



SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Municipal Year 2020/21

Meeting of Council on Thursday, 19 November 2020

ITEM - MINUTES OF OTHER COUNCIL BODIES

SECTION 1 - SPECIAL, AUDIT AND STANDARDS COMMITTEES

1. Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 21 July 2020 of Audit Committee (Pages 5 - 10)
2. Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 27 October 2020 of Audit Committee (Pages 11 - 14)
3. Minutes of meeting Monday, 12 October 2020 of Standards Committee (Pages 15 - 20)

SECTION 2 - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

4. Minutes of meeting Monday, 14 September 2020 of Scrutiny Committee (Pages 23 - 28)
5. Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 16 September 2020 of Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 29 - 36)

6. Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 30 September 2020 of Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 37 - 42)
7. Minutes of meeting Monday, 21 September 2020 of Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 43 - 46)

SECTION 3 - REGULATORY COMMITTEES

8. Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 6 October 2020 of Planning Committee (Pages 49 - 66)
9. Minutes of meeting Monday, 5 October 2020 of Licensing Committee (Pages 67 - 68)
10. Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 21 September 2021 of Education Transport Appeals Sub-Committee (Pages 69 - 70)
11. Minutes of meeting Wednesday, 14 October 2020 of Education Transport Appeals Sub-Committee (Pages 71 - 72)

SECTION 4 - CHILDREN SERVICES BODIES

12. Minutes of meeting Tuesday, 6 October 2020 of Schools Forum (Pages 75 - 80)

SECTION 5 - POLICE AND FIRE AUTHORITIES

13. Minutes of meeting Thursday, 3 September 2020 of Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel (Pages 83 - 92)

Section 1

Special, Audit and Standards Committee Minutes

This page is intentionally left blank

AUDIT COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 21 JULY 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Steve Weisinger (Chair), Nick Martin (Vice-Chair), Claire Crilly, Malcolm Davies, James Robbins, Kevin Small and Roger Smith

1. Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and set out how it would function as a 'virtual' meeting in public. The Chair also welcomed the Committee's latest member, Councillor Jim Robbins, who was appointed at Council on 9th July 2020.

2. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. Councillor Jim Robbins made a personal but non-prejudicial declaration of interest with regard to Agenda Item 8 - Head of Audit Annual Report/Opinion (Minute 8) in that he is a governor of Even Swindon Primary School.

3. Public Question Time

No members of the public submitted questions for this meeting.

4. Minutes

Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st January 2020 be confirmed and signed.

5. Corporate Risk Register update

The Committee received a summary report of risk management activity within the Council, including the most recently updated and reformatted Corporate Risk Register as reported to the Council's Corporate Management Team.

The Chief Executive introduced the report and informed the Committee how the narrative about the risks and mitigations had been clarified and augmented since the previous report in October 2019. In addition, the Chief Executive drew Members' attention to the new colour coding for finance – purple – to emphasise that this was a distinctive very high risk given the Covid-19 pandemic.

Following the report's introduction, the Chief Executive along with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets answered questions and responded to matters raised by the Chair and Councillor Jim Robbins in relation to the following issues:

- 1) The risks to the Council's finances, both in terms of extra costs and lost revenue from the initial pandemic wave.
- 2) How the Council was preparing itself and its finances in case of a second

wave later in the year. In particular, how was the Council lobbying central government for increased support.

- 3) The possible effect on employment in the Borough given the public announcement of the new Zurich offices along with the impact of both the pandemic and the impending closure of Honda.
- 4) How the Council would continue to inform and support Honda staff members seeking new employment.
- 5) Why Legal Services was not highlighted as a corporate risk as it had been in October 2019.

With regard to legal services, the Chief Executive confirmed that this risk was now being managed by the Chief Operations Officer. The Chair accepted the Chief Executive's offer that the Chief Operating Officer would bring an update on Legal Services to the next meeting of the Committee.

Resolved - That the risk management approach and the risks captured in the Corporate Risk Register be endorsed.

6. Treasury Management Performance 2019/20

The Committee considered a joint report of the Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education and Skills along with the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets setting out the Council's Treasury Management Performance for 2019/20.

The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets introduced the report and explained to Members that the changes to Council meetings because of the response to Covid-19 meant that it had not been considered by Audit prior to submission to Cabinet. The Corporate Director invited Members to consider the chart setting out the changes in interest rates and how the Council responded to these in making decisions about when to undertake borrowing.

Councillor Jim Robbins asked questions concerning the loans to other councils and the detail about the zero interest Salix (Green initiative Funding) loan, to which the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets responded at the meeting.

Resolved - That the 2019/20 Treasury Management performance as detailed at paragraphs 3.1 to 3.23 of the Joint report and the Prudential Indicators shown at Appendix 2 be noted.

7. Audit Committee Annual Report 2019/20

The Chair introduced the Committee's Annual Report setting out the role of the Committee, the changes because of the Covid-19 pandemic, savings delivered by the Council's Audit Team and the work undertaken during the Municipal Year 2019/20. The Chair expressed his thanks to the Audit Committee Members, officers, and the External Auditors for their endeavours over the past year.

Councillor Kevin Small asked a question in general about how all audit companies were maintaining standards and ensuring the quality of audits, given issues at some

councils and other sectors. With the consent of the Chair and the questioner, Barrie Morris (external auditor) undertook to address this under the agenda item on the Statement of Accounts.

Resolved - That the Audit Committee: Annual Report 2019/20 be noted.

8. Head of Audit Annual Report/Opinion

The Head of Internal Audit submitted the annual report for 2019/20 and informed the Committee that it is a requirement of the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards that the Head of Internal Audit delivers an annual internal audit opinion and report that can be used by the organisation to inform its annual governance statement.

The Head of Internal Audit introduced the report and invited the Committee to note that it found the Council's internal control arrangements to be satisfactory as well as confirming that the Audit Team was on target for completing internal audits. Members were invited to review the work of Corporate Fraud Team at Appendix One, which included details of £3.2m of actual or notional savings that had been identified through its work. The Head of Internal Audit also referred to the summary of Internal Audits Dashboard attached as Appendix 2 to the report

Resolved - That the Head of Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion 2019/20 be noted.

(Councillor Jim Robbins made a personal but non-prejudicial declaration of interest with regard to this item in that he is a governor of Even Swindon Primary School.)

9. Annual Governance Statement 2019/20

The Head of Internal Audit submitted a report providing the Committee with details of the draft Annual Governance Statement 2019/20. It is a requirement of the Accounts and Audit Regulations that the Council prepares an Annual Governance Statement. This set out the Council's governance arrangements, which included regular monitoring by the Council's Corporate Management Team along with providing an assessment of the performance of those arrangements and their effectiveness over the year.

The Head of Internal Audit confirmed that the draft had been circulated to Members for comment prior to the meeting and that the arrangements were in alignment with SOLACE's guidance.

Councillor Kevin Small asked a number of questions about the committee structure chart, in particular that Special Committee should have a direct link to Council, for which it is authorised to act and that the overview and scrutiny committees should be shown as subordinate to the Scrutiny Committee. The Chair agreed to follow up this issue with Councillor Small and relevant officers outside the meeting.

Resolved - That the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 be noted.

10. Statement of Accounts 2019/20 - update

The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets introduced the item and explained

that the audit of the Statement of Accounts was not yet completed because of the Covid-19 pandemic; however, the Government had moved the deadline for completion to the end of November 2020.

Barrie Morris and Sophie Morgan-Bower from the External Auditors summarised the work being undertaken and noted that Swindon Borough Council was among the first to have submitted draft accounts for audit. In response to a question raised earlier in the meeting, Mr Morris also outlined the actions Grant Thornton was taking to ensure that the external audit process remained up to date, effective, and of a high quality.

The Chair along with Councillor Kevin Small asked a range of questions to which the External Auditors responded at the meeting, covering:

- 1) The cost and time-scale for the additional scrutiny by the external auditors,
- 2) The timeline for bringing the Accounts to the Committee, and
- 3) Any indications of how councils might be audited for the way they disbursed government grants during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Resolved - That the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets, in consultation with the Chair and the External Auditors, be requested to schedule a special meeting of the Audit Committee in late September/October 2020 for the sole purpose of considering the Statement of Accounts 2019/20.

11. Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) Update

The Head of Internal Audit submitted an annual report reviewing the Council's use of powers set out within the Regulation for Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and seeking confirmation that the current policy in respect of its use was operating effectively.

The Head of Internal Audit presented the report and advised the Committee that the service was inspected by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office, with the summary of their findings in Appendix One. There were some recommendations to improve processes from the inspection the Head of Internal Audit confirmed that all of these had been implemented or set out in in proposed amended policy.

Resolved - (1) That the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA) Update report be noted and

(2) The recommended amendments to the Council's RIPA policy be approved.

12. Internal Audit Annual Plan 2020/2021

The Head of Internal Audit presented the draft Internal Audit Annual Plan (2020/21) for approval by the Audit Committee. The Head of Internal Audit explained that the original plan was drafted in March but as a consequence of the disruption from Covid-19, the plan has been reprioritised by the Corporate Management Team and Senior Management Teams. The detailed plan would be developed as Audit Staff return from redeployment duties as well as vacant posts being filled.

The Chair and the Head of Internal Audit responded to questions from Councillors Kevin Small and Councillor Jim Robbins covering:

- 1) Clarification of the scope of the update report into the Swindon Housing

Company.

- 2) How the plan will be reprioritised and updated over the year to make best use of resources.
- 3) How the Audit Committee would be kept updated with progress reports throughout the year.

The Chair and the Head of Internal Audit agreed to involve ward councillors in the review of Toothill Big Local

Resolved - That the draft Internal Audit plan for 2020/21, attached at Appendix 1, be approved as the Committee is satisfied that it includes all areas where it requires assurance with regards to the Council's Control, Risk and Governance framework.

13. Head of Internal Audit - update report

The Head of Internal Audit presented Members with a summary of the main issues arising from the Internal Audit reports finalised since the Audit Committee meeting in January 2020, to update Members with regard to progress against the annual internal audit plan as set out in Appendix 3 and other key issues.

Resolved - That the Head of Internal Audit's Update report be noted.

This page is intentionally left blank

AUDIT COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 27 OCTOBER 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Steve Weisinger (Chair), Nick Martin (Vice-Chair), Emma Bushell, Jenny Jefferies, James Robbins, Kevin Small and Roger Smith

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Claire Crilly and Malcolm Davies

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. No declarations were made.

15. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2020 be confirmed and signed.

16. Public Question Time

There were no public questions

17. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public

In response to a request from Councillor Kevin Small about why Agenda item 11 (Minute 22) should be taken without the press and public present, the Chief Legal Officer responded that the report and discussion might refer to posts in a way that would allow individuals to be identified, along with commercial information about the service area.

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 items listed below, on the grounds that they involve 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.

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph No.</u>	<u>Minute</u>
11	1, 2	23

18. Treasury Management - Mid-Year Review

The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets submitted a report setting out the Council's mid-year Treasury Management performance for 2020/21. The Committee noted that the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice recommends that Treasury Management performance is

reported to members at least twice a year.

In introducing the report Paul Smith (Head of Finance – Deputy Section 151 Officer) drew Members’ attention to paragraph 3.2, and advised the Committee that the second sentence should have been deleted.

Councillors Kevin Small and James Robbins asked a range of questions, as set out below, to which Paul Smith responded at the meeting:

- 1) Does the figure of £15m in paragraph 3.10.3 refer to the funding for commercial investment? Is it short- or long-term and from what source? The amount refers to a different investment, which was always intended as a five-year investment to maximise returns and avoid extra costs if left early the funding comes from cash flow.
- 2) How much of the government Covid-19 related grant was earmarked for free school meals over school holidays and how much has it cost the Council so far? A written response will be provided.
- 3) Where is the Council-owned investment property referred to in 3.10.5? What is the expected income and how might Covid affect this? It is Lysander House, Bristol. A written answer will be provided on the rental income; however, the tenants had not missed any payments to date and is it still making a surplus.
- 4) Could Officers elaborate on the issues around exceeding the Treasury limit as set out in paragraph 3.13? The limit is one adopted locally to ensure that the Council is not dependent on too few financial institutions. The Council exceeded this limit when central government Covid-19 funding arrived at short notice. Once this was known, officers set up a new money market fund as quickly as possible to reduce the risks and protect the Council’s cash.

Resolved: (1) That the mid-year Treasury Management performance be noted.

(2) That Officers would send the written responses to any questions to the Committee Officer for circulation to the Audit Committee members.

19. Statement of Accounts including External Audit findings

The Corporate Director of Finance and Assets submitted a report with the statement of accounts for 2019/20 for approval and providing an update on the audit. The Chair thanked Darren Stevens, Finance Manager, Mick Bowden, the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets, Paul Smith, Head of Finance, the Finance Team and the External Auditors for their work in producing the audited accounts during Covid-19.

Paul Smith, on behalf of the Corporate Director of Finance and Assets, introduced the report after which Mr Barrie Morris (Grant Thornton) and Ms Sophie Morgan-Bower (Grant Thornton) summarised the key details. Members were asked in particular to note the work plan attached as part of Appendix One that should have come to the Committee earlier in the year but had been omitted owing to the pandemic and other reasons.

Following their presentation of the report, the Head of Finance Manager, Sam Mowbray (Chief Operating Officer), Mr Barrie Morris (Grant Thornton) and Ms Sophie Morgan-Bower (Grant Thornton) responded to specific queries and observations regarding the accounts from Councillors James Robbins, Kevin Small.

- 1) What was the implication of the different policies of CIPFA and Grant Thornton on reporting the Direct Schools Grant deficit significant? This was just brought to Members' attention.
- 2) Could the Council make up the deficit from its general fund? Yes, if there was a surplus, which was not the current position.
- 3) Could there be more details about the issues with the Council's Oracle system. No fraud had been uncovered but the report was recommending improvements to ensure these were avoided. Sam Mowbray offered to send a separate briefing to Members via the Committee Officer.

Given the on-going pandemic, it was confirmed that any formal signing of accounts or documents could be undertaken through the Council's secure e-signature system.

Resolved: (1) To note that the Committee had considered the external auditor's report, set out in Appendix 1

(2) That the statement of accounts, set out in Appendix 2, be approved.

(3) That the letter of representation, set out in Appendix 3, be approved.

20. Audit Committee terms of reference work plan and self-assessment

The Head of Internal Audit submitted a report on the Audit Committee's terms of reference and details of the Committee's updated work programme for 2020/21.

The Head of Internal Audit introduced the report noting:

- 1) Having reviewed the Terms of Reference in relation to all relevant guidance, there were no changes for the Committee's consideration.
- 2) The work programme, which had been update to reflect the changes necessary because of Covid-19.
- 3) The Council's Audit Committee's self-assessment against the CIPFA good practice guide.

Resolved: (1) That the terms of reference and updated work programme attached at Appendices one to three be approved.

(2) That it be noted that, as recommended, Members reviewed and agreed responses to the CIPFA checklist of good practice.

21. Internal Audit Charter

The Head of Internal Audit submitted a report inviting members to review and approve the Council's Internal Audit Charter as required under the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and as requested by Members. These standards provided the mandatory guidance that constituted the principles of the fundamental requirements for the professional practice of internal auditing within the public sector and for the evaluation of the effectiveness of Internal Audit's performance.

Nick Hobbs, the Head of Internal Audit, drew the Committee's attention to the changes on the previous year, which mostly related to variations in job titles.

Resolved: That, having reviewed the Internal Audit Charter as attached at Appendix 1, it be approved.

22.**Head of Internal Audit - update**

The Committee received a report of the Head of Internal Audit summarising the main issues arising from the Internal Audit reports finalised since the last Audit Committee meeting in July 2020, progress made against the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2020/21 and Internal Audit staffing and resource issues.

The Chair of the Committee along with Nick Hobbs, Head of internal Audit, then responded to questions from Councillors James Robbins and Kevin Small, namely:

- 1) What were the benefits of using credit histories over other sources to detect Council Tax fraud? This was one of a number of data-matching tools the Council used.
- 2) How does the level of fraud relate to other years? A written answer would be provided via the Committee clerk. The Chair reminded Members that the Committee had received a report in 2019 showing significant savings from the work of the Fraud team.

Resolved: That the Head of Internal Audit – update report be noted

23.**Legal Services - update**

The Chief Operating Officer and the Chief Legal Officer submitted a report with exempt information under Paragraphs 1 and 2, Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972. The report followed an offer by the Chief Executive to provide Audit Committee with more information (Audit Committee Minute 5, 21st July 2020 refers).

Sam Mowbray, Chief Operating Officer, and Lisa Hall, Chief Legal Officer presented the report and then responded to questions, suggestions and comments from the Chair along with councillors Jenny Jefferies, James Robbins, Kevin Small, and Roger Smith covering the issues set out in the report. Lisa Hall undertook to provide all Committee Members via the Committee Officer with the various additional pieces of information requested.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 12 OCTOBER 2020

PRESENT: Councillor Caryl Sydney-Smith (Chair), Councillor Steve Weisinger (Vice-Chair), Councillor Claire Crilly, Councillor Oliver Donachie, Councillor Steph Exell, Councillor Oladapo Ibitoye, Councillor Jenny Jefferies, Councillor Vinay Manro, Councillor Jane Milner-Barry, Councillor Barbara Parry, Councillor Basil Solomon, Councillor Andy Spry and Mr Richard Hailstone (Parish Representative).

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillor Janine Howarth, Councillor Roger Smith, Councillor Vera Tomlinson, Mr Trevor Davies (Lay Representative), Mr David Dawson (Lay Representative), Mr Mick Compton (Parish Representative), Mr Paul Morris (Independent Person) and Mr Keith Strickland (Independent Person).

12. Declarations of Interest

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

13. Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th July 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

14. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

15. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved - That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in Agenda Item 7 (Minute 17) on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the Paragraphs 1 and 2 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.

16. Ethical Framework Update

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Legal Officer, which provided an update on the following matters relating to the Ethical Framework and issues of probity in the Council.

Dispensations

The Committee noted that, at its meeting on 7th November 2016, it had authorised the Monitoring Officer to grant any applications for a dispensation on the subject matter of the Budget and Council Tax matters for a four year period, with dispensations being granted in

consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee and reported back to the next available meeting. Also at its meeting on 7th November 2016, the Committee noted that it had authorised the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee, to grant applications for urgent dispensations on any subject matter in between meetings of this Committee, with any such dispensations being reported to the next available meeting.

As the period of the dispensations referred to above would shortly expire, and there is still no automatic exemption for Members from having a prejudicial interest in the Budget and Council Tax matters, the Committee agreed to authorise the Monitoring Officer to grant dispensations to Members on the subject matter of the Budget and Council Tax matters, to grant these and any additional applications received until 11th October 2024, and that any dispensations granted under these conditions be for the maximum period of four years, ending on 11th October 2024.

The Committee considered and noted that the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee, will continue to be authorised to grant applications for urgent dispensations on any subject matter in between meetings of this Committee, and that any such dispensations will be reported to the next available meeting. The Committee also asked the Monitoring Officer, where appropriate, to advise the Town and Parish Clerks of the need to arrange similar applications and determination of dispensations in respect of Town and Parish Councillors setting Parish budgets and precepts.

The Committee noted that the Chief Legal Officer had granted dispensations for non-attendance at meetings to Councillors Adorabelle Shaikh and Vera Tomlinson for reasons relating to Coronavirus Covid-19.

Annual Governance Statement

The Committee considered the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), set out in Appendix 2 to the report, which is the formal statement that recognises, records and publishes an authority's governance arrangements. It was confirmed that the Council has approved and adopted a local code of corporate governance, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework for Delivering Good Governance in Local Government. The AGS explained how the Council had complied with the local code along with meeting the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in relation to the publication of an annual governance statement.

The Committee noted that Audit Committee, at its meeting on 21st July 2020, had reviewed the Corporate Management Team and the Council's Monitoring Officer assessment of any areas of significant governance or internal control issues, and potential areas for inclusion. It had agreed that:

- Children Services could be removed from the statement.
- Further progress is still required in Information Governance and Security and GCSE attainment before they can be taken off the statement.
- That Covid-19, the Youth Offending Team, SEND, Car Park income, Communities and Housing and State of the Council's data should be included in the statement for 2019/20.

The Committee noted that the AGS will be signed off by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive.

During discussion the following matters were raised:

- The introduction of a new risk rating of 'Very High' with regards to financial sustainability following mitigation on the Corporate Risk Register, and what this means on a linear scale (an explanation of which will be circulated to members subsequent to the meeting).
- The officer-based focus on reviewing the effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements, in particular developing the council's capacity (including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it), and the separate processes in place to assist members with their learning and development. The Committee noted the discussions taking place at the Member Development Advisory Group on the potential for, and efficiencies to be gained by, offering joint member and officer sessions.
- The Committee noted the concerns raised by Councillor Oliver Donachie relating to the adoption of a change to the Council's constitution in line with prior legislation to permit the delegation of key or strategic decisions to the Chief Executive, but only with the consent of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and with the requirement to report such decisions to Council. The Chair agreed to forward on the following commentary from Councillor Donachie to Cabinet:
 - That Cabinet should consider the introduction of a sunset agreement / clause to ensure that this transfer of powers to three individuals is not permanent.
 - That the wording within the Constitution should be strengthened to demonstrate that these three individuals can only exercise this authority during an emergency response to a declared Gold Command event, and not during any subsequent recovery phase.
 - That Cabinet should agree that this change to the Constitution will be reviewed in line with the usual annual review process, noting these concerns as part of that process.

The Council's Codes and Protocols

The Committee was invited to consider whether the Council's various Codes and Protocols remained fit for purpose. In accordance with the Committee's previously utilised review process, the Monitoring Officer was asked to consult on each of the Codes and Protocols with relevant officers, the political groups on the Council, along with the Parish and Town Councils, and report back to the Standards Committee at its meeting on 27th January 2020.

During the discussion, the matter of a new Model Code of Conduct being introduced by the Local Government Association following its consultation was raised. The Committee noted that it will be prudent to delay the review of the Borough's Code to allow a revised model to be taken into account. It was also reiterated that all Parish and Town Councils within the Borough are consulted on the Codes and Protocols.

Update to the Council's Ethical Audit Self-Assessment

The Committee was invited to review the annual Ethical Audit Desktop Analysis, attached

at Appendix 4 to the report. It was agreed that the Desktop Audit should be endorsed without amendment.

Summary of Code of Conduct Complaints

The Committee noted the summary of Code of Conduct complaints, set out in the table at paragraph 3.22 of the report.

Independent Remuneration Panel - Membership

The Committee noted that it had previously agreed to re-appoint Mr Keith Strickland as a Lay Representative for a period of one year, which will be ending in March 2021, at which point the position will be vacant. The Committee also noted that Mr Ram Thiagarajah has indicated that he does not wish to seek re-appointment as a Lay Representative, and his current term will expire at the end of October 2020. In order to reduce costs, the Committee was asked to note that the recruitment process for both positions will take place at the same time, and will begin in January 2021.

Member Training

The Committee noted that the Member Development Advisory Group is working on proposals for the learning and development activities that will take place for councillors during the 2020-21 Municipal Year. A log of member attendance, and the feedback received from councillors at these events, will be kept and reported to this Committee at a future meeting.

The Committee was advised that parish councillors are able to attend training sessions as advertised in the Members Bulletin. The details of parish councillor attendance will be kept and reported to this Committee at a future meeting.

Resolved (with one vote against) – (1) That the actions with regards to Dispensations, as set out in paragraph 3.5 of the report, be agreed.

(2) That the Annual Governance Statement (that was considered by Audit Committee on 21st July 2020 and will be signed off by the Leader and Chief Executive) be noted.

(3) That, in order to facilitate the Standards Committee's annual review of the Council's Codes and Protocols, attached at Appendix 3 to the report, the Monitoring Officer be asked to consult on each document with relevant officers, the political groups on the Council, and with Parish and Town Councils, and recommend any valid changes to the Standards Committee at its meeting on 4th January 2021.

(4) That, further to (3) above, members of the Committee be invited to submit to the Monitoring Officer the details of any particular issues that they would wish to be considered as part of the annual review of the Codes and Protocols.

(5) That the latest Ethical Audit Desktop Analysis, attached at Appendix 4 to the report, be endorsed.

(6) That the Ethical Framework Update, including the Summary of Code of Conduct complaints, the membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel, and; the latest position regarding councillor training and development within the Borough be noted.

(7) That the Chair forward on the commentary of Cllr Oliver Donachie as agreed.

17.

Ethical Compliance Report

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Legal Officer regarding the outcome of various ethical compliance matters, including the details of any Whistleblowing cases, breaches of the Member / Officer Protocol, and Code of Conduct complaints received since the last Committee.

Resolved – That the Ethical Compliance report be noted.

This page is intentionally left blank

Section 2

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes

This page is intentionally left blank

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 10th 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 9th 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 1st 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 7th 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.

**CHILDREN'S HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

WEDNESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Barbara Parry (Chair), Matthew Courtliff, Oladapo Ibitoye (Vice-Chair), Nick Martin, Carol Shelley, Bazil Solomon, Nadine Watts and Alison Paul

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Fay Howard.

1. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Barbara Parry made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest as she worked for Ridgeway School.

Councillor Carol Shelley made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest as she was a governor of Swindon Academy.

Councillor Basil Solomon made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest in his capacity as a part time teacher.

2. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

3. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd January 2020, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4. Engagement/Participation of Young People

With the agreement of the Committee this item was adjourned to the next meeting in order to allow representatives from young people to attend.

5. Appointment of Co-opted Members

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Legal Officer in respect of the appointment of co-opted representatives on the Committee during the Municipal year 2020/21.

Resolved – (1) That Liz Townsend be appointed as the Church of England Diocese representative on this Committee for the Municipal Year 2020/21.
(2) That the following non-voting representatives be appointed to serve on the Committee for the Municipal Year 2020/21:

- Alison Paul (Swindon Association of Special School Headteachers).
- Spencer Allen (Swindon Association of Primary Headteachers).

- Steve Colledge (Swindon Association of Secondary Headteachers).
- Steve Henderson (Equalities Advisory Forum).
- Jacqui Watt (Swindon SEND Families Voice).
- Vanessa Scott (Healthwatch).

(3) That the appointment of a Catholic Church Diocese representative and a Parent Governor be appointed as and when nominations are received.

6. Recovery Report/ the Covid response and plans for school returns from September

The Head of Skills, Employment and Lifelong Learning providing details of (a) the Covid-19 response and plans for schools reopening for all pupils from September as outlined in the Education, Skills and Learning Recovery Plan, (b) the government's approach to grading of GCSE and A level outcomes in 2020 with a summary of the draft results, and (c) an outline the plans for formal assessment and examinations in 2020/21.

The Head of Skills, Employment and Lifelong Learning introduced the report and drew Members' attention to the following issues:

- The provision data for O Levels and A Levels for the Borough for 2020 with all schools except the UTC having provided details of their results.
- Initially it was intended results would be based upon predicted results predicted by teachers to provide the centre assessed grade and then standardised.
- During the week of the A Level results, it was decided that students would be awarded the highest grade either predicted by their teacher (centre assessed grade) or that awarded by standardisation.
- A summary of the A Level grades showing a 2% improvement in young people entries achieving A* to E grades compared to 2019, a 14% improvement in entries awarded A* to B and a 10% improvement in entries awarded A* to A.
- All settings had small increases at A* - E with one setting achieving a significant increase. All settings had significant increases in grades at A* - B and A* - A.
- That nationally 36% of grades were downgraded by one grade and locally this was 8%.
- Attainment 8 performance (a pupil's average grade across a suite of 8 GCSE subjects) had increased to 49.7% which is a 3% improvement on last year and showed a three year improvement.
- There had also been significant improvements in English and Maths with a 9% improvement at grades 5-9 and an 8% improvement at grades 4-9 (Grade 5 being a strong pass, grade 4 a standard pass).
- Preparations within the recovery plan for reopening all schools within the Borough which was achieved at the beginning of September with some staggered starts of classes within schools.
- That all schools had updated their risk assessments and contingency plans as part of the reopening process in line with available guidance.
- Briefings and weekly information bulletins for headteachers, especially those in the SN1 and SN2 postcodes.
- Work to establish and maintain good communications with schools, nurseries

- and further education establishments.
- Recovery plans planning and delivery plans overseen by a Council Bronze Group (and task groups) and in liaison with the Council's Public Health Team.
- Actions to contain a small number of outbreaks in educational settings including risk assessments and controls to be followed including additional support if the Borough was identified as an area requiring additional government support.
- Early indicators of school attendance in the first couple of weeks with 85% of all children in school and 96% of children looked after in school with robust work supporting this and reflecting the staggered starts of schools.
- Data in respect of elective home education requests which had increase over the same period in 2019 (225 to 285); this was being monitored, this included the reasons for requests (19 were Covid 19 related).
- The process for discussing elective home education, its implications and parental duties with schools and the local education authority prior to a decision being made and to ensure an informed decision.
- Work to monitor of attendance and ensuring vulnerable children were in school including any barriers to prevent attendance.
- Where attendance was under 85% additional work and support by the local education authority with schools would be undertaken with details of vulnerable children maintained by group.
- Details of work to return vulnerable children back to school was monitored regularly by staff across the Council and partners.
-

Members' considered the report and scrutinised Officers in respect of:

- The continued trend in narrowing the local achievement with that nationally with significant improvement locally with higher grades.
- The quality of education within the Borough and within specific schools.
- The robustness of the recovery plan which had been in place since May and which had been refreshed in September.
- The four current educational priorities, (i) Are Children in School (ensuring measures are in place to allow children to attend school), (ii) Achievement and Skills (to minimise the risk of achievement due to COVID and to support those in NEET), (iii) wellbeing (ensure good communication to prepare children to return to school and support to families), and (iv) Services working together to be inclusive (in particular work with SEND and education health and care plans).
- The testing of teachers and children and how priority might be given to those displaying potential symptoms.
- The effect on schools of teachers absence through COVID and the effect on children who have been kept out of schools with non-covid related symptoms (then being kept out of school until they had been tested).
- The anxiety of children taking exams in October in respect of potential further lockdowns and how examination papers might be graded.
- The flexibility of school's contingency plans to prepare children and to deal with future changes in circumstances.
- How schools would finance the additional measures being put into place to

ensure pupils can return to school and how the additional work being undertaken by the Local Education Authority was funded, including government funding which was available.

- The number of young people classed as NEET in Swindon (just above the national average) and the percentage of youth unemployment in the Borough, both of which were increasing.
- The positive work undertaken by schools to deal with individual cases of COVID and the guidelines from the Public Health Department as to when children should be sent home.
- The national issues on COVID testing and replacement of testing kits for schools if they need to use their allocated stock.

Resolved – That the report and work being undertaken under the recovery plan be noted

7. Motion from Council - Provision of Mental Health Services for Young People

Esther Schmidt Children's Commissioning Lead, BSW CCG Swindon Locality and Katie Currie, Public Health Consultant, Swindon Borough Council gave a presentation on the joint response to Minute 22 of Council (Motion - Provision of Mental Health Services for Young People) highlighting the following key issues:

- The timeline of joint mental strategy which commenced prior to the BSW CCG merger and which had subsequently been continued.
- The delay in public consultation arising from the COVID lockdown.
- The mental health services available in Swindon and how these were commissioned through the CCG, Council and through other providers.
- The TAMHS service provided by the Council for mild to moderate problems and CAMHS services provided by Oxford Health Trust who dealt with moderate to specialist interventions.
- Other services such as the Swindon Advocacy Movement which was being supported by Zurich.
- How individuals and families could obtain advice on mental health issues and were sign-posted to services through the Anna Freud system which didn't require a tiered approach of TAMHS prior to CAMHS to best provide help required through a tailored approach with 46 partners engaged.
- The work of the Trailblazer Project provided through Barbados as the lead provider pioneering mental health support in 40 schools within the Borough with the Borough being successful in bidding for additional funds.
- Feedback from young people that they preferred to receive help from family and friends prior to referral to professional services.
- Work on the evaluation of phase 1 of the Trailblazer project which was expected to be completed by March 2021.
- That service provision had continued through the pandemic although reporting had ceased during this period to allow resources to be used to tackle COVID.
- A break-down of referrals which had dropped during lockdown although the service had continued online under the Trailblazer Project and work undertaken with young people in a neutral setting outside of the school environment.

- The creation of a single referral and triage system for TAHMS and CAMHS to allow joint working on service allocation and provision which included the Early Help Service to ensure the right service was delivered in a timely manner.
- The creation of inter-care alliances by CCGs by 2021 which would through partnerships create the Integrated Care System which was focused on people getting the right assistance through multi-discipline teams.
- That since COVID there had been a 125% increase in mental health presentations at the Great Western Hospital.
- That all NHS contracts were held by NHS England until March 2021 when new service specifications would be in place.
- Available data from Oxford Health and the TAMHS service and data cleansing work to enable better comparative information in the future.
- The crisis support line operated by the Council for children and young people created during the current pandemic period and the provision of digital services.
- A case study of a young person accessing mental health services in Swindon.
- Prevention and Self-care services available to young people and how this fitted within wider service provision and the local offer for SEN.
- Swindon Town Football current provision is to children with SEND, in Care, at risk of offending, Premier League Kicks 8-18 inspiring children and young people to improve their health and wellbeing, commissioned by the Council.
- Due to Covid arts work was just re-starting and Create Studios in Swindon having secured CCG funding from a national project to produce short videos of and for young people accessing mental health services.
- Key messages in respect of (i) not all young people need clinical help-It is important to recognize that ups and downs in life are normal, (ii) that professional services can't "fix" young people- trickiness of puberty and physiological challenges of adolescence, and (iii) the majority of young people choose access support from family and friends before wanting to speak to a professional.
- Future work plan to improve and deliver mental health services within the Borough, including the re-procurement of mental health on-line services and Creation of a strategic mental health framework for Swindon by January 2021.

Following the presentation Members challenged officers in respect of:

- Waiting times for TAMHS and CAMHS services prior to and during the pandemic.
- The reduction in waiting time for services, with an additional 2.1 staff funded through the CCG, although there were concerns moving forward as to the effect of COVID on service provision.
- The operation of the Kooth online system and the positive response of young people to it.
- The accessibility and use of services to the BAME community and different age groups during the current crisis.
- The increase in accessing different types of support services for young people during the pandemic.
- The standard time of service provision for mental health services.

- The priority given to Children Looked After (including those placed Out of Borough) and waiting times for mental health services, many of who due to trauma suffered required specialist services.

Resolved – That the officers be thanked for their presentation and full response to Members' questions and the presentation be noted.

8. Children's Social Care and Early Help Summary of Performance 19/20 Outturn and Quarter 1 2020/21

The Interim Director of Children's Social Work submitted a report setting out (a) an overview of performance in children's, services for 2019/20, (b) the direction of travel for the first quarter of 2020/21, and (c) key performance information and additional service context and interpretation of data. The Interim Director of Children's Social Work introduced the report drawing Members' attention to:

- The effect of services during the period of the pandemic with service provision being undertaken through on-line engagement and remote working.
- A risk assessment of those families requiring physical visits with appropriate safety measure in place.
- With the lockdown there was a significant reduction in contacts with the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub and child protection referrals with more families being sign-posted to support services.
- Since June there has been an increase in referrals and in the number of families requiring a safeguarding response because of a family crisis.
- A summary of the key elements of the recovery plan including (i) plans to deal with an expected increase in demand due to family stress, and (ii) an increase in direct contact with children and families.
- A summary of key points in respect of early help, and community health services with more families helped through the troubled Families Programme and a new service providing additional family support where a child might otherwise enter care and a family led approach where appropriate.
- On-going issues in respect of recruiting health visitors, which was also a national issues, and due to this an issue with the number of home visits undertaken.
- Continued improvement in performance in key areas relating to Children Looked After and Care Leavers including placement permanence and adoption, Care leavers classed as EET in comparison with comparator local authorities, and completing health assessment for young people in care.
- Further work to improve services in relation to placement stability for Children in Care again which was also a national issue which could be due to the complexity of need or the availability of a suitable initial placement.
- The successful campaign for Foster Carers with twelve volunteers identified during the pandemic and who were currently being assessed.
- Work with other care providers in the region in areas such as children home provision and supported housing option in Swindon.
- Elective home education and children missing education and actions to ensure children's educational needs are met and the tracking of children not currently in school.

Following the presentation Members' scrutinised:

- The number of permanent and locum social workers employed by the Council with an increase in the number of permanent staff joining the Council in September and October.
- The current situation relating to domestic violence and the multi-agency response to such reports with the majority of reports to date being classified as lower risk.
- That there were no Serious Case Reviews outstanding and there had been one rapid review of a potential case.

Resolved – (1) That the report be noted and the Interim Director of Children’s Social Work be thanked for her informative presentation.

(2) That an update on the outcomes for troubled families be added to the Committee Work Programme.

9. Education/Exclusion/Persistent Absence

The Additional Provision and Reintegration Manager submitted a report concerning information on fixed term and permanent exclusion from schools, the reasons for those exclusions and the actions being taken and school attendance providing an update on the latest data. The Director of Inclusion and Achievement drew Members’ attention to the following points:

- Headline figures for exclusions with a reduction in permanent secondary exclusions when compared to 2019/20.
- A slight increase in the number primary exclusions in years 2, 3, 5 and 6.
- Early intervention work to reduce the number of exclusions which had been largely positive and had led to a number of withdrawn exclusions.
- The use of Fair Access Panel meetings to allocate excluded pupils a place in a different school, if appropriate, and to reduce the need for exclusions and to support children and young people with a strong focus on early intervention and avoidance of permanent exclusions.
- Data sharing with schools which formed a key element of the strategic improvement plan.
- Established performance and attendance forums to look at managed moves between schools for pupils should this be necessary prior to permanent exclusions where this was beneficial for the pupil and the school.
- Improved partnership working, including training relating to behavioural improvement.
- The differences between permanent and fixed term exclusion and the use of data to look at lineal links between fixed term and permanent exclusions and trigger points.
- Work to identify support for young people with behavioural issues to reduce the risk of exclusions.
- The identification of challenges in the family life of young people which could manifest as challenging behaviour.
- An increase in the capacity of the pupil referral unit to support pupils and offer intervention.
- The challenge of CQC and OFSTED Written Statement outcomes and priorities which was being addressed by the local authority as the lead with support from partner organisations.
- Children with education and health and care plans in primary schools in

Swindon was below the national average but exclusions were higher than the national average. In secondary schools the average of pupils with education and health and care plans was above the national average as was the fixed term exclusion rate and the proportion of pupils with a fixed term exclusion.

- Data showed that pupils identified with SEN was a significant factor in exclusions for Swindon which was the key of work to identify unknown SEN needs in pupils to help reduce exclusions.
- The embedding of the Fair Access Protocol and work on developing behavioural hubs and collaborative work to reduce exclusions with a graduated approach.
- A comparison of Swindon and statistical neighbours, as set out in the report, and the progress made in reducing persistent absence in primary schools.
- That the position on persistent absence in primary schools had been stable since 2016 and work was necessary to show significant improvement in line with Priority 7.
- The development of an attendance charter based upon Dfe guidance, amending attendance policies in liaison with the Council's Safeguarding Team, and learning from case study reviews relating to persistent absence.

Following the officer presentation Members' challenged officers in respect of:

- The significant rise in primary fixed term exclusions and the identification for this trend and support for schools to reduce this number.
- That data relating to exclusions should be included with the context of the size of schools to enable a better understanding of the information provided.
- The importance of reducing persistence absence to improve the educational attainment of pupils.
- The variance of the attendance policy to take account of COVID related issues.
- The use of the attendance policy on a consistent basis across schools with the Borough and measures available to schools and the local education authority to deal with persistent absence.

Resolved – (1) That the key performance messages in relation to the 2019/20 outturn position, as well as the latest performance for quarter 1 of 2020/21 for Children's Early Help be noted.

Social Care services.

(2) That the officers be thanked for their informative presentation and their full response to Members' questions.

10. Work Programme 2020/21

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Legal Officer on the proposed work programme for the Municipal Year, 2020/21.

Resolved – (1) That, subjected to (2) below the work programme be approved.

(2) That (i) an update on the outcomes for troubled families be added to the Committee Work Programme, and (ii) the item on Engagement and Participation of Young People be submitted to a future meeting.

GROWING THE ECONOMY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Junab Ali, Abdul Amin, Mark Dempsey, Jenny Jefferies, Vinay Manro, Kevin Parry (Chair), Roger Smith and Timothy Swinyard.

Councillors David Renard and Caryl Sydney-Smith were also in attendance.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Nick Burns-Howell.

1. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Kevin Parry made a non prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 7 as he was employed by Honda.

Councillor Junab Ali made a non prejudicial declaration of interest as he was a Non-Executive Director for Business West.

2. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

3. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2020, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

4. Update on the work of the Climate Change CMAG

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change made an oral report to the Committee regarding the Council's response to climate change, including the work of the Climate Change Cabinet Members' Advisory Group.

The Cabinet Member for Climate Change highlighted the following issues as part of his presentation and members' scrutiny:

- That the Cabinet Members' Advisory Group had initially constituted four sub-groups (buildings, transport, policy and lobbying and communications and education) but that these were to be consolidated into two as most of the activity had centred on buildings and transport which were the two largest contributors to climate change.
- The transport had already identified a lot of work and the Council could influence a lot of areas relating to transport, including alternative forms of transport and strategic planning for transport.
- The LED street lighting replacement programme which it was anticipated would reduce emissions by 60% and would also offer a major contribution to reducing the Council's carbon footprint by 2030 and would be in place by

2022.

- In June 2019, the UK Government set a legally binding target for the UK to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- The preferred option to achieve carbon neutrality was in order (i) Remove carbon production to reduce the amount of emissions at source by removing the need, for example, estate rationalisation, working practises, organisation structure and ensure that resources are used as efficiently as possible removing waste, through the design and operation of the building, (ii) Reduce Carbon production - ensure that resources are used as efficiently as possible removing waste, through the design and operation of the building and by behaviour through education, (iii) the use of technology - ensure that resources are used as efficiently as possible removing waste, through the design and operation of the building and behaviour through education, and (iv) Offset any remaining carbon emissions.
- A breakdown of Scope Emissions within the Carbon Reduction Strategy and targets including, Scope 1 - Carbon emissions from sources that directly burn the fossil fuel, such as gas boilers and combustion engines, Scope 2 -Carbon emissions from electricity usage, Scope 3 - Carbon emissions from sources that the Council does not directly control; but over which it has some responsibility and influence and Scope 4 - Carbon emissions from sources that the Council does not directly control; but over which it has some responsibility and influence.
- The use of standardised Government methodologies and conversion factors, we have gathered and calculated our Baseline (The target for Swindon Borough Council is to reduce our carbon emissions from 11,823 CO₂e down to Net Zero by 2030).
- A break-down of the Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions and targets related to their reduction.
- The further complication that accurate monitoring and measurement of emissions was very challenging and in some cases impossible. In order to help measure Borough wide emission the SCATTER (Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reduction).
- The target for the wider Borough of Swindon is to work towards Net Zero carbon emissions from 1,532,000 CO₂e by 2050.
- Although this is a new Council strategy, emission reduction activities are not new, and there has already been a large amount of work completed or in progress, as a result of over £15 million investment by the Council.
- That emissions from Council housing was included in the wider Borough target as energy usage was outside of the control of the Council. Work on energy efficiency for Council properties such as energy efficient boilers was programmed.
- That transport and housing were amongst the highest contributors to carbon emissions and these had sub-groups to consider ways to reduce their impact.
- Problems with reducing the carbon footprint of Listed Buildings such as Lydiard House and the need therefore for mitigation measures.
- Swindon had established a reputation as one of the leading towns in the UK for renewable energy, delivering a number of key initiatives in hydrogen and solar power including (i) being home to the UK's first commercial hydrogen filling station, (ii) Wroughton Airfield Solar Farm with a capacity of 62 MW is one of the largest ground mount solar parks in the UK, (iii) Chapel Farm Solar Park was the first solar farm funded by a Council backed community solar bond and (iv) Common Farm Solar Park was the first solar farm funded

- by an ISA-eligible renewable energy bond.
- That the Borough solar generation capacity could provide 2/3 of its domestic electrical needs.
- Current carbon reduction projects included (i) EV charging and EV fleet rollout, (ii) Planning Policy including requirement for residential EV charge points, (iii) Street-lighting LED lighting project (expected carbon reduction 60%), (iv) Multi-Storey Carpark LED lighting project (carbon reduction circa 60%), (v) Energy Management Software implementation, (vi) Print Rationalisation project (15million to 1 million copies), (vii) Digitisation project – Move towards paperless offices, and (viii) Community Forest Project tree planting.
- An explanation of the 12 main objectives for this strategy that will enable the Council to progress towards Net Zero Carbon which included an educational element.
- Work of the Climate Change Working Group which was chaired by the cabinet member for climate change and was formed of cross party Councillors following the adopted motion for Carbon reduction. This work had informed the direction for the Carbon Reduction Strategy and included membership from Councillors, Officers and external interested stakeholders. It had given consideration to 33 key climate themes using Friends of the Earth resources and used of policy levers to encourage change. There was a key focus on engagement and education with the wider borough. Both residents and businesses.
- The work of the Carbon Reduction Strategy Group which was comprised of officers chaired by the Director for Economy Growth and Place. The focus of the group was to create a collaborative environment where Carbon Reduction work from across the Council is pulled together, shared and reported. The primary goal of the group was to achieve the Net Zero Carbon reduction target by 2030. Action groups would be formed below this group to focus on specific aspects for emission reduction, and will report progress to the main group.
- The way these groups fitted within and influenced the Council's decision making structure.
- Forthcoming work which would include (i) the Carbon Reduction Strategy going to Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee in October with the recommendation to Release the Draft for consultation until January 2021, (ii) the final strategy being developed and published by February 2021, (iii) the creation of an Implementation Plan draft which would commence imminently, (iv) officer Sub groups to meet to tackle the Council's emissions under Scope 1 and 2, informing the implementation plan, feasibility and resource requirements, (v) an annual monitoring report to be created and published externally to track progress against targets, and (vi) the creation of internal monitoring (Dashboards) which would be published on the intranet.
- It was intended that much of the work to ensure the Council's carbon neutrality by 2030 would be put in place within the next three years.
- It was recognised that the Borough carbon neutrality target was not directly under the Council's control and it would be working with partners.
- That the authority was looking to plant around 400 hectares of trees as part of the carbon reduction initiative which exceeded the off-setting required and would help meet the 2050 target.
- Future projects to increase public awareness of climate change and sustainability.

Resolved – That the Cabinet Member for Climate Change be thanked for his attendance and full and informative answers to members' questions.

5. Swindon's Economic Recovery

The Director of Economy, Growth and Place submitted a report updating the Committee on the work to date by Swindon Borough Council officers working with business and other partners in support of the economic recovery of Swindon, in the light of circumstances arising from Covid-19.

In presenting the report the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and Director of Economy, Growth and Place highlighted the following issues and responded to Members' questions in relation to:

- The Council's Covid-19 response and recovery plan that had been considered by the Cabinet.
- That economy work streams with partners and enablers which fell with the broad heading of (i) Intel, Impact and Evidence (including businesses, the LEP and Councillors), (ii) Business Support (£30 million had been distributed and welcome feedback on the efficiency of this work), (iii) Business Growth (grow existing businesses and encourage new business to the Borough), (iv) Investment in Swindon (including Switch onto Swindon and new investment strategy), (v) Regeneration and Capital Schemes - Town Centre and (vi) Strategic Place Making (including a review of employment land with the Local Plan).
- Swindon's Bounce Back Campaign which had commenced on 7th September 2020 which was a call to action to galvanise the whole community and to seize every opportunity to reinvent, innovate and play to the economy's strengths and demonstrate how the Council is playing its part to boost the local economy.
- The role of the Council in using influence, powers and assets to boost the local economy, spelling out key projects and activity and what this means for Swindon's residents and the lobbying of Government.
- The COVID response and recovery work such as business grants "Business As Usual" measures such as attracting investment and supporting employers in the town.
- The Covid-19 recovery framework and interaction between the Council and key partners.
- The Town Centre Recovery Plan which included:

Mission – Attract people and businesses to Swindon – now in the context of post Covid-19 restrictions.

Strategy: Tell the story to:

- (a) position Swindon as a top UK town for quality of life
- (b) attract investment and funding
- (c) challenge perceptions
- (d) React quickly as a collaborative network

Objectives (measures of success): footfall level, economic activity, level of investment, crime rates and other to be agreed by the Plan Ahead Teams

Method: Establish stakeholder networks, leadership group and Plan Ahead Teams.

- A summary of key partners in the Town Centre Regeneration work.
- A summary of the work of Plan Ahead Teams (Retail, Community, Leisure, Commercial, Public Space, Transport, Marketing and Public Service).
- That Swindon's town centre footfall had recovered more strongly than a lot of areas, for instance, Birmingham.
- Examples of new business being attracted to Swindon, including the new business warehouse recently given planning permission at Symmetry Park which would create around 2,000 new jobs through £400 million of investment.
- The continued promotion of Swindon's quality of life to help drive inward investment and to dispel misconceptions about the town.
- The creation of strong partnerships, both existing and new, through the Plan Ahead Teams.
- The promotion of the Swindon Tech-Fest.
- An assessment, from a number of government and business sources, of the likely COVID-19 and Brit-exit impact and how these might be countered.
- How the tangible benefits arising from the work being undertaken and how these might be measured.
- The potential future use of the Honda site and how this could positively impact business and employment opportunities.

Resolved – (1) That the activity undertaken by Council officers set out in the report be noted.

(2) That the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and Director of Economy, Growth and Place be thanked for their presentation and full and frank responses to Members' questions.

6. Honda & Supply Chain Coordinating Steering Group Update

The Business & Economy Manager, Economy Growth and Place submitted a report updating on the activity of the Honda & Supply Chain Coordinating Steering Group and responded to Members' questions in respect of:

- An overview of the suppliers and stakeholders involved in the work of the Steering and Task Groups.
- That there were around 100 people involved in supporting the recovery programme with the majority of work focused on the Honda workforce and the workforce of suppliers.
- The national and local collaboration on economic recovery work and financial and mental wellbeing of employees and their families.
- Planning to reduce potential pressure on public services through partnership working and who were still busy dealing with Covid.
- Training and career advice available to those facing redundancy and the support the Council added to this process.
- Planned virtual events being planned to support people facing redundancy.
- Work with the Department for International Trade and other organisations to help Honda suppliers find new contract opportunities and where necessary to diversify.
- The site was owned by Honda and work by the Planning Department to

- continue its use as employment land and to maximise its potential.
- That conversations with employers was through a tailored approach depending on a company's needs.
- The use of £200,000 approved by Council to support work on Honda, £100,000 of which had been used to gain matched funding from the European Union for the start-up support training programme and supplier diversification work, and potential use of the remaining monies.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

(Councillor Kevin Parry made a non prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of this item as he was employed by Honda.)

7. Apprenticeship Task Group

The Committee considered (a) a report of the Head of Skills, Employment and Lifelong Learning setting out proposed Terms of Reference for the work of the Apprenticeship Task Group, and (b) proposed recommendations for the Task Group to consider forwarded to Members by the Chairs of the Growing the Economy and Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Members' considered the report and officer responses to questions in respect of the following issues:

- The proposed membership of the Task Group which would be employer led.
- The work of the Task Group to increase the number of apprenticeships through a collaborative approach and support for smaller employers.
- The promotion of apprenticeships during the National Apprenticeship Week.
- The use Government Kick-Start Scheme as an alternative or in support of apprenticeships.

Resolved – That the report be noted and the Terms of Reference for the Apprenticeship Task Group, as set out in the Appendix to the report, be approved.

8. Work Programme 2020/21

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Legal Officer setting out the Committee's proposed Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2020/21.

Resolved – (1) That the report be noted and Work Programme for the current Municipal Year be approved.

(2) That a report reviewing of Employment Land within the Local Plan be submitted to the Committee in November 2020.

RESOURCES AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2020

PRESENT: Councillors Rahul Tarar (Chair), Vinay Manro (Vice-Chair), Steve Allsopp, Claire Crilly, Steve Heyes, Oladapo Ibitoye, Nick Martin and Adorabelle Shaikh

Also in attendance were: Councillors Robert Jandy (Cabinet Member for Organisational Excellence) and Maureen Penny (Cabinet Member for Highways, Maintenance and Waste Services).

No apologies for absence were received.

1. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Steve Allsopp made a personal, non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of agenda item 5 (Financial Inclusion) as he is a member of the Wiltshire and Swindon Credit Union.

2. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. Public Question Time

There were no public questions submitted.

4. Financial Inclusion

The Committee considered a report providing an update on Financial Inclusion in relation to the Council's priorities, and also in response to the economic difficulties created by the Covid19 pandemic.

Mr Andy Stevens, Head of Revenue and Benefits, introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- The Council is pledged to provide early support so that Swindon residents are financially included and avoid getting into debt (Pledge 17).
- The work that has been undertaken to achieve this pledge includes:
 - The appointment of a Social Inclusion and Enterprise Manager.
 - Providing assistance to the Wiltshire and Swindon Credit Union.
 - Working in partnership with the National Illegal Money Lending Unit to try to prevent loan sharks operating in the area.
 - Providing assistance to the Citizens Advice Bureau, and enabling them to continue employing a 'Money Mentor'.
 - Providing a grant of £51k in 2018 to help create a new charity, Swindon Food Collective, which helps feed over 5000 people per annum.

- Providing assistance to the Swindon Social Enterprise Network, which has helped with projects such as the Night Shelter and getting companies to employ people in a socially inclusive manner.
- Arranging for Financial Inclusion seminars to be given to front line staff.
- Working with Libraries to help run 'Job Clubs' and assisting people in making online benefit claims.
- Telephoning residents in an attempt to prevent summonses for Council Tax debt.
- The additional financial support and advice offered to residents as a result of the pandemic includes:
 - The processing of an additional 2200 new claims for Council Tax Support, with the overall total number of claims having increased by 441.
 - Awarding an extra £150 per working age claimant for Council Tax Support using a government grant.
 - Rescheduling instalment payments to February and March 2021 to assist those customers paying by ten monthly instalments who contacted the Council Tax office to advise they could not afford a monthly instalment payment.
 - Providing food to people isolating or shielding via the Live Well Hub and through the Swindon Emergency Assistance Fund.
 - Successfully applied for a Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs grant of £227k to help with food provisions. This will be distributed via local partners and the Swindon Emergency Assistance Fund.
 - Holding meetings of the Welfare Hardship Group, whereby different service areas liaise on what can be done to assist residents.
 - Updating the benefits and financial advice on the Council's website.

Following the introduction, the Committee discussed:

- The provision available to use the Emergency Assistance Fund to provide items to those in financial difficulties, and also to potentially guarantee any loans following referral to the Credit Union.
- The advice and support offered to younger people who may be getting in to financial difficulties as a result of Covid.
- The resilience of organisations which are reliant on volunteers to provide financial assistance services, and concerns over how any lack of provision as a result of volunteers being in lockdown is compounding the financial difficulties of residents.
- The reasons behind the numbers of missed appointments with the Citizens Advice (48%) and the steps being taken to reduce this number, the details of which will be circulated to members of the Committee subsequent to the meeting.

Resolved – To note the contents of the report and the actions being taken in respect to Financial Inclusion.

5. Organisational recovery / response to Covid

The Committee considered a report setting out how the Council responded to the Covid-19 pandemic and the challenges of lockdown. In particular, the report set out

how corporate functions have supported Council staff and services to continue to work safely throughout the pandemic, and how a successful response and recovery from the pandemic is essential to ensure the Council is able to achieve its plans and priorities.

Councillor Robert Jandy (Cabinet Member for Organisational Excellence) introduced the report and referred to the exemplary way in which staff had adapted to new ways of working during lockdown, noting the steep learning curve for those who contributed to making it work. Councillor Jandy invited Ms Sam Mowbray (Chief Operating Officer) to give a presentation which highlighted the key elements of the organisational response to, and recovery from, Covid. A copy of the presentation is attached to these Minutes and on the Council's website.

Ms Mowbray began by offering some context around how the majority of the Council's services were maintained during the initial Response Phase (with only a small number of non-critical services having been paused on the basis of risk to residents and staff), and she highlighted how a significant amount of corporate support had been given to enable the Council to continue to provide critical services safely throughout the pandemic. Ms Mowbray also referred to the various work and projects undertaken by IT services throughout the pandemic.

Ms Mowbray was assisted by Sonia Grewal (Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development) who gave an update on how the 'Organisation' work stream had supported staff and services with a range of activities, and Mr Philip Avery (Head of Communications) who advised the Committee of the three communication campaigns that had taken place throughout the period. Ms Mowbray ended the presentation by setting out the next steps for the Council in assessing the impact of Covid and determining new, longer term working arrangements for services in the future.

Following the presentation, the Committee discussed:

- The IT projects agreed pre-Covid which had been deferred or cancelled, which included the decommissioning of Skype for Business. Information on further projects affected will be circulated to members of the Committee subsequent to the meeting.
- The IT projects brought forward as a result of Covid which included telephony work for the Contact Centre (to allow staff to work from home), and the projects delivered on time and to budget which included the launch of a new Children's Services Social Care system.
- The implications to staff and the Council's estate should officers continue to work more digitally.
- The support given to staff during lockdown which included Personal Development Plan's, monthly one-to-ones and surveys taking place via digital technology, and the monthly sessions held with managers to equip them to do their roles. The Committee noted that there are pockets of staff with less engagement and alternative ways are being found to reach them.
- The lack of potential risks and financial implications within Section 5 of the report, the details of which will be attached to these Minutes once available.
- The areas of focus and concerns which arose as a result of evaluation of the staff surveys which included the use of technology (and training for this) and the availability of Personal Protective Equipment.
- The key learning points from the actions taken to respond to Covid which will

help embed good working practices in future, and the skills, techniques and training programmes which will be required to deliver business as usual.

- Future plans for those residents with no digital access to the Council which may include unplanned non-emergency face-to-face contact being reduced.
- The need for realistic and authentic messaging from the Council regarding the economic recovery both within Swindon and the country as a whole.
- The additional IT costs and resources that had been required to respond to the pandemic which included: the purchase of an additional sixty laptops as part of the refresh programme which had been brought forward; the move to Amazon Web Services as the hosting platform for the Council's website at a cost of £1500 which had also been brought forward, and; around £34k spent on items such as chairs, risers and other desk equipment to enable staff to work at home.

Resolved – To note the work undertaken to respond to the pandemic and lockdown measures, and be aware of the planned work ahead.

6. Work Programme 2020-2021

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Legal Officer setting out potential topics for inclusion in the 2020/2021 Work Programme. Officers had already made suggestions for the Work Programme which the Chair had considered, and the Committee noted that these were included in the draft attached at Appendix 1.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed:

- That the Section 151 Officer would be invited to present an update on the overall impact from Covid on the Council's budgets to either the November 2020 or January 2021 meeting.
- That an item on Waste and Recycling Resources would be included in the Work Programme for this Committee should it not come under the remit of another Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved – That the draft Work Programme for 2020/2021, subject to the amendments as set out above, be agreed and adopted by the Committee.

Section 3

Regulatory Committee Minutes

This page is intentionally left blank

PLANNING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2020

PRESENT: - Councillors Timothy Swinyard (Chair), Junab Ali, John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Nick Burns-Howell, Matthew Courtliff, Malcolm Davies, Paul Dixon, Steph Exell, Jenny Jefferies, Vinay Manro, Nick Martin, Jane Milner-Barry, Stan Pajak, Vera Tomlinson, Peter Watts and Matthew Courtliff

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carol Shelley and Vera Tomlinson.

10. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Councillors to declare any known interests in any of the matters to be considered by the Committee.

Councillor Peter Watts made a personal and prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of applications numbered S/18/1781/SASM and S/18/1782/SASM as the agent was a close friend of a family member and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

Councillor Nick Burns-Howell, Matthew Courtliff, Jenny Jefferies, Nick Martin and Tim Swindon made a personal declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/RES/19/1852/TB as they had friends living in the vicinity. As they had not discussed the application with these friends and as the interest was not prejudicial they participated in the discussion and voting thereon.

Councillor Cathy Martyn made a personal declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/RES/19/1852/TB. As the interest was not prejudicial she would speak on the item in her capacity as Ward Councillor.

Councillor Tim Swinyard made a personal declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/18/1781/SASM as he was a season ticket holder for Swindon Town Football Club. As the interest was not prejudicial he participated in the discussion and voting thereon.

11. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held 25th August 2020, be confirmed and signed.

12. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

**13. S/RES/19/1852/TB - Erection of 103no. dwellings and associated works
- reserved matters pursuant to planning permission, Land East Of
Marlborough Road, Wroughton, Swindon S/OUT/15/0912 (Ward:
Wroughton And Wichelstowe) (DSD)**

In respect of application numbered S/RES/19/1852/TB - Erection of 103no. dwellings and associated works - reserved matters pursuant to planning permission, Land East Of Marlborough Road, Wroughton, Swindon - reserved matters pursuant to planning permission S/OUT/15/0912S/OUT/15/0912 the Committee considered: -

- (a) An application for permission to develop;
- (b) Recommendations of the Director of Strategic Development;
- (c) The views of interested persons set out in the report circulated with the Committee Agenda;
- (d) The comments at the meeting of the following interested persons:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address/Organisation</u>
Councillor Cathy Martyn	Ward Councillor
Councillor Brian Ford	Ward Councillor
Mr Dan Holland	Agent
Mr Tony Jeffrey	Local Resident
Mr Damon Murphy	Local Resident

Councillors Nick Burns-Howell, Matthew Courtliff, Paul Dixon, Jenny Jefferies, Vinay Manro, Nick Martin, Jane Milner-Barry, Stan Pajak and Peter Watts spoke in respect of this application.

The application can be broadly summarised as:

- This application sought permission for the reserved matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale at land east of Marlborough Road, Wroughton.
- Outline planning permission had been granted following an appeal in 2017 for up to 103 dwellings at the site.
- The means of highway access into the site, via means of a new junction off of Marlborough Road was also permitted at this stage.
- The principle of a residential development had therefore already been established, as has the new access and are therefore not up for consideration here.
- The proposals before Members was the subject of several revisions during the course of the application as the applicant attempted to address issues raised as part of the consultation stage.
- As well as changes to the layout further details have been provided regarding areas such as drainage and ecology.
- Officers were of the opinion that the layout now proposed is an improvement on that originally submitted in terms of safeguarding and appreciation of protected trees and the protection of neighbouring amenity in terms of at least meeting minimum separation distances.
- With regard to drainage, following the submission of further supporting information the Local Lead Flood Authority are now satisfied subject to detailed conditions that the development will discharge at greenfield run-off

rates. To clarify this will mean that the development will not increase flooding in the area.

- Matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are deemed to be acceptable and the application was recommended, subject to the conditions set out in the report, for approval.
- Planning condition needed to be reasonable, enforceable and relevant to the development.
- Replacement railings and the Pitchens could not be directly related to the site. Risk assessments for flooding was covered under different legislation and the use of a spur road to future developments was not the subject of development and would be the subject of a future application.
- The parking of construction vehicles and access to the site was the subject of a proposed condition and would be included in the outline consent.
- Future development conditions had been included where these were deemed to be appropriate and reasonable.
- Surface water drainage was covered in an existing condition and was required prior to occupation.
- The main details of the scheme had been approved by the Planning Inspectorate on appeal.
- The development created 8 car parking spaces at the entrance to the development to take account of spaces lost on Marlborough Road.

Submissions in support of the application can be broadly summarised as:

- The scheme was high quality and delivered a number of key benefits, including 103 new homes 73 of which would be private and 31 affordable.
- The creation of new open spaces and the retention and management of existing trees and hedgerows.
- Improvement to the local network through Section 278 works.
- The schemes was attractive and had been design led and which integrated well into the local surroundings.
- The financial contribution through the community infrastructure levy which would benefit the local area and community.
- It made efficient use of a previously undeveloped site in line with the requirements for local growth and development in a sustainable location.
- The development would provide employment and contracts for local people and businesses as part of its construction.
- The layout and design of the scheme had been extensively reviewed in consultation with local residents, and local councillors and Council officers which was reflected in the officers' report.
- Comments from residents, councillors and officers had been accommodated where possible although there was acknowledgement that there was local opposition to the scheme in respect of the effect on existing residents parking on Marlborough Road, the distance between housing units on and off site and units backing onto Wanshot Close.
- Access to the site has already been approved by Highways and additional parking onsite to provide safe parking, including for residents on Marlborough Road, has been included to take account of comments received.
- Back to back distances on site are all in line with planning regulations; the layout had been amended to improve the back to back distances with Wanshot Close to take on board comments and in additional landscaping had been introduced.

- There had been regular communication with the planning department and local councillors; there had also been liaison with local residents on elements of the scheme.
- Communication with residents and the Council was considered to be important and would continue and Bellway had worked extensively with the Council on the application over a period of time to ensure a high quality scheme.
- The layout of the scheme had been amended in a number of ways during the application process.

Submissions opposing the application can be broadly summarised as:

- The reserve matters failed to achieve a high quality design or layout and just met the minimum standards required and was poor quality.
- The layout failed to provide connectivity with the adjacent development to the south.
- The application did not provide a co-ordinated response to the historic character of the area, including but not limited to the lack of gables on houses, spacious gardens or narrow lanes, and the lack of usage of local building materials (stone, red brick or thatch).
- The design to include the large group of Tree Preservation Order trees within a more considered, holistic site layout was to the opposition and detriment of residents in Wanshot Close removing the buffer or green corridor between these developments.
- Residents of Wanshot Close wanted this green corridor reinstated; the 21 metre separation between houses in these developments was a minimum standard and the Urban Design Officer's opinion was that generous gardens along this edge were more appropriate and that there should be planting along the western edge. This advice had been ignored.
- There was sufficient land within the development to permit a more sympathetic layout.
- The development was merely meeting the absolute minimum standards required and have refused to meet local residents to discuss their concerns and in a meeting with Ward Councillors the developers made it clear they would not make changes to the design or layout other than very minor ones.
- Local residents believed that the detached garages of the new dwellings that would back onto Wanshot Close which would be approximately 5 – 6 metres from the boundary would lead to a loss of light even though they would be single-storey in height with pitched roofs and would have visual dominance as they were brick built and would be built on the top of the existing surface water drain which emptied into a nearby field.
- Bellway were proposing vehicular access is proposed now or in the future with regard to the turning head to the south west corner of the site. This was not part of the proposal considered by the Secretary of State and the proposal to access the narrowest part of Marlborough Road was unreasonable and unacceptable.
- There was concern that there were only two disabled accessible properties.
- There were no green buffers to the historical properties at the lower end of Marlborough Road which fronted the road and dated back to the 1700's with the gardens backing onto them being some of the shortest in the proposed scheme. This meant that they went from being historic houses in a rural setting to historic houses in a built up area.

- The proximity of a local electricity sub-station.
- The likelihood that the development will increase flooding in the vicinity as the whole hill contains springs.
- The amount of traffic which is material to the reserved matters as off-site highway works need to be approved as safe prior to building commencing.
- That Bellway should provide a timetable for the phased build in order that local residents know what to expect as they have refused to meet local residents to discuss their concerns.
- Bellway had commissioned bat surveys which were carried out in the dark but local residents had not been notified and so better communication was required.
- There were concerns at the water retention scheme and details of this had not been provided despite several requests for information. No increase in flooding would be deemed to be acceptable.
- The heritage statement concluded that the development would lead to less than substantial harm despite the erosion of local features.
- The development might meet minimum standards but was of poor quality and design and a development better than one that was acceptable on the balance of probabilities should be expected.
- The development should go before the design review panel for consideration due to its overall poor quality.
- Replacement work such as railings should be in line with conservation area standards and should be carried out in consultation with the Council's Conservation officer and ward councillors.
- Highway works, and risk assessment and maintenance strategy and attenuation basin should be agreed with officers prior to the commencement of the development.
- Any spur road forming part of the development should not be used for access to any other development.
- The parking of construction vehicles should be restricted to the site and parking of construction vehicles on local roads, which are narrow, should be prohibited.
- Development rights for all properties adjoining the boundary of the site should be removed to prevent overlooking of adjacent properties, overdevelopment and the erosion of distances between existing and new properties.
- There should be a 20mph speed limit in the vicinity of play areas and Wanshot Close.
- Any external lighting approved should prevent light pollution and electric Vehicle charging points should form part of the development.
- Priority for affordable housing should be given to people with a Wroughton connection.
- If the developer does not maintain management of the site this should be offered to the residents in order they can form a management company if they so wish.
- Trees should not be removed or works commenced until the drainage strategy has been approved by the Local Planning Authority.
- No offsite Section 278 highway works should commence until they are approved by officers.
- Site security should be improved as there had already been a robbery at the site, especially at the demolition site with immediate effect.

- The lack of changes to the layout showed little respect for local residents or the local environment and contrary to the developers own statements was disrespectful to exiting nearby properties.
- All of the benefits and enjoyment of the site would be for new residents and removed from residents bordering the development.
- There were concerns in respect of the Wanshot Close drainage pipes and surface drainage on the eastern boundary in the area of protected trees. The proposed drainage was inadequate and went underneath existing garages.
- There was an overbearing amount of development along the two boundaries bordering other developments in Wanshot Close and Marlborough Road with properties of a different character and would have a dominant impact on the amenity of existing properties.
- The development would have an adverse effect on local wildlife.
- Marlborough Road was a narrow, busy road and was not suitable for additional traffic.
- Neighbouring properties on Marlborough Road backed directly onto the site with the layout leading to sharing a garden to garden boundary with new properties with a maximum gap between dwellings of 24 metres, only 2 metres above Swindon's minimum standard. This was exacerbated by elevation of the buildings with clear views into existing gardens and dwellings leading to an evasion of privacy.
- A 40 foot sycamore tree on the boundary would be protected however digging foundations 8-10 metres away could adversely affect it.
- Existing trees and properties would benefit from the relocation of properties away from the property line with parking forming the rear of the property.
- With the new electrical sub-station be located 20 metres from the nearest existing dwelling Bellway needed to provide more detail regarding the protection of amenity to nearby properties, including potential noise issues.
- The removal of existing parking on Marlborough Road should be replaced by a like for like alternative provision for safety reasons.
- That there was no pedestrian crossing facility proposed for Marlborough Road.
- The scheme saw no integration with local communities.

The Chair determined that the time allocated to local residents should be extended from 5 to 10 minutes as the two public speakers had agreed to represent the local community in order that representations were not repeated. The application was considered to be exceptional as it had been subject to an appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

Resolved - That the reserved matters be approved subject to the inclusion of a condition requiring the submission of an engagement and communications plan and subject to the conditions set out within the report.

(Councillor Nick Burns-Howell, Matthew Courtliff, Jenny Jefferies, Nick Martin and Tim Swindon made a personal declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/RES/19/1852/TB as they had friends living in the vicinity. As they had not discussed the application with these friends and as the interest was not prejudicial they participated in the discussion and voting thereon.)

(Councillor Vinay Manro had a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest as a Councillor colleague lived on Marlborough Road. As they had not discussed the

application with these friends and as the interest was not prejudicial he participated in the discussion and voting thereon.)

(Councillor Cathy Martyn made a personal declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/RES/19/1852/TB. As the interest was not prejudicial she would speak on the item in her capacity as Ward Councillor.)

- 14. S/LBC/20/0465/RACH - Works to a fire damaged Grade II listed building comprising reinstatement of thatch (different to pre-fire state) to the two and a half storey component; change in roof covering (from the pre-fire state) from thatch to tile for the two storey component; from thatch to lead over the single storey component; and the removal of a thatched porch for and the erection of a front porch with timber posts and a lead canopy; Internal floor layout and finishes (including staircase); creation of doorway to West Elevation; blocking up of window to east elevation; structural repairs to walls; window replacement; structural frame to floors and roofs, Brook House, 12 The Pitches, Wroughton (Ward: Wroughton And Wichelstowe) (DSD)**

The Chair noted that applications S/LBC/20/0465/RACH and S/HOU/20/0464/RACH would be considered together but that each application would be subject to a separate vote.

In respect of (a) application numbered S/LBC/20/0465/RACH - Works to a fire damaged Grade II listed building comprising reinstatement of thatch (different to pre-fire state) to the two and a half storey component; change in roof covering (from the pre-fire state) from thatch to tile for the two storey component; from thatch to lead over the single storey component; and the removal of a thatched porch for and the erection of a front porch with timber posts and a lead canopy; Internal floor layout and finishes (including staircase); creation of doorway to West Elevation; blocking up of window to east elevation; structural repairs to walls; window replacement; structural frame to floors and roofs, Brook House, 12 The Pitches, Wroughton, and (b) S/HOU/20/0464/RACH - Reinstatement including alterations to part of the roof of a fire damaged Grade II listed building comprising change in roof covering (from the pre-fire state) from thatch to tile for the two storey component; from thatch to lead over the single storey component; and the removal of a thatched porch for the erection of a front porch with timber posts and a lead canopy, Brook House, 12 The Pitches, Wroughton the Committee considered: -

- (a) An application for permission to develop;
- (b) Recommendations of the Director of Strategic Development;
- (c) The views of interested persons set out in the report circulated with the Committee Agenda;
- (d) The comments at the meeting of the following interested persons:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address/Organisation</u>
Councillor Cathy Martyn	Ward Councillor
Councillor Brian Ford	Ward Councillor
Nigel Henham	Agent

Councillors Alan Bishop, Nick Burns-Howell, Matthew Courtliff, Nick Martin, Jane Milner-Barry, Stan Pajak and Peter Watts spoke in respect of this application.

The application can be broadly summarised as:

- The applications were brought before the Committee at the request of Councillors Brian Ford and Cathy Martyn (Ward Councillors).
- The application was for a Grade II Listed Building situated within the Wroughton Conservation Area.
- The site is located on the Pitchens, on the north side and below the stream and pathway that runs alongside. This relationship of the thatched cottage to The Pitchens delivers a unique appreciation close-up of this historic asset which has a time-capsule like appearance which has been utilised in postcards advertising Wroughton. Brook House contributes strongly to the character and appearance of the designated Wroughton Conservation area in this location within The Pitchens.
- The building contains three main components, a two and a half storey component that incorporates a third level within the roof space; a two-storey component that contains elements of a later extension and a single storey component to the rear.
- Brook House was Grade II listed in 1979. The listing describes the building as being of brick, stone and some modern construction with a thatched roof. In March 2019, Brook House was subject to an arson attack whereby fire engulfed the majority of the building.
- This resulted in the complete loss of its thatched roof and roof timbers and parts of internal partitions and flooring.
- The applications that included The application seeks listed building consent for the reinstatement of thatch to the roof of the two and half storey element of the property, albeit a different type of thatch – Water Reed proposed in order to replicate Long Straw. In addition a single storey extension with a flat lead roof incorporating flat lead canopy with timber posts forming a wrap-around to the front of the property. This replaces the previous pre-fire thatched roof porch canopy.
- The lead roof element was proposed to reduce the risk of future arson attacks.
- The recommendation for refusal was based upon potential harm to the character of the Listed Building.

Submissions in support of the application can be broadly summarised as:

- The building was listed with a thatched roof however, originally the two storey element of the building had a tiled roof before moving to a thatched roof.
- The tiled roof would be within 3 feet of the public footpath.
- The house was adjacent to a path and last year, following a previous unsuccessful attempt to set fire to the property, an arsonist stood on the secluded and dimly lit footpath running next to Brook House, and this time sprayed lighter fluid on the overhanging thatch roof and set it alight with the occupant inside the building.
- The resultant fire required 70 fire fighters from 4 counties to tackle the blaze with many still there 24 hours later.
- The restricted access and a poor water supply gave fire fighters no option but to push the burning roof into the shell of the building in order to contain the blaze and prevent it spreading to neighbouring buildings. This action

undoubtedly saved other properties but with devastating damage and virtual loss of Brook House.

- Contrary to the comments of the Conservation Officer there were no views across the village from the site and the building was sunk down on one side and does not relate to the Pitches.
- The property was one of the few thatched housing in the village and would be reinstated to its original form.
- At the end of last year, frustrated by bureaucracy and still traumatised by the fire, the owners felt they could no longer battle to reinstate their home and reluctantly sold what remained of Brook House at auction.
- It was purchased by the applicant, who grew up in Wroughton, with the objective to restore it once more to a family home and remove its current blight on the Conservation Area.
- His family have worked tirelessly over several months to protect what remains of the building, clearing the debris, propping and stabilising the dangerous structure whilst engaging a professional team to establish a strategy for repair and to seek planning permission and listed building consent.
- Brook House was originally 2 buildings, constructed at different times, built of different materials and of different appearances. One was brick faced, the other stone. One had a thatch roof the other was tiled. Around the end of the 1960's both were combined in a somewhat clumsy conversion. Shortly thereafter the modernised property was listed on the grounds of its heritage whilst acknowledging it was a building much altered in the late 20th Century.
- The alterations to achieve a single dwelling included extending the thatch roof of the older building over the previously tiled smaller one. Whilst the thatch achieved a uniformity of appearance it had no integrity, it cut diagonally across a window, obscured another and being of a lower pitch it subsequently weathered poorly requiring extensive maintenance.
- The larger roof is to be re-thatched but it is the smaller roof that the applicant seeks to return to its earlier tiled condition. This smaller thatch roof had no heritage value, it was not original, it was poorly formed and it impacted detrimentally on the earlier building.
- Arguments have been promoted by the Conservation Officer to support a contention that any new roof should be fully completed in thatch to restore the 1960's stylised thatch vernacular. Disappointingly, he chose to dismiss historic photographs proving the smaller roof was previously tiled and surprisingly has been unwilling to accept the advice of the fire service instead electing to argue that a tiled roof could equally be set alight.
- This stance is contrary to published advice by several fire authorities and supported by Historic England that promotes identification and removal of potential arson opportunities to heritage properties.
- The applicant wishes to restore the smaller building element with a tiled roof to afford its future security. This is supported by Ward Councillors, The Parish Council, residents and importantly the Fire Service who confirm their inability to effectively fight a thatch fire at the location.
- The Conservation Officer had sought to argue the importance of restoration of Brook House to its pre fire status regardless of its identified shortcomings advancing Planning Policies that were never drafted to cover the quite unique situation of a restoration of a building deliberately destroyed through arson.
- There is claim made that the proposals will be detrimental to the setting of the Wroughton Conservation Area and other designated and non-designated structures. Noting the proposal seeks to restore an original material and roof

form this claim is without substance. The Conservation Officer has postulated that both adjoining buildings were once historically thatched but cannot support this view whereas there is evidence of tiling. Heritage hand-made roof tiles are thus promoted that follow other tiling to new and heritage buildings adjacent to Brook House as well as the existing extension to the property erected only three years ago for which I was the architect and which was approved under officers delegated powers.

- The remaining building shell requires a sensitive structural solution for stabilisation and strengthening of the weakened walls together with the insertion of a new roof structure and two floors. Some remaining charred timber beams can be retained. However, these must have no structural use to the advice of a timber preservation specialist and two independent consultant structural engineers (one an accredited conservation engineer). Proposals have been developed and submitted that retain (where practical) the timbers allowing them to be exposed. The scheme is in full accordance with best conservation practice despite the Conservation Officer holding seemingly diverging views and passing commentary that highlights a misunderstanding of the complex structural proposals necessary.
- The applicant is not seeking to complete the works in a shoddy way and through his actions has already demonstrated the intent to undertake the works sensitively and professionally.
- The property has been amended and extended during its 200 year history.
- Ward Councillors and the Parish Council were in favour of the application in order that the building might be restored.

Resolved – (1) That Listed Building Consent be granted.

Reasons

(i) That the building had seen a number of amendments during its history and the thatched roof was not always in place at the time of the arson attack.

(ii) That the reversion to a tiled roof reflected its appearance during periods of its history.

(iii) That the application would not create significant harm to the building or the vicinity.

(iv) That by returning the building to its former roof construction would enhance the character of the listed building and the Wroughton Conservation Area.

(v) That in accordance with Paragraph 194 of the National Design Guide the application does not do any harm to, or create a loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting, enhances the building and makes it safe and is therefore acceptable.

(2) That Planning Application S/HOU/20/0464/RACH be granted subject to conditions to be approved by the Director of Strategic Development.

Reasons

- (i) That the building had seen a number of amendments during its history and the thatched roof was not always in place at the time of the arson attack.
- (ii) That the reversion to a tiled roof reflected its appearance during periods of its history.
- (iii) That the application would not create significant harm to the building or the vicinity.
- (iv) That by returning the building to its former roof construction would enhance the character of the listed building and the Wroughton Conservation Area.
- (v) That in accordance with Paragraph 194 of the National Design Guide the application does not do any harm to, or create a loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting, enhances the building and makes it safe and is therefore acceptable.

15. S/18/1781/SASM - Erection of Football Training Centre/ Headquarters building and ancillary accommodation, single storey equipment store building, re-grading of ground levels and laying out of grass football pitches, construction of all-weather pitch and associated works including a pumping station, Twelve Oaks, Lechlade Road, Highworth (Ward: Blunsdon And Highworth) (DSD)

In respect of application numbered S/18/1781/SASM - Erection of Football Training Centre/ Headquarters building and ancillary accommodation, single storey equipment store building, re-grading of ground levels and laying out of grass football pitches, construction of all-weather pitch and associated works including a pumping station, Twelve Oaks, Lechlade Road, Highworth the Committee considered: -

- (a) An application for permission to develop;
- (b) Recommendations of the Director of Strategic Development;
- (c) The views of interested persons set out in the report circulated with the Committee Agenda;
- (d) The comments at the meeting of the following interested persons:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address/Organisation</u>
Councillor Alan Bishop	Ward Councillor
Danielle Wyatt-Bond	Developer
Julie Murphy	Parish Council

Councillors Nick Burns-Howell, Nick Martin, Jane Milner-Barry, Stan Pajak spoke in respect of this application.

The application can be broadly summarised as:

- The application has been brought to Planning Committee at the request of Highworth Town Council.
- The site closed as a golf club and course in 2015 and this application sought permission to redevelop a large part of the site including the existing buildings

and golf course into a new training facility. There is also a current application for an equestrian facility on the western part of the site.

- The application sought the creation of 8 grass training pitches, an all-weather training pitch, training centre building, new car park and associated development. It would be located on the central and eastern part of the site and would consist of over 12 hectares out of a total area of the former Golf Club of over 22 hectares.
- It is located outside the rural settlement boundary of Highworth in respect of Local Plan Policy SD2 and Highworth Neighbourhood Plan Policy 3. Policy SD2 supports development in rural and countryside locations where it is in accordance with other policies of the plan permitting specific development in the countryside.
- There is some conflict with Local Plan Policy TR2 which seeks that development should be located to reduce the need to travel and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives. However, almost inevitably, facilities of this scale are likely to be located outside a settlement.
- The Local Plan does not contain a policy specifically supporting the development of facilities for professional sport in the countryside, but Policy EC1 identifies leisure as one of the key employment sectors, the opportunity to develop which will be particularly supported.
- Therefore while the Local Plan does not specifically support the creation of sport and training facilities in this location, it does provide support for leisure industry development. It is necessary to look at other material considerations. It is also material to recognise that the golf course represents an existing and lawful sport and recreation use of the land, with golf and football both falling within Use Class D2 'indoor or outdoor sports and recreation'.
- National policy supports leisure developments in the countryside and recognises that sites for local businesses may have to be found beyond settlement boundaries. It is considered that the nature of the facilities proposed is such that they could not realistically be accommodated within settlement boundaries.
- These material considerations support the principle of the proposed development.
- There is a deficiency of Artificial Grass Pitches for football across the Borough according to Sport England. The applicants are proposing up to 20 hours of community use on both natural and artificial pitches, including full weekend use of the artificial grass pitch throughout the year. This will help meet some of the required pitch usage identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy and the proposal is supported by Sport England in principle.
- The Highways Officer has advised following revisions that there are objections to the proposal subject to Conditions and the provision of a Travel Plan through a legal agreement.
- The built development is focused around the retained former Clubhouse which retains the overall openness of the site. The proposed new build elements of the scheme will be appropriate in scale to the requirements of the Football Club and relate well to the existing built form on the overall site. Overall the design of the proposals is appropriate subject to conditions.
- Following the submission of appropriate assessments and surveys the Council's Ecologist, the County Archaeologist, Drainage Officer and Contaminated Land Officer have no objections to the proposal subject to conditions. The Landscape Officer has no objections in principle but would prefer to see any floodlighting proposal address light pollution impact. The

applicant has stated that they are content not to provide floodlighting at all since the proposal is viable without it. Floodlighting could cause issues in respect of 'dark skies' as well as possible impacts on ecology, nearby residents and highway safety for drivers on the Lechlade road and would need further assessment. On this basis notwithstanding the submitted plans it is recommended that a Condition be attached preventing the provision of floodlighting without prior permission from the Local Planning Authority.

- There are a small number of residential properties relatively close to the proposed Football Training Facility and it is important to ensure that the level of use of the facility would not cause unacceptable harm to the existing amenity of the occupiers of these properties. Overall traffic levels are predicted to be less than the previous Golf club use and use of the pitches is not predicted to be intensive on a weekly basis. However the Environmental Health Officer has recommended conditions to prevent any nuisance from lighting and noise being generated which could have an impact on residential properties.
- Paragraph 70 of the officer's report requires clarification. It should state that 'subject to the completion of a S106 Agreement and conditions the proposed development is considered on balance to be acceptable at this location taking into account material considerations, particularly the NPPF.'

Submissions in support of the application can be broadly summarised as:

- There was a public consultation in July 2018 and the resulting application was a positive scheme for the whole community.
- The Swindon Town training facility and headquarters would act as a positive financial multiplier in a number of ways.
- The scheme provided the use of pitches for the local community and would be used by many groups including for women's football, local schools and clubs.
- Swindon Town would fund the 3G pitch privately meaning there would be no impact on neighbouring football clubs in respect of available Football Association funding.
- This would help address the shortage of £G pitches across the county.
- The ambitious development during a period of financial uncertainty was a huge commitment by the club to create top class facilities, for players, apprentices and would help in attracting new players and staff to the club and provide the opportunity to attract new sponsorship to the club.
- The development would also contribute to reducing carbon emissions by replacing the need to use three training facilities across the county at a cost of just under £70,000 per season which would go directly back into the club.
- The development was in accordance with paragraphs 83 and 84 of the National Planning Policy Framework as well as the Council's own policies as set out within the report.
- The application was also in accordance with Policy 6 of the Highworth Neighbourhood Plan promoting employment opportunities in Highworth.
- There were no highways objections to the application and complied with policy TR2 subject to conditions and the completion of a section 106 agreement.
- Traffic level were anticipated to be less than those of the previous usage.
- The appearance of the buildings was considered acceptable.
- The Sport Council and Football Association supported the application and would be an asset to Swindon.

- The football club had tried to contact Highworth Town Council on a number of occasions without a response and the club was willing to engage the Town Council to discuss any issues.

Submissions opposing the application can be broadly summarised as:

- The previous owner had dumped toxic waste on the site which would make alternative use of the site difficult.
- There were a number of valid objections from local residents.
- The site was outside the permitted development area and outside of the Settlement Plan Area.
- No-one associated with the application had been in touch with the Parish Council or Highworth Football Club to discuss community use of the pitches. This was important as the application could adversely affect funding from Sports England for other proposed pitches.
- The proposed entrance would require vehicles to cross traffic to turn right towards Swindon on the A361 which was a busy road other high volume developments such as the industrial estate and Aldi's had a roundabout.
- The volume of traffic using the site would be likely to increase significantly (with 86 car parking spaces requested) as the golf course was not used extensively.
- The application was set on the rural edge of Highworth in an open rural setting.
- The proposed building were significantly bigger in size and height than that the existing buildings which supported the golf course. This will give an industrial feel to the area and be visible for miles around and if approved would significantly change the landscape.
- The accumulative impact with the proposed equestrian centre could not be ignored.
- The accumulative traffic impact of the two applications had not been considered, nor the different types of vehicles using the site and the entrance was on an acceleration strip of the A341 with traffic overtaking at high speed.
- This and potential installation of floodlights would considerably impact upon the amenity of neighbouring properties.
- Sports England had not commented on the removal of the floodlights from the proposed scheme which could adversely impact on the community usage of the pitches.
- The previous owner of the site had been refused planning permission by Swindon Borough Council for the erection of 8 floodlights to an existing golf driving range as it would be deemed to be an obtrusive development that would adversary and unacceptably affect the character of the area an appeal against this decision was subsequently dismissed.

Resolved – (1) That the Director of Strategic Development be authorised to grant Planning Permission subject to:-

(a) Completion of a legal agreement to secure the satisfactory completion of the Travel Plan and a Community Use Agreement which shall apply to changing accommodation, car parking and football pitches and shall include details of pricing policy, hours of use, access by non-Swindon Town employees, management responsibilities, a mechanism for review and a programme for implementation; and

(b) The planning conditions set out in this report, with delegated authority to make reasonable amendments, additions or omissions to those conditions before issuing formal consent as may be necessary.

(2) That in the event that an extension of time is not forthcoming to enable the planning obligation to be completed and the decision issued, the Director of Strategic Development be authorised to refuse the application.

(Councillor Tim Swinyard made a personal declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/18/1781/SASM as he was a season ticket holder for Swindon Town Football Club. As the interest was not prejudicial he participated in the discussion and voting thereon.)

(Councillor Peter Watts made a personal and prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of this application as the agent was a close friend of a family member and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.)

16. S/18/1782/SASM - Erection of Equestrian Training Facility with courtyard barn for 20no. stables, ancillary rooms, stable hand accommodation; an American barn with 30no. loose horse boxes and hay store; all-weather gallop, horse walker, lunge pit and paddocks, vehicular parking, waste storage, landscaping and drainage (partly retrospective), Twelve Oaks Golf Club, Lechlade Road, Highworth (Ward: Blunsdon And Highworth) (DSD)

In respect of application numbered S/18/1781/SASM - Erection of Football Training Centre/ Headquarters building and ancillary accommodation, single storey equipment store building, re-grading of ground levels and laying out of grass football pitches, construction of all-weather pitch and associated works including a pumping station, Twelve Oaks, Lechlade Road, Highworth the Committee considered: -

- (a) An application for permission to develop;
- (b) Recommendations of the Director of Strategic Development;
- (c) The views of interested persons set out in the report circulated with the Committee Agenda;
- (d) The comments at the meeting of the following interested persons:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address/Organisation</u>
Councillor Alan Bishop	Ward Councillor
Danielle Wyatt-Bond	Developer
Julie Murphy	Parish Council

Councillors Nick Burns-Howell, Matthew Courtliff, Vinay Manro, Nick Martin, Jane Milner-Barry spoke in respect of this application.

The application can be broadly summarised as:

- This application has been brought to Planning Committee at the request of Highworth Town Council.
- The site closed as a golf club and course in 2015 and the application seeks permission for an Equestrian Training Facility which comprises a courtyard barn of 20 stables, ancillary rooms, stable hand accommodation and an

American barn of 30 loose horse boxes. Also a hay store, all weather gallop, other training structures and paddocks - all on the western part of the golf club site.

- The site area is just over 10 hectares out of a total area of the former Golf Club of about 22 hectares.
- The application is partly retrospective since the gallop and other works for training of horses have already been carried out and are operational.
- The site is located outside the rural settlement boundary of Highworth for the purposes of Swindon Local Plan Policy SD2 and Highworth Neighbourhood Plan Policy 3. The Local Plan does not contain a policy specifically supporting the development of equestrian facilities in the countryside, but Policy EC1 (Economic Growth through Existing Business and Inward Investment) identifies leisure as one of the key employment sectors, the opportunity to develop which will be particularly supported.
- While the Local Plan therefore does not specifically support the creation of equestrian facilities in this location, it does provide support for leisure industry development.
- National policy supports leisure developments in the countryside and recognises that sites for local businesses may have to be found beyond settlement boundaries. In officers opinion it is considered that the nature of the facilities proposed is such that they could not realistically be accommodated within settlement boundaries. It is a use commonly found in the countryside.
- However the scale of the proposed buildings and their use and the impact on local highway matters and any impact on the landscape and residential amenity are important considerations. These impacts have been considered as set out in the report and in summary the Highways Officer has no objections to the proposal and there are no objections subject to conditions from the County Archaeologist, the Drainage Engineer, the Contaminated Land Officer and the Council's Ecologist.
- The Landscape Officer has no objection in principle although would prefer to see a more comprehensive plan that includes all existing vegetation, noting specifically which is to be retained and which is to be removed. This is because the retention, protection (during construction) and long term management of the perimeter vegetation is important to the development.
- However on balance it is considered that this can be satisfactorily provided for by Condition but that it will be necessary prior to commencement of any building works.
- Overall it is not considered that the scale of the built form and activity would be expected to cause any overriding harm to the landscape in this countryside location subject to strict conditions in relation to the residential accommodation proposed.
- Paragraph 49 of the officer's report needs clarification and should read 'The proposed development is considered on balance to be acceptable at this location taking into account material considerations, particularly the NPPF.'
- A late letter requesting a Condition with regard to the operational hours of the gallop on the grounds of safety and signage has been received and the Highways Officer has been asked to comment on and the applicant has also been made aware of this.
- The letter also requested that the landscaping condition be expanded to specifically provide planting and bunding to screen the gallop and reduce noise.

- Clarification on highway impact had been requested from the Highways team, including the rights of usage of bridleways and footpaths.

Submissions in support of the application can be broadly summarised as:

- The equestrian centre would act as a positive financial multiplier in a number of ways, having a positive impact on local businesses.
- The horse racing industry was worth approximately £3.7 billion in the United Kingdom with additional income from equine related activities.
- The application was for use by Sean Curran a highly respected trainer and would complement the local area.
- There would be economic benefit including new employment opportunities for local residents.
- Staff and visitors would make a valuable contribution to Highworth's economy and to local businesses, many of which were independent and would use local suppliers and farrier and equine services.
- The stables would house up to 40 horses.
- The scale of activity would not create any major harm to the local landscape in this countryside location.
- The proposed size and location of the building was considered to be appropriate to the scale of the locality and usage with no adverse impact anticipated.
- Suitable conditions would protect the amenity of neighbours.
- The proposed equestrian use was appropriate for the location and needed to be situated in the countryside environment nor would it adversely impact on the landscaping of the site.
- The development was in accordance with the Swindon Borough Council Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 83 and 84 and the Highworth Neighbourhood Plan Policy 6 which promotes employment opportunities in Highworth.
- The request for a condition on the gallop had been responded to and the bridleway referred to is indeed a public footpath.

Submissions opposing the application can be broadly summarised as:

- The objections of the Town Council relating to traffic, siting and impact were as set out for application S/18/1781/SASM.
- The usage was currently underway with some facilities in place prior to the grant of planning permission.
- Should the application be granted noise and light mitigation measures should be conditioned.
- A letter from a neighbouring farm had been received in respect of the adverse effect the application, if granted, would have on their business.
- The possibility of walking horses being spooked by galloping horses and whether this warranted conditions.

Resolved - That the Director of Strategic Development be authorised to grant permission subject to the conditions set out within the report and subject to the controls set out in the three additional conditions suggested by an objector (or similar wording). In the event that the additional conditions are not imposed or considered

appropriate, the application shall be referred back to this Committee for re-consideration.

(Councillor Peter Watts made a personal and prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of this application as the agent was a close friend of a family member and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.)

17. Protocol for Dealing with Planning and Related Applications

The Director of Strategic Development submitted a report seeking the Planning Committee's approval of the protocol for the dealing with planning and related applications.

Resolved – (1) That the procedures set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved for the purpose of consulting upon and determining planning and related applications with the addition of the following wording to paragraph 21 'Appeal decisions are circulated to members of the Planning committee.'

(2) That the consultation protocol be circulated to all Borough Councillors for information and that they be reminded of the obligation that where they request an application be determined by the planning committee that they do so in writing within the prescribed timescales and the request must give reasons for the request.

(3) That the consultation protocol be circulated to all Parish and Town Councils for information and that they be reminded of the obligation that where they request an application be determined by the planning committee that they do so they do so in writing within the prescribed timescales and that reasons are given for the request as to why a particular application is considered to raise significant planning issues or is locally controversial.

(4) That the Director of Strategic Development be authorised to make any minor or typographical changes as may be necessary.

(5) That the Director of Strategic Development be requested to inform all Members of the Planning Committee in respect of Planning Inspectorate appeal decisions.

LICENSING COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Steph Exell, Steve Heyes, Vinay Manro, Nick Martin, Stan Pajak, Imtiyaz Shaikh, Bazil Solomon, Caryl Sydney-Smith and Rahul Tarar.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Vera Tomlinson, Nadine Watts and Robert Wright.

7. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. Councillor Abdul Amin made a non prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item No. 5 as he had a number of friends in the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade.

8. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2020, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

9. Public Question Time

The Committee was advised of the contents of an email received from Mr John Stocker opposing relaxation of rules restricting private hire drivers being employed by more than one company on the grounds of public safety.

10. Review of the licensing policy in regard to allowing private hire licence holders to work for more than one operator at a time - Results of Consultation exercise

The Committee considered (a) a report of the Council's Licensing Manager setting out the responses received during the 12 week consultation period of the review of the private hire drivers licence known as the 'green form' and to consider any amendments to the policy and driver licence requirements, (b) advice received from the Committee's Legal Advisor, (c) the options available to the Committee as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.3 of the report, (d) representation made to the Committee by from Messrs Desmond Broster, Andy Lucas, opposing changes to the current policy, and (e) answers to questions from the Council's Licensing Manager and comments of Councillors Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Steve Heyes, Vinay Manro, Bazil Solomon.

Resolved – That there be no change to the current policy that enables them to work for only one licensed operator at any time.

11. Review of licensing policy in regard to emissions standards for licensed vehicles, and the age at which vehicles are first licensed - Review of Consultation exercise

The Committee considered (a) a report of the Council's Licensing Manager Review of licensing policy in regard to emissions standards for licensed vehicles, and the age at which vehicles are first licensed, (b) advice received from the Committee's Legal Advisor, (c) the results of a consultation exercise undertaken with the private hire and hackney carriage trade, (d) representation made to the Committee by from Messrs. Andy Lucas supporting changes to the current policy, and (e) answers to questions from the Council's Licensing Manager and comments of Councillors Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Vinay Manro, Bazil Solomon and Rahul Tara.

Resolved – (1) That the amendment of the age policy so that the age at which vehicles are first licensed is lowered from 5 years to 4 years from 1st January 2021 be approved.

(2) That it be agreed that all vehicles currently licensed be required to meet the Euro 6 emissions standards by 31st December 2024, except that well maintained existing vehicles meeting mechanical standards be permitted to continue until the end of the upper age limits (as linked to the introduction of an emissions policy linked to the Swindon Air Quality Action Plan).

(3) That the wording of the revised policy be forwarded to all Members of the Committee be comment.

EDUCATION TRANSPORT APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2021

PRESENT:- Councillors Ray Ballman, Basil Solomon and Caryl Sydney-Smith.

6. Appointment of Chair

Resolved – That Councillor Basil Solomon Chair this meeting of the Sub-Committee.

Councillor Basil Solomon took the Chair.

7. Declarations of Interest

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

8. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 1st September 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

9. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved – That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1992, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred in Agenda item 8 on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned (Minute 5 refers).

10. Home to School Transport Appeals

On consideration of (a) a report of the Director of Children Services setting out education transport appeals that officers could not determine under delegated authority, and (b) the comments and written submission of parents.

Resolved – (1) That due to the exceptional circumstances set out in the appeal, the appeal for RM be upheld and a bus pass be provided for this scholastic term to allow an admission appeal to be lodged.

2) That, due to the exceptional circumstances set out in the appeal, the appeal for MC be upheld and a personal travel budget be allocated.

(3) That, due to the exceptional circumstances set out in the appeal, the appeal for TB be upheld and a personal travel budget for this scholastic term be allocated.

(4) Further to (3) above, the Sub-Committee requested an update following completion of investigations by the 0-25 Statutory Services Team Leader with West Berkshire Council.

This page is intentionally left blank

EDUCATION TRANSPORT APPEALS SUB-COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Ray Ballman, Caryl Sydney-Smith and Jenny Jefferies.

11. Appointment of Chair

Resolved – That Councillor Caryl Sydney-Smith Chair this meeting of the Sub-Committee.

Councillor Caryl Sydney-Smith took the Chair.

12. Declarations of Interest

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

13. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st September 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

14. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved – That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1992, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred in Agenda item 8 on the grounds that it would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information concerned (Minute 15 refers).

15. Home to School Transport Appeals

On consideration of (a) a report of the Director of Children Services setting out education transport appeals that officers could not determine under delegated authority, and (b) the comments and written submission of parents.

Resolved – (1) That due to the exceptional circumstances set out in the appeal, the appeal for KP be upheld and a bus pass be provided for this scholastic term to allow an admission application to another local school to be lodged.

2) That, due to the exceptional circumstances set out in the appeal, the appeal for FF be upheld and a bus pass be allocated whilst FF attended secondary school.

(3) That, due to the exceptional circumstances set out in the appeal, the appeal for BS be upheld and a travel allowance be allocated as dictated in the decision letter.

This page is intentionally left blank

Section 4

Children Services Bodies Minutes

This page is intentionally left blank

SCHOOLS FORUM

TUESDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2020

Maintained School Members:

Rhian Cockwell,	Primary Headteacher
Kate Higham,	Special Headteacher
Lindsey Hull,	Pupil Referral Unit
Alison Lowe,	Primary Headteacher
Ray Williams,	Primary Governor

Academy Members

Bob Buckley,	Mainstream Academy
Gary Evans,	Mainstream Academy
Fiona Godfrey,	Mainstream Academy
Bob Linnegar,	Mainstream Academy
Karen Pyman,	Mainstream Academy
Jackie Smith,	Special Academy
Clive Zimmerman,	Mainstream Academy

Non-School Representatives

Andrew Henstridge,	Clifton Diocese
Margaret Clark,	Diocese of Bristol
Jo Morris Golds,	Early Years

Officers:

Annette Perrington	Director: Inclusion and Achievement
Gareth Cheal,	Interim SEND Lead, Education
Dawn Sexstone,	Head of Finance, Children Services
Danielle Maundrell,	Strategic Commissioner, Early Years and Childcare
Phil Wirth,	Principal Solicitor (Litigation)

Apologies for absence were received from, Peter Smith (Trade Unions), Sherryl Bareham and James Povoas (Mainstream Academy) and Nick Capstick (Special Academy).

7. Declaration 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 of interest were made.

8. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

9. Public Question Time

No questions were received for this meeting.

10.**DSG Retained Budget Monitoring**

The Forum considered a report by the Head of Finance, Children Services, on the latest projected 2020-21 Dedicated Schools Grant ("DSG") retained budget position. She referred to the requirement by the Local Authority to report on the DSG budget position to the Schools Forum and advised that the report provided data on the projected year end position against the 2020-21 retained budgets based upon available information at the end of August 2020. She explained that the projected out-turn position is forecast to be £1.980m above the overall budget and that the main variances are related to increasing demand for High Needs support. Members heard that the forecast based on known demand and agreed placements as at the end of August is £1.980m and that following the projected forecast and the 2019/20 brought forward deficit of £1.679m, the total DSG balance will be a deficit of £3.659m.

Resolved: The Schools Forum notes:

- (a) That the latest projection on the 2020-21 retained budget is expected to be £1.980m above budget.
- (b) That following the projected out-turn position and brought forward deficit from 2019/20, the DSG balance will be a deficit to be mitigated of £3.659m.

11.**Monitoring of School Balances**

The Forum considered a report submitted by the Head of Finance, Children Services, setting out the level of school balances, particularly regarding the planned use of 2020/21 surplus balances during 2021/22 and the use of 2022/23 surplus balances in 2022/23. She referred to:

- The summary of balances, which strongly indicated that overall balances are expected to continue to significantly reduce over the next three years from the value carried forward into 2020/21.
- The analysis of the schools' planned use of the 2019/20 surplus balances during 2020/21.
- The actual revenue balances brought forward from 2019/20 and the indicative revenue balances for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.
- The work to be undertaken by the department to support the number of schools predicting a deficit balance in any of the financial years.
- The right of the Local Authority (LA) to use the claw back mechanism and when this may be implemented.

Resolved: The Schools Forum notes:

- (a) The schools' surplus balances brought forward at 1st April 2020 and the schools' committed use of these balances in 2020/21 and 2021/22.
- (b) The analysis of schools' planned use of surplus balances brought forward in 2020/21.
- (c) The indicative future balances to be held by schools at 31st March 2021, 31st March 2022 and 31st March 2023, taken from the three-year budget plans submitted by schools in June 2020.
- (d) The number of schools forecasting low balances on 31st March 2020, 31st March 2021 and 31st March 2022.
- (e) The school balances claw back mechanism remains in place and the circumstances that need to apply for it to be implemented by the Local Authority.

12. Schools Forum Membership and Update

The Interim SEND Lead updated the Forum on Membership matters. He advised that a review had been undertaken of the current membership in light of the evolving balance of schools in Swindon. He drew attention to point 3.3 of the report highlighting that membership had been agreed in 2019 on the pupil percentage difference between maintained and academy schools. He requested that a task group be set up to review current Forum membership with the aim of having representation from the Schools, High Needs and Early Years blocks as this would allow future work of the group to be strengthened.

Resolved: (1) The Schools Forum agrees to establish a task group to undertake a review of the membership of the Forum.

(2) That the Interim SEND Lead be requested to update the Forum on the recommendations of the task group at the Schools Forum meeting on 5th January 2021.

13. Early Years Budget Update

The Forum considered a report submitted by Strategic Commissioner Early Years and Childcare, setting out the budget position of the early years Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and provided an update on the rates to be paid to providers for 2, 3 and 4 year old funding during 20/21 financial year. She drew attention to the issues faced by early years providers due to Covid-19, the agreement that one hundred percent of 2 year old funding and ninety five percent of 3 and 4 year old funding was to be passed onto providers

Resolved: (1) That School Forum notes the early years budget funding position for Autumn 2020.

(2) That an update on the review of inclusion funding being undertaken by the Inclusion Officer be submitted at the School Forum meeting on 5th January 2021.

14. Schools Block Update

The Head of Finance, Children Services, submitted a report for members to update and discuss (a) the 2020/21 Local agreed formula values compared to the National Funding Formula (NFF) values; (b) the planned changes to the National Funding Formula for financial year 2021/22; and (c) the timeframes for the 2021/22 Budget Consultation. She reminded members of the decision taken at the Schools Forum meeting in December 2019 where they supported Option 1 when setting the local Mainstream Funding Formula and updated them on the changes to the National Funding formula for 2021/22. She concluded by advising that a consultation event for stakeholders would need to be set up before the end of November 2020 to discuss the setting of the 2021/22 individual school budgets (ISB). Members will be able to discuss the LA option either to use the National Funding Formula ('NFF') allocations or to agree a local formula with Schools Forum to enable the LA to deal with local issues including Pupil Growth.

Resolved: (1) That School Forum notes:

(a) The comparison data between the NFF and the Local agreed formula values for 2020/21.

(b) The changes that have been made to the 2021/22 National Funding Formula.

(2) That School Forum agrees:

(a) To undertake a 2021/22 Funding formula consultation by the end of November 2020.

(b) To set up an extraordinary Schools Forum meeting in December 2020 to review the formula and principles that will be applied to the funding allocated to Swindon for 2021/22.

(c) To assist the Finance Manager, Children Services, in his collection of indicative autumn census data to be undertaken in October 2020.

15. 2020-21 DSG High Needs Budget Update

The Interim SEND Lead gave a presentation (attached) updating members on the current and projected position for the Swindon Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High Needs block and on progress made with the reforms following the July 2020 meeting. He explained that the report supports the SEND and Inclusion Strategy, the Written Statement of Action and that the proposals contained links to the 3-year action plan agreed by the Strategic SEND Board. Members noted the partnership approach between parents and carers, leaders in education across all settings in Swindon, political leaders, officers and members of Schools Forum, which has been recognised as essential to address the need to achieve a balanced High Needs budget position by 2023. He drew the following key issues to members' attention:

- The SEND and inclusion strategy and principles that will help set the activities and decisions for the future of the High Needs Block.
- Resource Allocation Tool and banding descriptors testing and how this will (a) provide more clarity about how children are funded based on their individual needs, (b) make clearer how funding is allocated and (c) removes the complicated supplementary allocations.
- How the High Needs funding without EHC plans would be transferred to support inclusion.
- How the transfer of Early Years funding will create pressure on the high needs block and how this will be addressed as part of the wider budget deficit recovery plan work.
- The pressure on the 2020/21 DSG High Needs Budget.

Following his presentation, the Interim SEND Lead, Education together with the Chair responded to members' comments and questions in respect of the following matters:

- When and where the therapeutic and advisory services were agreed and how was the benefit to the children accessing these services being measured.
- The impact on education support services due to capacity and funding constraints.
- How funding to 'Teams around the School' would be allocated to schools via a different route and would be allocated according to the child's needs.
- The centralisation of paediatric services being delivered by professionals.
- The cost of Advisory Teachers, the benefits of employing them and how their performance would be measured.
- The adoption of a different delivery mechanism for allocating high needs funding to support early intervention.
- The DSG High Needs budget forecast a deficit of 1,691m for 2020/21.

Resolved: (1) That Schools Forum notes:

(a) The progress of testing the High Needs Banding tool.

(b) The agreement to transfer of funding from early years budgets to high needs budget to support the use of Early Years Inclusion budget for its intended purpose.

(c) Further to (b) above, acknowledges pressures to be picked up as a part of the wider budget deficit recovery plan work.

- (c) The DSG HN budget forecast and pressures for 2020/21
- (2) That School Forum supports the recommendation to cease high needs funding for children under statutory needs assessment (£0.454m) and redirect the allocation to the “Team around the School” to support the delivery of new working practices
- (3) That School Forum members volunteer to support a series of “task and finish” groups to be established and undertaken in October, which will clarify detailed spending across the DSG.

16. 2020-21 Covid 19 Finance Update

The Head of Finance, Children Services, submitted a report regarding the current financial position of the Local Authority due to the impact of Covid-19. She confirmed that this was an extract from the Budget Management 2020/21 report that went to Cabinet on the 9th September 2020. She drew attention to the year-end projection, based on the position at the end of June, reflecting pressures of £18.7m on the General Fund. This has been offset by the receipt of a Covid-19 grant, resulting in a total general fund variance of £5.686m.

Resolved: That Schools Forum notes the pressure on the Local Authority General Fund budget is a pressure of £5.686m due to the impact of Covid-19

This page is intentionally left blank

Section 5

Minutes of Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel and Fire Authority

This page is intentionally left blank

MINUTES

Meeting: Wiltshire Police and Crime Panel
Place: On-Line Meeting
Date: 3 September 2020
Start Time: 10.00 am
Finish Time: 12.15 pm

Please direct any enquiries on these minutes to:

Kevin Fielding, Tel: 01249 706612 EXT 21612 or (e-mail)
kevin.fielding@wiltshire.gov.uk

Papers available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

In Attendance:

Wiltshire Councillors

Cllr Junab Ali, Cllr Abdul Amin, Cllr Alan Bishop, Cllr Richard Britton,
Cllr Ross Henning, Cllr Vinay Manro, Anna Richardson, Cllr Tom Rounds,
Cllr Jonathon Seed and Cllr John Smale

Also Present:

Angus Macpherson – Police & Crime Commissioner
Kieran Kilgallen – OPCC
Chris McMullen – OPCC
Adrian Jones - OPCC

Kevin Fielding – Wiltshire Council

<u>Agenda Item No.</u>	<u>Summary of Issues Discussed and Decision</u>
87	<u>Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Richard Britton was elected Chairman for the forthcoming year • Cllr Junab Ali was elected Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year
88	<u>Apologies for Absence</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies were received from Cllr Peter Hutton – Wiltshire Council and Mamie Beasant – Independent Member
89	<u>Minutes and matters arising</u> Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 4 June were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
90	<u>Declarations of interest</u> There were no declarations of interest
91	<u>Chairman's Announcements</u> There were no Chairman's Announcements
92	<u>Public Participation</u> There was no Public Participation
93	<u>Quarterly data (Q1)- Risk / Performance / Finance / Complaints</u> The Commissioner presented his report for data reported for Quarter 1 - 2020/2021 Performance Overview which was contained in the agenda pack. Points made included: Crime Volume <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April-2020 was highlighting as a significant exceptional low with 2,518

	<p>crimes recorded. This was to be expected considering the recent impact of COVID-19 on the overall crime position within particular crime groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increases in recorded crime for May and June-2020 correlated with the relaxation of lockdown guidelines by the government. • The monthly and rolling 12 month forecast was showing a decline in volumes. • The year on year change to June-2020 of -4.4% had been significantly impacted by the decrease in reported crime. • Police recorded crime had decreased nationally by -3.9 per cent in the 12 months to May 2020 and -2.8 per cent regionally. Meaning Wiltshire was in line with national increases but significantly below forces within our most similar group (MSG). <p>Hate Crime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were 81 reported hate crimes in June-20, highlighting as an exceptional high and breaching the upper limit, 54 (66%) were racially motivated. There were also 25 hate incidents recorded, also considered as exceptional. • Exceptional increases were experienced in Salisbury (15), Amesbury (8) and Chippenham (6) CPTs. • Hate Crime volumes increased week on week in June-2020, with the week ending 28/06 being most impacted. • The Black Lives Matter Movement saw: (resulting in 8 hate crimes being reported), 300 people gathered in Trowbridge on the 04/06, 1,000 people gathered in Swindon and Salisbury on the 06/06, 150 people gathered in Melksham on the 07/06. <p>A discussion ensued. It was agreed that the OPCC would bring a report to the December meeting outlining how Wiltshire Police were supporting victims of hate crime.</p> <p>Volume of Domestic Abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the long term trend for domestic abuse crime in Wiltshire continued to increase in line with the national trend with June-2020 being the first exceptionally high month in the last 2 years. These increases were reported as exceptional highs within Chippenham, Royal Wootton Bassett and Swindon CPT's. This exception correlated with the easing in
--	--

lockdown restrictions.

- That there had been a significant reduction in reported high risk cases. In contrast, partner agencies were reporting an increase in more complex cases.
- Wiltshire Police had invested in radio media campaign, Facebook live sessions and promoted multiagency social media campaign all encouraging reporting.

It was agreed that the OPCC would email the panel members with statistics highlighting - How does Wiltshire Police compare to its MFS group.

Number of Actual Sickness Days lost per person

- That Quarter 1 2020/2021 had seen a reduction in sickness. With June-2020, being the lowest volume since September 2017 with 1738 sickness days lost (0.8 days lost per person).
- June-2020 experienced 42% of all sickness being classified as psychological.
- A slight increasing trend over the previous 24 months was still present (7%). However, if volumes continued to reduce or remain stable a downward trend was likely over the coming months.
- The reduction in volume was attributed to long term members of staff returning from sickness and increased data quality. Staff from our human resources department were focusing on ensuring the records were accurate, in conjunction with daily data quality meetings to identify anomalies within records.

It was agreed that the OPCC would email the panel members with statistics outlining - why 42% of sickness is classified as psychological.

Covid-19 Issued Fixed Penalty Notices

Panel members raised concerned that they felt that Wiltshire Police and Wiltshire Council were not actively enforcing law breaking concerning the non-wearing of masks in shops. It was felt that Wiltshire Police and Wiltshire Council needed to show that they took this issue seriously and would not tolerate any members of the public who were flouting the rule re masks.

	<p>Tri-Force</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Wiltshire Police had worked in collaboration with Avon & Somerset Constabulary and Gloucestershire Constabulary for the shared provision of Specialist Operations including Firearms Officers, Roads Policing & Collision Investigation and Dog Handlers, entering into a 'Tri-Force' collaboration agreement with effect from April 2014. • As of 19th April 2019, the collaboration had been formally disbanded following concerns over the impact on governance of proposed changes to the model, although some elements such as the shared Black Rock firearms training facility remain in operation. • Disaggregating the collaboration and bolstering the resilience of the respective specialist teams with additional local resource carried an anticipated cost implication of c.£860k per annum; however, it was anticipated that benefits would be realised in terms of their increased contribution to local policing priorities. • In anticipation of the dissolution of the Tri-Force collaboration, an internal audit was included within the 2019/20 annual plan. • Phase 3 of the implementation of HQ Operations involved a review of the performance of the current HQ Operations model and was done in tandem with the Force Management Statement. • HQ Operations frequently assisted local CPT's with community priorities which either required additional support or specialist assets. • HQ Operations were tasked via the Force Incident Manager for Spontaneous Work or for Pre-Planned, Force Tasking Fortnightly and also via local Tasking Meetings which the HQ Operations Department Leads attend. • Local priorities where HQ Operations could be an assistance were provided to the HQ Operations Department Leads and then this was tasked directly to officers on HQ Operations.
--	---

- The process of tasking had been noted as being successful, it was responsive to the needs of local CPT's and could flex to provide support in Surge Demand.

It was noted that Wiltshire Police had had to undertake a major exercise in unravelling all the strands from the Tri-Force collaboration, and that this should be considered when entering into any future collaborations.

Risk Register

Kieran Kilgallen - Chief Executive, OPCC outlined the risk register which was contained in the agenda pack.

Points made included:

- That the risk register was aligned to the lifespan of the Police and Crime Plan (2017-2021) and had been reviewed and updated as at 30 July 2020.
- That all risks were split into two categories – they were either inherent risks and would remain on the register regardless of score, or topical risks which would be removed when they had a score of 10 or under. This would assist in ensuring focus remains on current risks and what additional mitigations or plans were needed to reduce the score and thus removed the risk from the register.
- That the register was a dynamic document and was intended to capture live management of risk and mitigation, rather than being a record of all possible risks.

The Risk Register was noted.

The OPCC were congratulated for the new style of the risk register, which it was felt was now easier to navigate.

Report on the Monitoring of Professional Standards, Integrity and Complaint Appeals

	<p>Kieran Kilgallen - Chief Executive, OPCC outlined the report which was contained in the agenda pack. The report provided the Police and Crime Panel with an update on the monitoring of professional standards, integrity and complaint appeals for the period April 2019 to March 2020.</p> <p>Points made included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That a key element in evaluating performance involves comparisons with the performance of our Most Similar Forces (MSFs) and the national picture. IOPC had yet to provide this data or indicate when they would be in a position to do so. The Independent Adjudicator therefore analysed the data available from the Force system at the cut-off date of 31st March 2020. The analysis was likely to err to the pessimistic in consequence, but otherwise gave a reasonable indication of the efficiency and effectiveness with which PSD handled complaints, had monitored and responded to potential corrupt practice and implemented integrity checks. • The Policing and Crime Act 2017 changed the processes for the handling of complaints and conduct matters as of 1st February 2020. The provisions allow Professional Standards Departments to not record or investigate Complaints below the conduct threshold if they could be finalised by a process of Service Recovery (SR); i.e. a triage process in which complainants are provided with an explanation and, where appropriate, an apology for any failures to provide a reasonable service. This process would be conducted through OPCC from September 2020. • In June 2019 two Independent Resilience Adjudicators were appointed and trained. • The change to the system had necessarily confined performance review to the period 1st April 2019 to 31st January 2020. The Adjudicator did however include a short resume of experience in the handling of complaints under the new regime for the two month period 1st February-31st March 2020. <p><i>It was agreed that the OPCC would email panel members for information on – Table A: PSD Complaint Handling Performance.</i></p> <p><i>The Chairman thanked the Commissioner and Kieran Kilgallen for their respective reports.</i></p>
94	<p><u>Community Policing Model</u></p> <p>Chris McMullen – Director of People and Change, OPCC presented a report which outlined performance measures for the PCC and Police and Crime panel related to areas of Community Policing Teams (CPT).</p>

	<p>Points made included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That as the organisation brought more officers in under Operation Uplift, it was anticipated that the number of vacancies would increase. The scorecard would also present information on police sergeants, local crime investigators and specials to capture all aspects of CPT. • That the report continued to assess working days “lost” to short and medium term sickness and annual leave and calculated how many FTE posts this equates too. The methodology for this was to count the total number of days lost to sickness and annual leave within the last three months. This resulted in a “days lost” figure which was then divided by 48, which was the average number of shifts (working days) for officers across a quarter. This provided an indication regarding the number of posts lost to sickness and annual leave (capacity of 1 post = 48 “days lost” over 3 months). • Calculating short-term reasons (less than 27 days) for absence within CPT was complex and subject to more variance than longer term reasons. <p>The report was noted, it was felt that this report was very comprehensive and well received.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Chris McMullen for his report.</p>
95	<p><u>Operation Uplift - update</u></p> <p>Chris McMullen – Director of People and Change, OPCC presented a report which outlined the Operation Uplift Update.</p> <p>Points made included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That as raised within the previous paper presented at the June Panel meeting, the national Uplift programme was an opportunity to increase resourcing and re-invest in policing further to a ten year period of austerity and a fall in police officer numbers. • That the service had been asked to introduce 2,000 extra officers by March 2020, rising to 6,000 extra officers by March 2021. • That Wiltshire had been allocated 49 extra officers by March 2021. High level assumptions continued to be made on financial and workforce plans for beyond March 2021, which suggested that a total number of 147 extra officers by March 2023.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That in order to achieve the uplift numbers, in addition to maintaining the numbers required due to officers leaving the organisation, Wiltshire would be required to recruit over 400 officers up to March 2023. It was estimated at this stage that one in eight applicants get through the process, resulting in needing approximately 3,200 applicants for police officer jobs in Wiltshire – this was a huge requirement. <p>It was agreed that Chris McMullen would have further discussions with Cllr Richard Britton re the “total established figure”.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Chris McMullen for his report.</p>
96	<p><u>Progress of Estates Strategy - update</u></p> <p>Kieran Kilgallen - Chief Executive, OPCC outlined a report which provided an update on progress in delivering the PCC’s Estates Strategy 2017-2021. It provided a comprehensive summary of progress across all sites as well as those identified for change in the Estates Strategy.</p> <p>Points made included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the PCC’s Estates Strategy was published August 2017 outlining the plans for the police estate. This strategy was based on operational requirements from Wiltshire Police and approved by the Chief Constable and the Force ELT. • The strategy addressed long standing issues including significant underutilisation following policing model changes. The introduction of technology had been successful in reducing the need for staff to be in offices. • That the initial parts of the strategy were to develop a clear delivery plan and establish projects to deliver the new estates model, the strategy objectives as well as maintaining smooth operational delivery. • The operational demands placed on the Estates team and Wiltshire Police due to OP Fairline and Fortis delayed delivery of this strategy by approximately 9 months. Currently the estate strategy was also being delayed due to COVID and the impact on the construction market and supply chain. This was a risk included on the OPCC risk register. • That the Estates Strategy set the direction for police estate to meet The Police and Crime plan 2017-21 and supported the efficient and effective delivery of policing. Its delivery was included within the Police and Crime

	<p>Plan 2017-2021.</p> <p>It was agreed that a Capital Budget report would be provided for the December meeting.</p> <p>The report was noted.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked Kieran Kilgallen for his report.</p>
97	<p><u>Members Questions</u></p> <p>The Members Questions contained in the agenda pack were noted.</p> <p>Cllr Jonathon Seed asked re his question contained in the agenda pack “Avon and Somerset will receive £400,000, Devon and Cornwall £546,781 and Dorset £266,357 – a total of £1,213,138. There is no extra funding in this round for Gloucestershire or Wiltshire. Did Wiltshire PCC or CC bid for this funding and if not why not? If they did bid why were they not successful”</p> <p>OPCC – That Wiltshire did not meet the funding criteria.</p> <p>Cllr Jonathon Seed asked a question “Should the Commissioner be pushing for more Automatic Speed Cameras”</p> <p>OPCC – It was felt that Automatic Speed Cameras should not be seen as a replacement for the Speedwatch scheme. A business case was being put together for interventions that would include fines and speed awareness courses.</p>
98	<p><u>Future meeting dates</u></p> <p>The future meeting dates of the PCP were noted.</p>