

Swindon Borough Council

Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 12 February 2020

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices

At 6.00 p.m.

Conservative Councillors

Emma Faramarzi (Chair)
Nick Burns-Howell
Jenny Jefferies
Roger Smith
Rahul Tarar

Labour Councillors

Mark Dempsey
Paul Dixon
James Robbins
Imtiyaz Shaikh

Committee Officer: Shaun Banks (07980752047) sbanks@swindon.gov.uk

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

Access Arrangements - The venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you have any special requirements to enable you to attend the meeting or 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.

AGENDA

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. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

4. Minutes (Pages 3 - 6)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 6th November 2019.

5. Business Engagement

(Oral Presentation by Mr Les Durrant DPDS and the Swindon Chamber of Commerce)

6. Honda Task Group Update

(Oral Report)

7. Mentorships and Start-Up Support

8. North Star Development (Pages 7 - 10)

(A copy of a report considered by the Council's Scrutiny Committee on 9th December 2019 is attached for Members' information.)

9. Work Programme (Pages 11 - 18)

Date of Despatch: 04 February 2020

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 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.

Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Director of Law and Democratic Services, 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" available on the Council's Website.

(<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sched=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

GROWING THE ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2019

PRESENT:- Councillors Emma Faramarzi (Chair), Mark Dempsey, Jenny Jefferies, James Robbins, Imtiyaz Shaikh and Rahul Tarar

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nick Burns-Howell, Paul Dixon and Roger Smith.

16. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

17. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

18. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2019, be confirmed and signed.

19. Business Engagement

The Chair welcomed Mr James Lockhart a partner at Whitmarsh Lockhart, Chartered Surveyors and Commercial Property Agents, who had agreed to attend the Committee to provide some insight to the business environment in Swindon.

Mr Lockhart thanked the Committee for the invitation to address them. He outlined his history of working in Swindon since 1980 at Whitmarsh Lockhart, Chartered Surveyors and explained that he was a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and an accredited expert witness. Mr Lockhart raised the following points and responded to Members questions in respect of:

- The vibrancy of Swindon as a town and its ability to adapt to market conditions.
- The Swindon warehouse sector which in 2018 took up approximately 671,000sq feet of space with around 700,000sq feet in the first two quarters of this year.
- The current national and international industrial and commercial markets and the need for Swindon to identify employment land to match the enquiries received for development.
- The boom of activity in Swindon in the 1980's following the country's entry into the European Community with a number of major manufacturers arriving in the town, including Honda in the late 80's; and the slowdown in commercial growth in the 1990's.
- The average life cycle of a major company moving into the town of approximately 35 years before they tended to move for various reasons.

- The need to constantly refresh employers within the town to maintain the economic structure of the town.
- That companies interested in locating to Swindon would also naturally also consider Milton Keynes (who have a large promotional budget), Northampton and Peterborough.
- Swindon still have an advantage over its natural rivals due to its proximity to Heathrow Airport and access to the west end of London but needed land availability, especially with a number of commercial properties being converted to housing.
- The need for UK banks to support the development of commercial land.
- The opportunity for the development of brownfield sites which became commercially less attractive if there were any complications or constraints with its redevelopment.
- The development model for Swindon in the 1980's whereby the Council would buy land, gain planning permission, put infrastructure in place and then sell freehold plots of that land to companies for development.
- The need for feedback from companies who decided to leave Swindon and the work of the Council's Business Retention Service.
- Current resources, both financially and staffing, within the Council for attracting new businesses to the town.
- The complex needs of new business, for instance, high quality internet provision.
- The move of Swindon towards becoming a logistics centre.
- The future of the current Honda site after the company left Swindon.
- The fluidity of the office based market and the effect this would have on the demand for office accommodation and future car parking provision/requirements.

Resolved – That Mr James Lockhart be thanked for his attendance and presentation to the Committee.

20. Town Centre Public Space Protection Order

The Director of Housing and Communities and Head of Public Protection, Planning and Culture submitted a joint report reviewing the town centre Public Space Protection Order and enforcement activities. Following a presentation of the report the Cabinet Member for Economy and Place and Locality Lead Public Health responded to Members' questions and points in respect of:

- The main issues requiring enforcement officers to speak to up to 100 members of the public each week.
- The outcome of six injunction orders sought against persistent street drinkers in the town centre area.
- The placement and prominence of signage advising cyclists of restrictions on cycling in the town centre.
- The use of mobile signage highlighting cycling the restrictions in the town centre.
- The proactive nature of Council and Police Officers staff in positively engaging the public within the town centre.
- The use of CCTV to identify anti-social behaviour in the town centre and to direct staff to address these issues.

- The use of bodycams by In-Swindon and Police Officers in the town centre.

Resolved – That the report and enforcement activities in respect of the town centre Public Space Protection Order be noted.

21. Kimmerfields Update

The Committee considered the draft Swindon Town Centre Vision and in particular the Kimmerfields Development.

Resolved – That the update be noted and the Cabinet Member for the town Centre be thanked for his attendance at the meeting.

22. Cultural Quarter Update

The Head of Town Centre Development submitted a report updating Members on progress with the Cultural Quarter project. The Cabinet Member for the Town Centre responded to Members comments and questions in respect of the following issues:

- The Art Gallery and Museum Strategy as reported to Cabinet in March 2019.
- The future of the Wyvern Theatre and options for its future development. How this could be combined with the proposed art gallery and museum and associated facilities to make a sustainable facility in the theatre square area.
- Ways in which any newly developed theatre could be made more commercially viable.
- The business case for options for financing the proposed cultural quarter.
- The future of the civic offices campus site and whether this could be incorporated in the new theatre/museum facility.
- Initial conversations with interested parties regarding the creation of a cultural quarter.
- The commissioning of an impact assessment for options for the cultural quarter and timetable for a decision on any proposal and development.
- Whether there was scope to include educational facilities as part of any proposed development.

Resolved – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the Cabinet Member for the Town Centre and Cabinet Member for Economy and Place be thanked for their presentation and answers to Members' questions.

23. Honda Task Group Update

The Committee received an update on current work being progressed by Honda Task Groups.

24. Work Programme 2019/20

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Legal Officer setting out the Committee's proposed Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

North Star Regional Leisure Development

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 9th December 2019

Author: Cabinet Member for the Town Centre and Head of Property Assets
Wards: Rodbourne Cheney
Parishes Affected: Central Swindon North

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out progress on the North Star Development trigger points, which has been requested by the Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 Pledge 3F of the Council's Vision is "Working with Seven Capital, to deliver the development of the new regional leisure destination at North Star."

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the contents of the report.

3. Detail

- 3.1 Seven Capital (SC) obtained outline planning consent S/OUT/15/0143, for the erection of indoor ski, cinema, bowling and trampoline facilities (Class D2), shops, restaurants & cafes (Class A1 - A4), parking, landscaping, access and associated works in February 2018. This was then followed up in November 2018 by the highway condition being discharged under S/COND/18/1738.
- 3.2 Since obtaining planning consent for the proposed development, SC have been unable to secure lending to build out the leisure destination. Generally, large funders are not committing to fund developments of this nature nationally due to economic uncertainty around Brexit. In an effort to raise finance for the scheme, SC has been talking to lenders, who would, rather than acquire the completed development as would a funder, lend finance on the basis that the loan was repaid by SC. SC have also been having discussions on what is required to secure a sufficient legal interest in the North Star site in a way that is acceptable to a funder to obtain £80m+ of loans recognising what is needed in the current funding environment.
- 3.3 To address these issues, and following discussions with SC, the Council have identified changes to the development agreement that should secure a way forward with a funder. The changes look to mitigate some (but by no means all) of the risks, and new clauses would be included to state that the build contract must be explicitly for the construction of the consented leisure destination, and that it is placed with a major contractor. SC has advised that they have completed pre-lets achieving £4m of rental income as part of their funder discussions. In addition, as part of varying the development agreement, the

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rob Richards, Direct Dial 07400 37316, rrichards@swindon.gov.uk.

North Star Regional Leisure Development

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 9th December 2019

Council would also require evidence of a signed finance offer for the full development costs.

- 3.4 Based on these changes, and by way of a decision note dated 3 September 2019, the Council agreed to amend the Council's right to terminate the North Star development agreement, which was exercisable in the event that the developer does not complete the piling works for the leisure destination by 13 March 2022. The new provision is now that the Council has the right to terminate the agreement if a building contract for leisure destination is not placed by 13 March 2024. This recognises that the scheme is at a critical stage and the variation is realistically the last opportunity for SC to secure finance for its delivery.
- 3.5 This termination clause is the only "trigger point" in the development agreement. If the building contract is not placed by this date, either party has the ability to terminate the development agreement. If the agreement is terminated, the 3 leases of the North Star site that form part of the agreement would also terminate, and control of the site would return to the Council.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options that apply in relation to the contents of this report.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 There are no legal or human rights implications arising from this report.

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

- 5.3 There are no known implications.

Diversity Impact Assessment DIA)

- 5.4 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this specific report as there are no proposed changes to the provision of any services.

Risk Management

- 5.5 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Rob Richards, Direct Dial 07400 37316, r-richards@swindon.gov.uk.

North Star Regional Leisure Development

Scrutiny Committee

Date: 9th December 2019

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) and Chief Legal Officer are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None.

This page is intentionally left blank

Work Programme 2019/2020

Growing the Economy

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 12th February 2020

Author: Chief Legal Officer

Wards: All Wards

Parishes Affected: All Parish Areas

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 Each year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are invited to put together a Work Programme that details the activities that it will be undertaking during the Municipal Year.
- 1.2 The Work Programme details the various topics and issues that the 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 where appropriate.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider and discuss items to be included in the Work Programme for the Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/2020 Municipal Year.

3. Detail

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The Work Programme is developed taking into account:
 - 3.2.1 Corporate priorities and objectives, including the Cabinet Forward Plan.
 - 3.2.2 Partnership strategic priorities and objectives.
 - 3.2.3 The interests and concerns of Members, Council officers, members of the public and other stakeholders such as community and voluntary groups and local businesses.
- 3.3 Members are reminded that the Work Programme must also take into account:
 - 3.3.1 The workload of the Committee and of individual members.
 - 3.3.2 The capacity of officers to support a review.
 - 3.3.3 The resource implications of carrying out a review.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, 07980 752047, sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

Work Programme 2019/2020

Growing the Economy

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 12th February 2020

- 3.3.4 The timescales for a review.
- 3.3.5 The most appropriate method of carrying out a review e.g. Committee meeting, Task Group, Member Champion review.
- 3.4 It is important that Overview and Scrutiny adds value to the work of the Council and the Borough and produces tangible outcomes for local people that result in real service improvements. Selecting the right topics is crucial to ensure that Overview and Scrutiny will be effective. Attention is drawn to the Scrutiny Process Flowchart, attached at Appendix 2, which is aimed at assisting the Committee in identifying how they could influence policy development.
- 3.5 Committees are encouraged to review the Work Programme on a regular basis to ensure it remains relevant to the Terms and Reference of the Committee and to prioritise the workload of the Committee to address issues the importance of which might only become evident during the course of the year.
- 3.6 In the 2018/2019 Municipal Year the Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the following topics:
 - 3.6.1 Inward Investment and Business Retention and Expansion.
 - 3.6.2 Swindon and Wiltshire LEP Industrial Strategy - Update
 - 3.6.3 The Council's Refreshed Vision, Priorities and Pledges - Update.
 - 3.6.4 Learning Town, Higher Education and Apprenticeships - Update.
 - 3.6.5 Switch Onto Swindon.
 - 3.6.6 Possible Effects of Leaving the European Union.
 - 3.6.7 Presentation – Regeneration of the Town Centre.
 - 3.6.8 Reference from Council - Honda.

Task Group Reviews

- 3.7 The Committee is able to undertake individual reviews throughout the Municipal Year and proposals for reviews should be proposed and discussed at the Committee meeting. The Committee has established a Honda Cabinet Member Advisory Group.

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.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, 07980 752047, sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

Work Programme 2019/2020

Growing the Economy

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 12th February 2020

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 Committee and in any recommendations made by the Committee.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 No Diversity Impact Assessment 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 Committee and if it makes any recommendations.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The author has consulted, where appropriate, with Corporate Directors, Directors, Heads of Service, other officers, and relevant partners on the purpose, content, and recommendations of the report.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2019/2020.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Shaun Banks, 07980 752047, sbanks@swindon.gov.uk.

Work Programme 2019/2020

Growing the Economy

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 12th February 2020

-
- 8.2 Appendix 2 – Scrutiny Process Flowchart.
- 8.3 Appendix 3 – Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan, for the 2nd January 2020 to 2nd January 2021. (This appendix can be inspected on the Council's website and copies can be obtained from the Committee Officer. A hard copy will be available for inspection at the meeting.)
- 8.4 Internal link: <http://sbcvpwmmgv02/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=667&LLL=0>
- 8.5 External link:
<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=667&LLL=0>

Growing the Economy Work Programme

Terms of Reference of the Committee

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, and
- the formulation of advice for the Cabinet, Council and other partners and stakeholders.

To have specific responsibility for (but not limited to) the scrutiny of: -

- the performance of services promoting cultural and economic development and enterprise and regeneration of the Borough against agreed local and national indicators,
- Regeneration,
- Economic and Cultural development,
- Strategy and Research,
- The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP),
- Car Parking Services,
- Spatial and Strategic Planning,
- Superfast Broadband,
- Wichelstowe,
- The Borough's Property Portfolio

Review of the Work Programme

The work programme will be reviewed at every meeting of the Growing the Economy Overview & 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.

Wednesday 6th November 2019

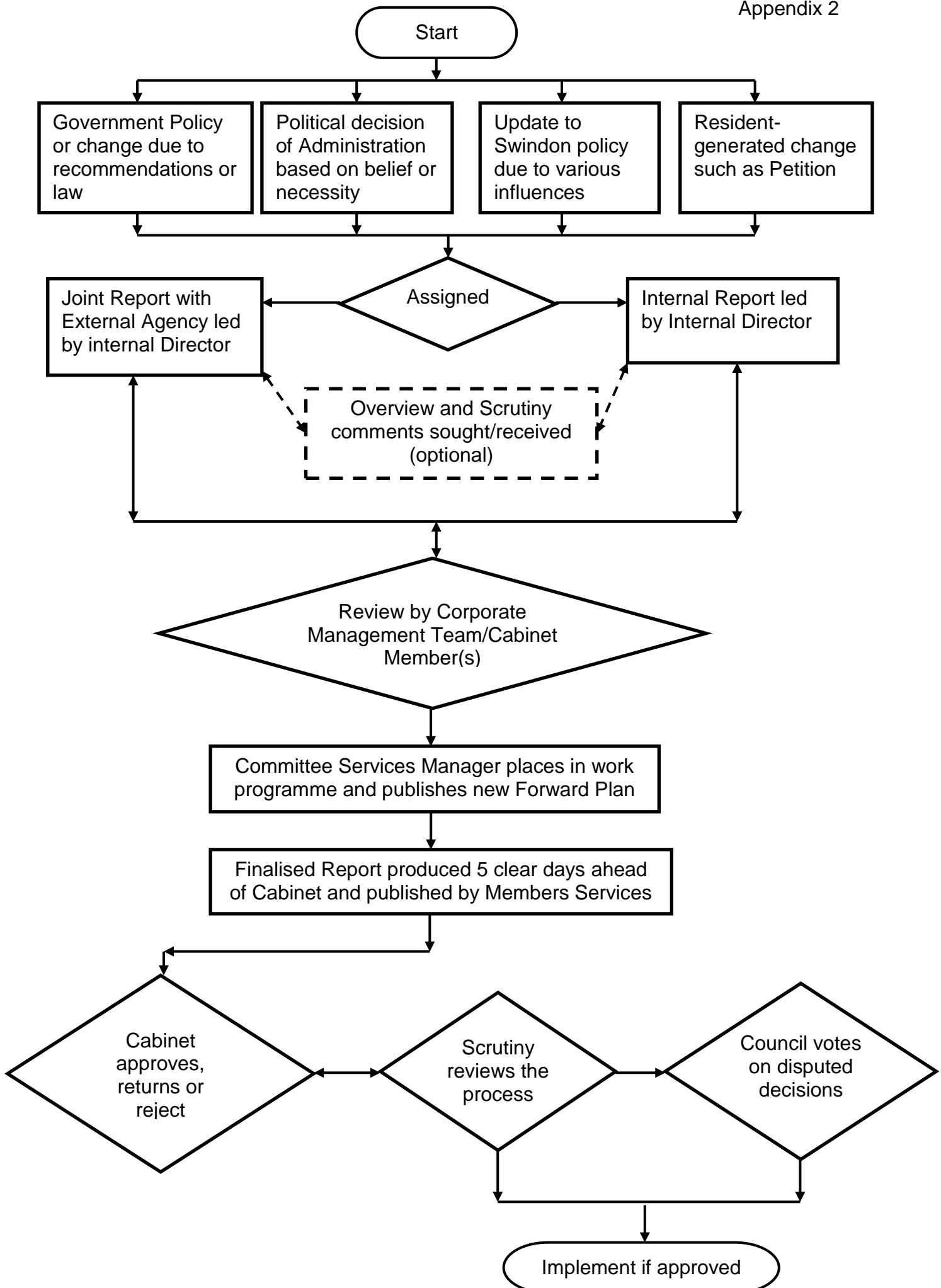
Business Engagement
Honda Task Group Update
PSPO Town Centre Update and Review
Kimmerfields - Update
Civic Campus/Wyvern Theatre Update
Work Programme

Wednesday 12th February 2020

Business Engagement
Honda Task Group Update
North Star Development - Update
Learning Town - Update
Mentorships and Start-up Support
Work Programme

Wednesday 11th March 2020

Business Engagement
Honda Task Group Update
The Council's Property Portfolio (including Commercial Assets List)
5G Update (including Switch onto Swindon and Tech Swindon)
Work Programme



This page is intentionally left blank