the stated results are not, unfortunately, that surprising.</p> <p>Your report correctly identifies that PM2.5 is not primarily a locally generated issue, but I do not feel the regional and global influence was sufficiently highlighted in the report or the headlines around its release.</p> <p>I also have concerns that the inherent uncertainty in the models used to produce these figures was not sufficiently highlighted. For instance: the Public Health England paper titled 'Estimating Local Mortality Burdens associated with Particulate Air Pollution' in 2014, from which I believe these figures are principally derived, states in its abstract that the inherent uncertainty in the model is that '...actual burdens.....could range from approximately one-sixth to about double these figures'.</p> <p>We have some experience of the uncertainty inherent in modelled data, as we have periodically measured particulate matter in areas of the Borough where we expected to find relatively high levels (busy roadside). During the periods</p>	<b>Completed</b>

**SUMMARY OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS REQUIRING A WRITTEN RESPONSE  
AND MEMBER REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION  
14<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

	<p>measured, we found in fact that measured particulate matter values were lower than the modelled background figures used to inform these published figures. Notwithstanding the inevitable uncertainty of even direct measurement devices, this gives us pause for thought on figures derived from models. The devices that we employed gave comparable results to identical externally sourced equipment used during a waste fire episode in the Borough, when they were used side by side at that time, and were calibrated by an accredited laboratory. As you would imagine, we discussed these results with DEFRA, who were unable to explain them and raised no concerns on PM in Swindon.</p> <p>My concern is that residents of boroughs identified as having relatively higher Attributable Fraction and Attributable Deaths than other boroughs will be extremely concerned at these figures; which are subject to substantial potential uncertainty, and where the causative issues are not under significant local control.</p> <p>I support the Centre for Cities' conclusions with regard to actions that will be useful in tackling this issue, all of which are national and international in scope, of course.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Those cities with the poorest air quality being empowered or compelled to set up low emission zones.</li> <li>· Tighter emission standards for solid fuel burning appliances.</li> <li>· Restricting the sale of the most polluting fuels.</li> <li>· Raising public awareness.</li> <li>· More powers and resources to help clean the air.</li> <li>· A focus on trans-boundary pollution.</li> </ul> <p>It is clear that fine particulate matter is a regional, national, &amp; international issue and, if it is to be solved, must be solved predominantly through action at those levels. For Swindon's part, we have identified, and are tackling, our only Air Quality Management Area, and we wait with anticipation for the new Environment Act, which may give us additional powers in this area. We are also proud of our record on renewable energy and energy storage, which helps to displace power generation elsewhere which may introduce particulate matter to the atmosphere.</p> <p>Yours sincerely, Cllr David Renard</p>	
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<b>SUMMARY OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS REQUIRING A WRITTEN RESPONSE AND MEMBER REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>		
	Leader, Swindon Borough Council	
To provide details of how much has been spent from the Emergency Active Travel Fund	<p>The response is as follows:</p> <p>The whole of the round 1 grant of £214,500 is committed, and of this total £18,739 of payments have been made to date.</p>	<b>Completed</b>
<b>Minute No. 18</b>	<b>Cabinet Member Q&amp;A – Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
To provide information on the number of people currently on the waiting list for a council house.	<p>The response is as follows:</p> <p>There were 4519 households on the Housing Waiting List as at week commencing 21 Sept 2020.</p>	<b>Completed</b>
To provide information on the number of different clients that have used The Haven over the last month.	<p>The response is as follows:</p> <p>30 different clients have benefitted from visiting the Haven in the first 4 weeks of reopening, this amounted to 70 individual sessions.</p>	<b>Completed</b>
To provide information on whether the 38 people currently in the Harm Reduction Programme are long term participants (in terms of assessing how effective it has been at enabling people to move on and manage their condition).	<p>The response is as follows:</p> <p>The 38 people who were noted in the report have been clients of Swindon Borough Council's rough sleeper coordination team, supported typically by Threshold Housing Ltd. Some of them will have been engaged with Turning Point, either in structured treatment, or through the engagement and prevention team.</p> <p>During lockdown a rough sleeper coordination meeting was set up to ensure that interventions were, as best as possible coordinated and this led to a significant number being housed as part of the government's Everyone In scheme.</p> <p>By the mid-May ten people had been permanently housed under the project, with accommodation identified for another 16. Eight individuals did not</p>	<b>Completed</b>

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	have access to public funds but the team was working with other providers to house them. Where necessary, people who had treatment started while in the Great Western Hotel, have been maintained.	
To provide information on the number of businesses that broke lockdown rules.	<p>The response is as follows:</p> <p><u>Licensed Premises and Events</u></p> <p>2 Licensing Officers and the Licensing Manager have worked 6 consecutive weekends from 4 July. Inspections and visits are ongoing, alongside the certification at the football ground which may welcome very limited number of fans back in some capacity in October, though guidance and advice on this matter is under constant review.</p> <p>4th July – 22 premises \ events \ activities inspected  5th July – 1 specific venue visited following complaints  11th July – 14 premises visited  17th July – 3 premises \ events visited  22nd July – Single outdoor event visited  25th July – 5 premises \ events visited  During August 2020 – 4 premises visited, plus all venues along one street in Swindon Town Centre  5 September 2020 – 10 premises visited  Since 5 September – 1 event visited (twice)</p> <p>These events have taken place following advice from the Event Safety Advisory Group which includes the Police, Fire, Ambulance, Public Health, Environmental Health, Highways, Emergency Planning and is chaired by Licensing.</p> <p>None of the licensed events or outlets visited have been closed down, though 1 voluntarily closed at start of reopening to resolve social distancing issues but are now compliant. One premises is programme for a licence review after breaking Covid regulations during Lockdown. All verbal advice which has been checked has been adhered to, though one ongoing complaint at a licensed premises is being dealt with.</p> <p><u>Other premises</u></p>	<b>Completed</b>



<b>SUMMARY OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS REQUIRING A WRITTEN RESPONSE AND MEMBER REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020</b>		
	<p>The Public Protection team has investigated the 101 complaints that we have received since the start of the pandemic, both covertly and overtly. Of these, 29 businesses given words of advice or warnings and 3 Prohibition Notices have been served on businesses operating unlawfully in contravention of Covid Regulations.</p> <p>Any amendments to operating hours for licensed premises and businesses that may be announced over the next few weeks or months will also have to be enforced, and this will be prioritised on a risk and impact basis.</p>	
To provide information on the difference in costs between building a low carbon house and a passive house.	<p>The response is as follows:</p> <p>Delivering Low Carbon is estimated at an additional £5k capital per unit based on recent specifications. Delivering Zero Carbon is estimated at an additional £12k capital per unit. These costs will vary depending on site specific requirements. Low carbon is a fabric first approach increasing insulation with improvements to heating and ventilation. Passive house reduces the building's ecological footprint. It results in ultra-low energy buildings that require little energy for space heating or cooling.</p>	<b>Completed</b>

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