

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 3 MARCH 2021

PRESENT:- Councillors David Renard (Chair), Brian Ford, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Robert Jandy, Mary Martin, Cathy Martyn, Maureen Penny, Gary Sumner and Keith Williams

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors

Councillors attended the meeting in respect of Minute

54. Declarations of Interest.

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

55. Minutes.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2021 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

56. Public Question Time.

Mr Daniel Adams submitted a question to Councillor Dale Heenan, the Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Culture and Heritage regarding the Mechanics, to which a written response was provided. Mr Adams will not be able to attend the meeting to ask a supplementary question.

Mr Lawrence Elliott submitted a question to Councillor Dale Heenan, the Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Culture and Heritage regarding Lawns Wood, to which a written response was provided.

57. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public.

Resolved – That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the item listed below, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Item Nos.	Paragraph No	Minute No
11	3	63

58. Budget Management (March)

Councillor Russell Holland, the Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills along with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets submitted a joint report that presented the 2020/21 revenue budget forecast out-turn.

Councillor Holland introduced the joint report, thanking Officers for their efforts to deliver a budget without an overspend while acknowledging the support from central government in response to Covid-19 to compensate for lost income and higher expenditure.

Councillor Grant asked a number of questions about the cost of the Council Tax booklet and distribution of information about the local elections and the choice of advertising channels. The Leader confirmed that the cost was 14p per booklet and undertook to provide the full cost. The Returning Officer responded to the questions about the local elections; however, as the decisions of the Returning Officer are not a matter for the executive, the Leader closed discussion on this topic.

Councillor Williams drew Members' attention to the success officers had achieved in managing the two demand-led budgets – Children's Services and Adult Social Care.

Resolved: That the 2020/21 revenue budget forecast out-turn for each service area set out in Table 1 and Appendix 1 be noted.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

59. Capital Programme Update 3rd Quarter

Councillor Russell Holland, the Deputy Leader of Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills along with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets submitted a joint report that presented the year-end monitoring position for the Council's capital programme and some proposed changes to the programme.

Councillor Holland introduced the joint report as tabled and invited Members to comment as appropriate.

Resolved: (1) That the 2020/21 year end projected out-turn position as set out in Tables 1 & 2 and Appendices 1 and 2 be noted;
(2) That the amendments following to the current approved capital programme budgets as detailed at paragraph 3.2 of the joint report be approved:
(a) To reduce the IT infrastructure budget (line 7) budget by £29k to reflect revised cost of the project;
(b) To reduce the William Morris Primary School budget (line 36) budget by £400k to reflect revised cost of the project;
(c) To reduce the Regulatory & Statutory Services Case Management System budget (line 167) budget by £3k to reflect revised cost of the project;
(d) To note that Mead Way (line 163) is currently forecasting an overspend of £475k,

and that officers are in contractual negotiations as well as reviewing other budgets to mitigate this position; and

(e) To remove the £3.5m capital contingency fund budget (line 3).

(3) That the following addition to the programme detailed at paragraph 3.4 be approved and it be noted that this further update to the Capital Programme can be accommodated within the approved capital financing revenue budget and prudential indicators as set out in the 2020/21 Budget approved by Council.

(a) That £585k of grant funding be allocated to improve cycling provision in the town centre and Old Town.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

60.

Swindon Road Safety Strategy

Councillor Maureen Penny, Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance, and Waste Services and Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Initiatives, Transport and Planning along with Director of Strategic Development and Growth submitted a joint report. The report set out the recommended draft interim Swindon Road Safety Strategy 2021 for consideration by Cabinet along with proposals to carry out a consultation exercise on this revised approach to road safety.

Councillor Penny introduced the joint report, which was setting out a clear process by which Ward Members could submit requests for schemes. Councillor Sumner seconded the report. Councillor Ford asked Cabinet colleagues to consider cycle and pedestrian links from outlying areas as the strategy was developed. Councillor Grant asked about the process for requesting a safety zone, in particular how such bids would be weighted by local demand or by accident data. Councillor Penny replied that both were necessary to help form a priority list as any scheme was dependent on the funding available.

Resolved: (1) That the direction of travel towards adoption of a 'Safe Systems' approach for Swindon's Road Safety Strategy be approved.

(2) That for consultation purposes the draft Swindon Road Safety Strategy as set out in Appendix 2 and policy regarding 20mph limits and zones in Appendix 4 be approved.

(3) That the Director for Strategic Development and Growth, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport & Planning and the Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance & Waste Services be authorised to

(a) Commence a public consultation on the draft Swindon Road Safety Strategy and draft 20mph schemes policy.

(b) Consult with the Community Safety Partnership Board on the draft strategy.

(c) Report back to Cabinet on a proposed final document having taken into account feedback from the public consultation.

(d) Enter into discussions with partners in the Wiltshire and Swindon Road Safety Partnership to develop the Safe Systems approach across the partnership.

(4) That it be noted that this report addresses Council's concerns as set out in motion recorded at Minute 54, 19th November 2020, regarding the policy towards future consideration of requests for 20mph speed limits raised by Ward Councillors.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to

the meeting.

61. SEND Home to School Transport Policy 2022/23

Councillor Mary Martin, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, and the Head of Statutory SEND submitted a joint report to inform Cabinet of the outcome of the consultation and seek agreement to approve the Special Educational Needs and Disability Home to School Transport Policy for 2022-23.

Councillor Martin introduced the joint report and informed Members the draft policy had changed as a consequence of views in the consultation. In particular, the new policy would permit qualified, competent assistants to administer necessary, appropriate medication to children when they were on one of the transport services.

Resolved: (1) That the responses to the consultation as set out at Appendix One as well as the proposed changes to the policy in consequence of this to provide more information around extended rights and eligibility for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability who are in a low income group be considered and noted.

(2) That the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Home to School Transport Policy for all applicants for 2022-23 summarised in the report and attached at Appendix Two be approved.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

62. Corn Exchange: Identification of Future Options

Councillor Dale Heenan, the Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Culture, and Heritage; Councillor Gary Sumner, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport and Planning; the Chief Executive and the Head of Property Assets submitted a joint report.

Councillor Heenan introduced the report, which set out the options that the Council could deploy to assist in securing the restoration of the Corn Exchange in the event that a suitable and relevant planning application had not been submitted by its private owner by summer 2021. He also advised Members that the report has been prepared in response to the Council motion (Council Minute 73, 21st January 2021 refers). Councillor Sumner seconded the report and emphasised how it set out a way forward for the site.

Councillor Jane Milner-Barry asked a number of questions concerning the preparation of the conditions report, the confidence in the current owner to submit an application, and the feasibility of using compulsory purchase. Councillor Heenan confirmed the private owner was responsible for the conditions survey and, while pre-application negotiations were confidential, he re-stated that the report confirmed how the Council would proceed.

Resolved: That the options available to the Council to assist in securing the restoration of the Corn Exchange in the event that inadequate progress has been made to submit a suitable and relevant full planning application by summer 2021 be noted; however, no formal decision was required at this time.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.

63.

Disposal of Town Centre site

The Leader of the Council and Councillor Russell Holland, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills along with the Chief Executive and the Head of Property Assets submitted a joint report. The report set out the proposal to grant an agreement for the disposal by way of a long lease of the site identified in the plan attached as Appendix 1 to the main report to the party which then intends to carry out the proposed development as set out in the main body of the report.

The Leader of the Council introduced the joint report and confirmed that the financial institution named in the papers had confirmed its intent to proceed. Councillor Holland added that this investment was the consequence of the Administration's policies for the town centre.

Resolved: That the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Head of Property Assets be authorised to grant an option for the disposal of the Site on a long lease, to the party identified in the main body of the report to allow them to carry out the proposed development as also set out in the main body of the report. The long lease will be on such terms and conditions as are determined by the Head of Property Assets in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer and as are considered necessary in order to protect the Council's interests.

The reasons for the decision and alternative options are as set out in the report to the meeting.