

# **Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session**

## **Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment**

**Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

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Author:	Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment
Wards:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

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

- 1.1 This report sets out details of the portfolio for the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment.
- 1.2 A key purpose of the Scrutiny Committee 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 relevant Cabinet Member.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Question and Answer session is to ensure that the Cabinet Member provides the Scrutiny Committee with performance information that relates to their portfolio responsibilities. It also requires the Cabinet Member to provide budget information for their portfolio responsibilities and provides an opportunity for the Scrutiny Committee to ask questions on the portfolio responsibilities.
- 1.4 The remit of the Committee includes the review, scrutiny, and development of policy recommendations and the monitoring of performance of corporate priorities.

### **2. Recommendations**

Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 Take note of the report by the Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment;
- 2.2 Put appropriate questions to the Cabinet Member;
- 2.3 Decide if any further action is required.

### **3. Detail**

- 3.1 The Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment is Councillor Maureen Penny who is accountable for the following Pledges from the Council's Vision:

- 3.1.1 **Pledge three** (in part) – refresh and implement the Masterplan for Swindon Town Centre, support our vision that Swindon is a vibrant,

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Steve Jorden, Corporate Director for Communities and Housing, [sjorden@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:sjorden@swindon.gov.uk)

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modern place. We will do this through b) delivery of the bus boulevard, c) delivering improvements to the strategic town centre network.

3.1.2 **Pledge five** - enhance Wellington Street as a prime thoroughfare for the town.

3.1.3 **Pledge thirteen** – find new ways to engage communities and neighbourhoods to increase the cleanliness of their local area.

3.1.4 **Pledge Fourteen** – encourage Swindon residents to increase recycling and reduce their waste in line with the Council's Waste Strategy; Swindon Borough Council to reduce the use of single use plastics with the intention to stop using such plastics by 2019/20 and encourage local businesses to do the same.

### Update on pledges

3.1.5 **Pledge three** (in part) relates to the proposals for a new central public transport interchange at Fleming Way, now commonly referred to as the Bus Boulevard. The full preliminary design for the scheme has been subject to consultation with key stakeholders and is now complete. Advance utility diversions commenced in April 2019 and detailed design is progressing well. Further stakeholder consultation is programmed for March 2020. The submission of the Expression of Interest to the Future High Streets Fund was successful and good progress is being made on the next stages in partnership with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

3.1.6 **Pledge five** relates to Wellington Street which is the main route for pedestrians and cyclists between the Railway Station and the Town Centre. The improvement scheme was completed in June 2019. It includes:

- new, separate paths for cyclists and pedestrians;
- a new, raised road with contrasting surfacing and sharper road markings;
- a safer junction where Wellington Street meets Milford Street and Manchester Road, with ramps to slow down vehicles and bikes, and tactile paving around the kerb line;
- new zebra crossing over Wellington Street and new toucan crossing over Milford Street;
- a smarter, more pleasurable feel, with less clutter of street furniture.

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### 3.1.7 Pledge thirteen – metrics:

- Remove fly-tipping within 5 working days (Target – 75%)
- Deliver an education programme to 900 pupils in the 2019-20 academic year (Target – 660 Year to Date)
- To undertake 30 visits to schools to deliver sessions/programmes in the 2019-20 academic year
- To support qualifying requests from Parish Councils for support with clean-ups (Target – 90%)
- To provide the opportunity of 15 work experience placements per year (Target – 15)

Metric	Current Performance	Comments
Remove fly tips within 5 working days (target 75%)	75.5	Teams continue to work hard to remove fly tipping and are maintaining a high level of performance in removing fly tipping well within the 5 day Service Level Agreement.
Deliver an education programme to 900 pupils in the 2018/19 academic year (Target – 660 Year to Date)	959	The Waste Enforcement Team are delivering programmes to pupils of all ages with the aim of embedding appropriate behaviours around waste and waste disposal from an early age.
Undertake 30 visits to schools to deliver sessions/programmes in the 2019-20 academic year	23	The team are on target to visit 30 schools in order to deliver education programmes to pupils.
Support qualifying requests from Parish Councils for support with clean-ups (Target – 90%)	100%	The Environmental Cleansing Team continue to support requests for Parish Council clean ups when made
Provide the opportunity of 15 work experience placements per year (Target – 15)	15	Placements in 2019 have been fully occupied; the first intake of 2020 will commence in March 2020

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### 3.1.8 Pledge fourteen - metrics

- Waste reduction – to reduce the tonnage of household waste collected (black bins)
- Increase recycling – to increase the tonnage of collected recyclables from households
- To achieve 50% recycling rate by year end 2020
- To recover a minimum of 90% of non- recycled waste
- To landfill less than 5% of all waste collected.

Metric	Current Performance	Comments
Reduce kg per household per annum of household <b>waste</b> from 451kg per annum (2018-19 figure)	Cumulative to date = 321kg Average = 36kg per month	Based on this projection kg per household for 2019/20 will be 430kg
Increase kg per household per annum of <b>recycling</b> from 139 kg per annum (2018-19 figure)	Cumulative to date = 93kg Average = 10kg per month	Based on this projection kg per household for 2019/20 will be 123kg
Achieve a 50% recycling rate by the end of 2020	Current rate = 40.5%	
Recover a minimum of 90% of non- recycled waste	Current rate = 95.87%	
Landfill less than 5% of all waste collected	Current rate = 2.5%	

### 3.2 The Portfolio responsibilities for this Cabinet position are as follows:

- 3.2.1 Traffic and Transport Forward Planning, including the preparation and implementation of the Local Transport Plan;
- 3.2.2 Strategic Highways and Maintenance Works;
- 3.2.3 Car Parks and Bus Gates;
- 3.2.4 Public Transport (including Concessionary Fares, Specialist Transport, Council Transport and Fleet Management);
- 3.2.5 Waste and Recycling Collections;
- 3.2.6 Waste Disposal and Waste Minimisation;

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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Steve Jorden, Corporate Director for Communities and Housing, [sjorden@swindon.gov.uk](mailto:sjorden@swindon.gov.uk)

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- 3.2.7 Waterside Depot, including Household Waste and Recycling centre (but not PPS);
- 3.2.8 Envirocrime;
- 3.2.9 Grounds Parks and Open Spaces (including bespoke services for four Parish Councils);
- 3.2.10 Street Cleaning (including bespoke services for four Parish Councils);
- 3.2.11 Arboricultural Services (Trees);
- 3.2.12 Fleet Services including Tool and Plant;
- 3.2.13 Transport Compliance;
- 3.2.14 Stores;
- 3.2.15 Playgrounds; and
- 3.2.16 Enterprise Works.

### **Highways and Transport - what we did well**

#### Local Transport Plan

- 3.3 The Local Transport Plan is the principal means of delivering the Council's transport programme. It is the statutory document that contains the transport policies and programmes of the local transport authority. It is listed in Article 4 of the Council Constitution as a key document in forming the policy framework for the Council and it is subject to an annual report to the Cabinet in order to ensure transparency in the apportionment of the funding and aid the delivery of the programme. The current Local Transport Plan (LTP3) was approved by Cabinet on 9th March 2011 and covers the period 2011 to 2026.
- 3.4 Transport patterns, demand and growth within Swindon have progressed significantly since 2011 and a review of the Council's transport strategy is required to tie in with these changes along with the Local Plan Review which is currently out to consultation. As indicated in the LTP Implementation Plan report considered by Cabinet on 20 March 2019 the existing LTP3 document is being reviewed and refreshed. Work is also underway on updating a number of other strategic plans which sit within the context of the LTP. These include the plans covering Road Safety and Network Management. I expect to provide an update on the findings of the review at Cabinet on 25th March 2020.

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- 3.5 Officers continue to work with adjacent highway authorities, particularly Wiltshire Council and Oxfordshire County Council, to plan positively for sustainable growth in Swindon given our strategic location and connectivity to the wider economic area. Working closely with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning I have asked officers to review the transport opportunities along the A420 corridor. This work will feed directly into the England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Forum which seeks to deliver shared ambitions for improved connectivity to support business investment and economic growth.

### Traffic Management and Road Safety

- 3.6 The Council has been a member of the Wiltshire and Swindon Road Safety Partnership for a number of years. The partnership provides the opportunity to work collaboratively with our strategic partners – Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Police, Dorset and Wiltshire Fire Service, NHS and Highways England - to deliver road safety initiatives to reduce road casualties on our network. I am pleased to report there is renewed focus on the Partnership's Strategic Group with the intention of providing tactical direction on road safety priorities across Swindon and Wiltshire for the Delivery Group who co-ordinate events and initiatives throughout the year.
- 3.7 Wiltshire Police provide data on all traffic collisions which result in personal injuries, and officers undertake an annual review of all reported injury accidents that have occurred in Swindon in both the last 12 months and over the last 5 years in order to identify emerging patterns in collisions across Swindon or at specific sites where multiple collisions have occurred. This data is examined alongside other data such as traffic speeds and volumes and road surface skid resistance levels. Using this holistic approach to road safety, officers seek to identify locations and trends for which effective solutions can be delivered to offer maximum improvement in road safety for Swindon's road users.
- 3.8 At its meeting on 19th September 2019 the Council considered a petition containing 425 signatures requesting the Council to "make the section of Hay Lane in Grange Park safe to cross for residents." The petition arose as a result of a collision on the zebra crossing on Hay Lane involving a young person travelling to school. I thanked those who had organised the petition and expressed my desire, as Cabinet Member for Transport and the Environment to have roads that are safe for all users – motorists, cyclists and pedestrians.
- 3.9 As noted elsewhere within this report Council officers monitor road safety performance across the Borough as part of an annual review, analysing

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reported injury collision data provided by Wiltshire Police. This work informs the Council's priorities for road safety improvements either as engineering schemes or education based initiatives. I recognised the concerns that had been raised and proposed that officers write a Briefing Note outlining the road safety priorities for the Borough, and for this report to consider the measures required for the Borough including Hay Lane. This proposal was agreed by the Council. Following this decision officers have commenced work to provide a report on the road safety priorities in Swindon and the feasibility of implementing the measures suggested by residents. A Cabinet Member Briefing Note is currently being prepared and will be shared through the normal Briefing Note process next month.

- 3.10 Officers continue to develop the action plan for the Rodbourne Road area in response to concerns expressed by residents about traffic management in the area during special events at the Great Western Retail Outlet Village and STEAM museum, and throughout the Christmas period. The action plan consists of 17 actions which were agreed with Ward Councillors following a meeting with residents. I have hosted further meetings with Ward Councillors to review priorities, the last of which was on 27<sup>th</sup> January. Officers are tasked with progressing the agreed priorities and I will provide updates at quarterly meetings with Ward Councillors.

### Strategic Highways and Maintenance Works

- 3.11 The scale of transport improvements and highway infrastructure work contained within the Council's capital programme coupled with the need to maintain the highway asset continues to be a major focus for the highways and transport department.
- 3.12 The Council is committed to the asset management principles set out in the Code of Practice (CoP) "Well Managed Highway Infrastructure" that came into being in October 2018 to deliver a more efficient and effective approach to the management of highway infrastructure assets through longer term planning and ensuring standards are defined and achievable for available budget.
- 3.13 The overall public satisfaction score for highways maintenance from the 2019 public satisfaction survey is consistent with the national average at 51%. This is higher than the 2018 return at 49%. The Council retained the Department for Transport's Local Highway Maintenance Incentive Fund Level 3 (highest rating) in 2019.
- 3.14 During 2019 we received 1003 enquiries about potholes. We repaired 4795 carriageway potholes, 585 footway potholes, 585 carriageway patches and



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292 footway patches. The Department for Transport's Pothole Action Fund remains in place until 2020/21.

- 3.15 Officers are progressing the £7.2m Street Light replacement programme which will see the conversion of all street lanterns to LED, and are implementing a new asset management system which will reduce maintenance costs, facilitate remote monitoring of faults and enable mobile working for staff in line with our drive for service efficiencies.

### Car Parks and Bus Gates

- 3.16 The Council has recently introduced contactless payment at its pay on foot car parks, becoming Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant and promoting an easier method of payment in the digital era. This should improve the service to customers and help all users pay the correct charge.
- 3.17 The Council has taken ownership of Bristol Street Car Park from Network Rail. Officers are currently undertaking an assessment of capacity and utilisation across all Town Centre car parks to ensure that the car parking stock continues to enable the wider objectives for Town Centre regeneration.

### Passenger Transport

- 3.18 Officers have introduced a Dynamic Purchasing System which gives the Council more flexibility for current and future tendering of passenger transport contracts. They have also introduced new software to improve route planning and scheduling.
- 3.19 Over 8 million passenger transport journeys are made each year on the network of local bus services operated by Swindon Bus Company. These local services are complemented by strategic routes operated by Stagecoach and officers continue to work with both companies to improve the passenger offer for residents and commuters. Bus stop infrastructure has been improved at various locations throughout Swindon including at Regents Circus to support town centre regeneration, and at Symmetry Park (New Eastern Villages) to support new development.
- 3.20 Officers are progressing the delivery of quality bus corridors for North Swindon and Wichelstowe with support of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and I have written to the bus operators regarding the possibility of reintroducing Service 20 which used to connect Stratton to the Great Western Hospital.
- 3.21 The new contract for the community transport service has been awarded to Akcess CIC from the 1st February, with the new service operating from



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Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020. This service consists of the dial a ride service and community shopping service which were previously provided by Swindon Dial a Ride. The community shopping service operates three days a week in rural areas of the Borough to supermarkets and various retail parks in Swindon. The service is also part of a contract package which includes transport routes taking people to day centres for the Council. This will replace current contracts to day centres operated by Akcess CIC so there is no change on contractor on these journeys.

- 3.22 A key responsibility for officers is to manage the temporary disruption caused by Council's own programme of works as well as the significant levels of temporary works caused by utility providers and other contractors who need access to services within the highway. The Streetworks Team received 7070 notices from utility providers and contractors (January 2019 to January 2020), and the team works hard to minimise disruptions to the travelling public and businesses.
- 3.23 Communication and project governance is much improved with the recently appointed Head of Highways and Transport providing additional rigour to the Highway Delivery Board which comprises senior officers across a number of service areas to ensure projects are better co-ordinated, and delivered efficiently and effectively. The Highways Newsletter is published every three weeks to nearly 3,000 subscribers, and project specific communication strategies have also been developed for improvement schemes such as Wichelstowe Southern Access, Moonrakers and Mead Way.
- 3.24 The construction of a new merging on-slip lane from the Mannington Retail Park on to Great Western Way (A3102) has been completed. The scheme, funded by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, reduces the volume of traffic using Wootton Bassett Road/Mannington Roundabout. New street lighting has been installed and the joint footway/cyclepath has been relocated to the back of the widened carriageway.
- 3.25 The Council has a statutory duty to ensure as far as reasonably practical that snow or ice does not endanger the safe passage along the highway. The number of full gritting routes completed, including during the snow in February is 35. The winter this year has been relatively mild to date: however, there has been significant periods of rain. Officers responded promptly to an incidence of flooding at Perrys Lane, Wroughton before Christmas when a culvert became blocked with debris from the overflowing stream. The culvert has now been cleared as part of a joint operation with the Environment Agency, and a working group re-established with representatives from the Council, Environment Agency and Thames Water

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with a remit to review current maintenance regimes and potential infrastructure improvements.

- 3.26 I have established, and Chair, the Climate Change Work Group Transport Sub-Group. We are exploring emerging technology opportunities, including with transport providers and seek to influence national, regional and local policies in line with the Council commitment to go carbon neutral by 2030 and to ensure sustainable transport is inherent in all new development
- 3.27 Swindon Borough Council, with funding from the Government's One Public Estate programme, is working with partners Network Rail and GWR to develop a high level masterplan for Swindon Rail station to demonstrate a case for investment, also improving this case by promoting works to bring the site forward. The objective is to develop a scheme for a landmark arrival into Swindon while providing improved north-south connectivity through railway crossings, also integrating sustainable transport solutions into the wider scheme through linkages with the Town Centre Masterplan. Work is underway with partners, particularly understand and improve bus-rail integration.
- 3.28 Looking at rail travel regionally and sub-nationally, the Council has been working with Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership on the regional rail strategy, which sets out recommendations to connect areas of high productivity (GVA) through strategic route and station planning. This work in turn informs the rail strategy of England's Economic Heartland, (the subnational Transport Body). Swindon's strategic position in relation to East-West Rail and the opportunities to create improved links with Oxford (and associated economic benefits) are a key driver.

### **What would you do differently?**

- 3.29 Financial pressures remain a common theme in local government and prioritisation of service provision across highways and transport will need to focus on statutory responsibilities and those areas which are most aligned to meet the needs of our community as recognised through the Council's vision, priorities and pledges.
- 3.30 The Traffic Management team continue to receive a high level of requests from Councillors for minor schemes in their Wards. Additional resource has been retained to support the assessment of these requests. However, this remains a challenging area. To provide greater clarity on how requests are dealt with, including the assessment criteria used, I will be providing further information in the annual LTP Implementation Plan report to Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

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- 3.31 The Passenger Transport team have seen a significant increase in demand for special education needs transport this year. I have commissioned a review of this service area and will work closely with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to ensure those students who meet the policy criteria continue to receive an efficient service.
- 3.32 I am committed to ensuring a better balance between the contracted and commercial bus network in Swindon, and have a series of meetings arranged with public transport operators to develop short, medium and longer term priorities to support existing and new communities in line with the Swindon Local Plan.
- 3.33 In regards to the condition of highway assets, a gap remains between current levels of capital investment and the estimated levels of investment required to keep the whole network in good condition. Officers are tasked with reviewing the backlog of capital maintenance work and I will continue to work with them to maintain the highway network as efficiently as possible with the resources available.

### **What are the Challenges and Priorities facing your Portfolio?**

- 3.34 There are a number of challenges facing several aspects of the portfolio. In regards to Highways and Transport:
- 3.34.1 supporting sustainable economic growth to meet local needs by continuing to provide essential new infrastructure;
  - 3.34.2 effectively managing and maintaining ageing (highway) assets on a needs based basis;
  - 3.34.3 managing increases in demand across the portfolio within financial constraints;
  - 3.34.4 maintaining flexible resources to deliver service improvements, and ensuring staff are multi-skilled and can operate in a variety of roles across a range of services. It is now more important than ever to prove that the public get value for money from the highways and transport department in Swindon given the current and future budgetary provisions;
  - 3.34.5 it is disappointing the planned improvement scheme for M4 J15 is yet to commence given the strategic importance of this junction. Highways England, who are responsible for the Strategic Road Network (SRN) are progressing the detailed design for the scheme, and officers are currently working on a delivery plan to support Highway England

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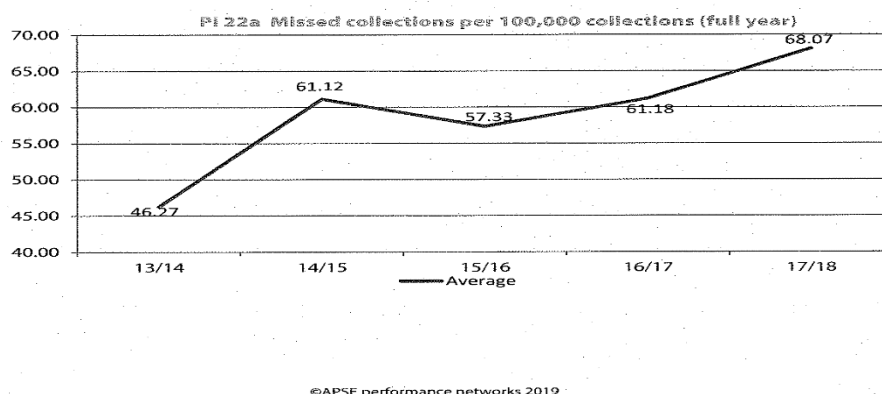
colleagues to ensure benefits are delivered across the highway network in support of sustainable economic growth in the longer term. Officers are also reviewing opportunities for improvements further along the A419 corridor at Blunsdon junction with colleagues from Highways England.

### StreetSmart – what we did well

#### Waste and Recycling Collections

- 3.35 The team maintained a good level of service delivery despite a backdrop of staffing challenges due to the continued national Class II driver shortage and our commitment to tackling poor behaviours which led to some driver suspensions.
- 3.36 Although there was a temporary increase in missed collections and complaints in September (see 5.1.1g below), overall for the Waste Collections, Recycling Collections, Plastics Collections, Bulky Household Waste Collections and Clinical Waste Collections, the missed collections rate was around or below 50 per 100,000 collections. This is an industry aspiration. According to APSE (below), the national average is 80 missed collections per 100,000, putting Swindon in the top quartile of efficient service delivery.

Figure 1: Missed Collections per 100,000 collections (full year)



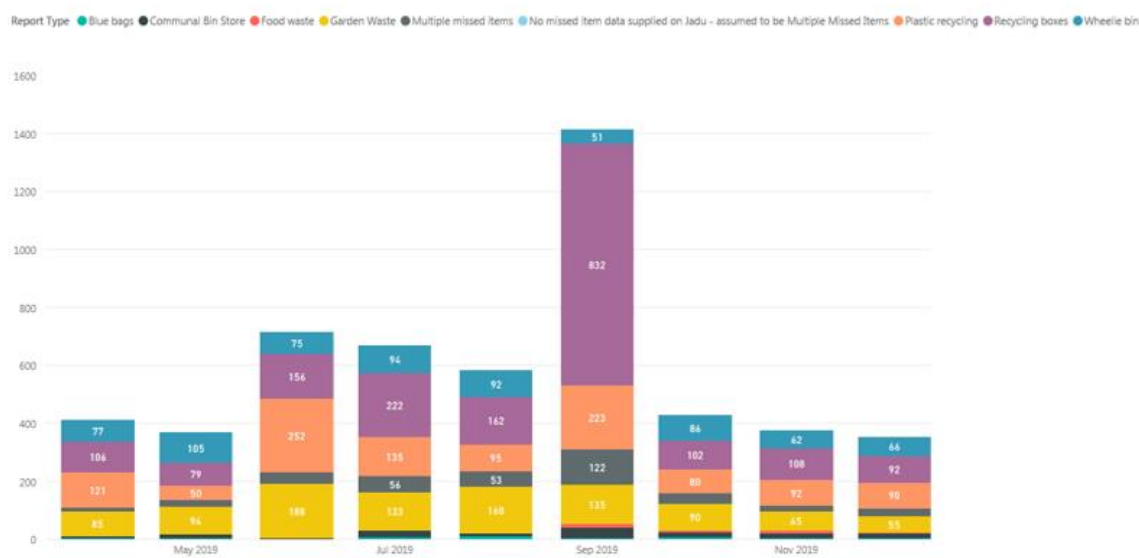
- 3.37 In August 2019 we introduced charges for replacement recycling boxes in order to mitigate spend on the high number of additional boxes being issued with no associated increase in recycling rates

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**Figure 2: Missed collections by service March 2019 to December 2019**



### Waste Disposal and Waste Minimisation

- 3.38 As part of the first year of the ten year waste strategy, a pilot weekly food waste collection service was launched in September 2019 which has been well-received by those households on the pilot and has resulted in 288 tonnes of food waste being removed from the waste stream and sent for composting between September and December 2019.
- 3.39 Also as part of the strategy, there has been a comprehensive communications campaign to encourage residents to adhere to the waste hierarchy; that is to reduce waste as much as possible, to reuse items before recycling; and finally to recycle as much as possible rather than disposing through the black (refuse) bin.
- 3.40 As a result, Swindon's overall waste (year to date, April to December 2019) is as follows:

**Table 1: Swindon waste (April to December 2019)**

Actual Tonnage	Budgeted Tonnage	Difference	2018 Tonnage	Difference
38,001	39,452	1,451	40,364	2,363

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- 3.41 Finally, a Council policy of compulsory recycling was introduced in August 2019, facilitated only by employing additional Waste Wardens to monitor and enforce the policy.

Waterside Depot, including Household Waste and Recycling centre

- 3.42 Phase one of the depot improvement programme commenced in 2019 with the much-needed reconstruction and resurfacing of the road running through the depot. Further improvements such as new bicycle shelters, the separation of smoking shelters and improved visitors parking facilities have also been undertaken in this year.
- 3.43 Phase two has started in January 2020 and this will see the introduction of barrier-protected walkways and the separation of private and works vehicle parking, both these improvements being in line with HSE best practice. Phase II will also see the introduction of a main gate at the depot, improved security through card-access doors and improved staff welfare with the provision of drying room facilities for manual staff.

Envirocrime

- 3.44 As outlined above the employment of additional Waste Wardens has bolstered the Council's ability to tackle fly-tipping and other Enviro-crime issues such as littering.
- 3.45 This has greatly improved those areas that have had several issues with fly-tipping, such as Broad Green, where the introduction of a daily mobile Waste Warden team has reduced the instances of fly tips, improved the response times to clear fly tips when they occur and has led to positive feedback from residents and Councillors in this area.
- 3.46 The team completed their Enforcement Academy Training in 2019 accredited by WAMITAB and all have certificates of competence.
- 3.47 The EnviroCrime team follow the nationally recognised phases of enforcement which are Education, Engagement and Enforcement. The team are working in schools to embed appropriate behaviours with regard to waste and waste disposal and carry out patrols in hot spot areas to engage with local residents and businesses.
- 3.48 Enforcement is the last final action and will only be taken when there is evidence that would meet the standards for prosecution.



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- 3.49 For the period April to December 2019 the team have carried out 445 investigations which have resulted in the issue of 15 Fixed Penalty Notices and 1 Formal Caution.

Grounds Parks and Open Spaces (including bespoke services for four Parish Councils)

- 3.50 In June 2019, the StreetSmart service reorganised its management structure to streamline levels of management and supervision. As a result, those Grounds Maintenance staff and the separate Street Cleansing delivering services to 4 specific Parish Councils were merged into one service.

- 3.51 Each of the 4 Parish Councils were given dedicated staff and a go-to Supervisor as a single point of contact.

Street Cleaning (including bespoke services for four Parish Councils)

- 3.52 In April 2019 the Borough Council secured Section 31 funding for Community Clean Up events which was distributed to a number of Parish Councils in order to improve the cleanliness of their areas.

Arboricultural Services (Trees)

- 3.53 In April 2019, additional staffing resource was found for the tree service following a Zurich Insurance report which recommended a “spend to save” approach when dealing with the increasing insurance claims because of the age of trees in certain areas (eg West Swindon) and the increasingly dry summers due to climate change making some trees unstable. It is worth noting that any tree related storm damage that impacts the highway is treated as a priority.

- 3.54 As a result of this and the introduction of a comprehensive inspection regime, there has been a reduction in the backlog of tree work completed.

Fleet Services including Tool and Plant

- 3.55 The Fleet Commissioning and Fleet Management Strategies were introduced in December 2019 with the aim of improving the procurement and management of vehicles and thereby delivering significant cost savings.

- 3.56 The introduction of electric vehicles, with 4 new electric vans being delivered in December 2019 forms part of the Fleet Strategy (see photograph below), and represent the start of a shift to more environmentally-friendly type of vehicles.



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Figure 3: new electric vehicle



### Transport Compliance

- 3.57 The dedicated Transport Compliance Manager has instigated a much greater level control of transport compliance related issues, improving the culture of transport compliance at the Waterside Depot and reducing the likelihood and impact of any intervention from the Traffic Commissioner, who is the governor who grants the Council its licence to operate fleet vehicles across all services (Waste and Recycling, Highways Maintenance, Housing etc).
- 3.58 This improvement extends to all areas of transport related matters such as drivers hours, daily (driver) and six-weekly (workshop) vehicle inspections, optimal vehicle usage, overweight vehicles, gate checks and other legal undertakings.
- 3.59 The following is the current DVSA Risk Score of SBC's requisite standards of operations:

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The screenshot shows the DVSA Operator Compliance Risk Score (OCRS) report page. The header is green with the DVSA logo and name. Below the header, there is a navigation bar with 'Transport Home > My Services > OCRS Reports' and 'My Services | Logout'. The main heading is 'Operator Compliance Risk Score'. A paragraph explains that OCRS is a risk-based scoring system used at roadside checks to calculate the likelihood of an operator being non-compliant. It is used as a guide only and is not a mechanism for rating operators. Below this, it states 'Your Operator Compliance Risk Scores are currently as follows :'. There are three sections: 'Your Operator Licence' with the value 'OH1124029', 'Road Worthiness Score' with a green box containing 'G03', and 'Overall Traffic Score' with a green box containing 'G03'. There are links for 'Help with your Operator Compliance Risk Score reports', 'Exit', and 'Print this Page'. At the bottom, there is a footer with 'DVSA Terms & Conditions | DVSA Help | DVSA webmaster | Version: 4.1'.

#### Stores

- 3.60 The management of stock within Stores continues to emphasise the reduction of expensive stock-holding and a shift to operating a *call-off* type system of stock control and distribution.

#### Playgrounds

- 3.61 Since April 2017, the responsibility for the inspection and maintenance of the playgrounds have been transferred to the appropriate Parish Council. However, StreetSmart continue to provide a playground inspection and routine maintenance service to West Swindon and Central Swindon North Parish Councils through the Service Level Agreement. In addition, there is also the provision of the ad-hoc service to St Andrews Parish Council. Central Swindon South Parish Council have been self-delivering this service since April 2019.

#### Enterprise Works

- 3.62 There continues to be a real focus on the financial and commercial performance of Enterprise Works whilst remaining committed to supporting the Supported Employment Strategy of Swindon Borough Council.
- 3.63 Since autumn 2019 the Stores Manager has added additional support and brings considerable retail and commercial experience and business acumen to Enterprise Works.

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- 3.64 Ongoing negotiations have continued with AgeUK Wiltshire to transfer the Community Meals Service from SBC with a target completion date by end of the 2019-20 financial year.

### **StreetSmart**

#### **What would you do differently?**

- 3.65 Of all the Waste and Recycling collection services, the subscription Garden Waste service has proved the most problematic to operate with an inordinately higher number of missed collections. Following an IT systems discovery project in November 2019 it was found that there was a flaw in the In Cab systems data which has resulted in the higher number of missed collections.
- 3.66 This has now been rectified but there will be a greater emphasis on improving the performance of this service, starting in the beginning of 2020 when the subscription renewal period begins (currently approximately 20,000 subscribers, an increase of c. 1,000 subscribers from the previous year).
- 3.67 There will be a greater emphasis on a more transparent reporting of missed collection data which will more accurately highlight through a public platform when collections have not been made due to access or staffing issues.
- 3.68 Linked to the above, the Council will be tendering for the contract to operate the Collections In-Cab system which digitally links the operational and customer (householder) information to run the services.
- 3.69 An additional Waste and Recycling Supervisor role has been identified as necessary to further improve the services.
- 3.70 There will be a greater emphasis on compulsory recycling with improved information exchange between collection crews and Waste Wardens when discovering the presence of recyclable materials in household residual waste receptacles (black bins).
- 3.71 There will be a greater emphasis on site management of waste and an improvement in the housekeeping at Waterside and the Household Waste Recovery Centre.
- 3.72 The future service delivery for the four Parishes is currently under consideration, following the decision by two of the four Parish Councils to opt for self- delivery in 2020.
- 3.73 The retained Street Cleansing Services will be utilised for Town Centre cleansing only (the Business Improvement District area).
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- 3.74 There will be a greater emphasis on tackling the backlog of routine inspection work, whilst simultaneously dealing with new, insurance cases and dealing with those trees planted next to lamp columns.
  - 3.75 There will be a greater utilisation of work experience placements to work alongside the tree teams.
  - 3.76 A one-year tool and plant pilot with a third party will commence in 2020 to improve the control and inventory of tool and plant to improve Health and Safety requirements, namely the timely inspection of plant and the control of HAVS (Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome). It is anticipated that if this is proved to be a successful delivery model, this approach will also deliver long term cost benefits.
  - 3.77 A target date of September 2020 has been set for SBCs to apply for the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme. As the DVSA is the controlling body for all transport compliance related matters, being accredited to this scheme will demonstrate the highest standards of transport compliance.
  - 3.78 The future delivery of the Stores function at the Waterside Depot is linked to the proposed Housing move from Waterside to the Hillmead Depot. It is envisaged that there will be a retained Stores function at Waterside which will be partly managed by the services operating from the depot; Waste and Recycling, Highways Maintenance, Fleet and Depot functions.
  - 3.79 The lift and shift operation into Hillmead will reshape the Stores function for Housing, although the Stores function will remain a part of StreetSmart.
  - 3.80 The remaining playground inspection and maintenance provision supplied under the SLA for West Swindon and Central Swindon North Parish Councils will end with responsibility for this work being passed over to the relevant Parish Council. However, SBC will retain overall responsibility for a significant number of playgrounds across the Borough, and therefore remedial actions may be required to ensure that these play areas remain in a safe condition – this will involve removing equipment if agreement cannot be reached with the appropriate Parish Council to fund / undertake works.
  - 3.81 In 2020 the Community Meals Service of Enterprise Works will transfer to AgeUK Wiltshire.
  - 3.82 The remaining Enterprise Works function will be re-shaped to concentrate on its timber constructions and retail products with a greater support given by the Housing Revenue Account. The aim is to ensure the financial and commercial stability of Enterprise Works whilst continuing to support the Council's Support Into Employment Strategy.

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### **What are the Challenges and Priorities facing your Portfolio?**

- 3.83 There are a number of challenges facing several aspects of the portfolio. In regards to StreetSmart:
- 3.83.1 the correct resourcing of services remains a priority during a challenging financial period. Cost controls, cost efficiencies and a focus on smarter ways of working, including the better reliance on current and emerging technologies are a common theme for future service delivery within StreetSmart.
  - 3.83.2 for example, we will be conducting a proof of concept trial for Multi-layered dynamic geospatial visualisation of fly tip reporting, analysis, location and collection throughout the Borough with a view to using this technology in future to improve operational efficiencies and the customer experience
  - 3.83.3 in 2020, in conjunction with Methods and Year 2 of the ten year waste strategy, an options appraisal for the future of waste collections and disposal will be undertaken. This will look at all considerations including collections methodologies (eg co-mingled recycling collections), collections frequencies (weekly, fortnightly, other), materials (eg. the roll out of food waste), disposal routes (food waste, palletisation), the continuation of in-house service delivery compared to external market delivery etc.
  - 3.83.4 the vehicle commissioning and fleet management strategy, having been approved by Communities and Housing Senior Management Team will be implemented in 2020 with a focus on procuring new vehicles in the most cost-efficient and long-term effectiveness. Within this strategy is a focus on Electric Vehicles and emerging and advancing technologies around this matter with Carbon Neutrality and Climate Change priorities in mind.
  - 3.83.5 with the corresponding improvement and control of transport compliance issues, Swindon Borough Council's Fleet and Vehicle Service will be applying to the DVSA Earned Recognition Scheme which will demonstrate the highest standards of transport compliance through its accreditation. StreetSmart, as part of the Directorate-wide focus will work with Methods to review current working practices and future recommendations for the Waste and Recycling Strategy, the implications for the Waterside Depot, the Fleet Strategy, the Arboricultural Service and Stores function

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### **4. Alternative Options**

- 4.1 Scrutiny Committee could choose not to operate a Cabinet Member Question and Answer programme.

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

#### Financial and Procurement Implications

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

#### 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 from this report. Any further implications will be identified when a topic is reviewed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and in any recommendations made by it.

#### 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 Overview Scrutiny 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.

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**8. Appendices**

8.1 None.