

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2020

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

Councillor Jim Grant attended the meeting in respect of Minutes 15, 17 and 18

14. Declarations of Interest.

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare 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 1st July 2020 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Councillor Grant asked in relation to Minute 6 if there had been briefing on Section 114 notices. The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education, and Skills undertook to provide this by the end of the week.

16. Public Question Time.

Mr Roy Worman, Swindon resident, submitted questions relating to Covid-19 regulations, to which Councillor Cathy Martyn, Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety, had provided responses. Mr Worman asked a supplementary question about how the Council would manage the change of emphasis from voluntary to compulsory checks, to which Councillor Martyn undertook to provide a written response as soon as possible. Mr Worman asked a further question about the re-introduction of Open Forum and the Leader stated he would talk to officers to see if this could resume from the next Cabinet meeting.

17. Swindon Borough Council Covid-19 Recovery update

Councillor David Renard, Leader of the Council, and the Director of Public Health (on behalf of the Chief Executive) introduced a joint report providing Cabinet with an update on the Covid-19 cases that have been identified and the action taken in accordance with the Local Outbreak Management Plan ("LOMP"), including the re-instatement of Gold Response from Monday, 10th August 2020. The report also set out the progress the Council has made to recover from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Leader drew Cabinet's attention to the work on managing local outbreaks as well as restarting the economy, especially in the town centre. The Director of Public Health delivered an update on the current situation, emphasising the progress made in reducing the infection rate while urging all not to be complacent. Councillor Brian Ford, Cabinet

Member for Adults and Health thanked all councillors for their efforts in supporting the response and recovery efforts.

Councillor Jim Grant along with Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Culture and Heritage, asked a range of questions, to which the Leader, Councillor Brian Ford, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, Councillor Robert Jandy, Cabinet Member for Organisational Excellence, the Corporate Director, Children's Services, and the Director of Public Health responded at the meeting.

- What was the rate of return to offices by Council staff? Twenty five percent of staff had return with the aim of this rising to thirty percent by the end of September, with a further review in October.
- What was the engagement with ward councillors in SN2? Ward councillors had been engaged but the Director of Public Health would confirm this and ensure that both councillors in specific areas and across the borough were kept briefed.
- Would there be a test facility in SN2 given that the current ones were in SN1? The testing process is being administered nationally and the Council was looking to identify more 'pop-up' sites to facilitate access in areas of concern.
- Which agencies will be responsible for enforcing the new restrictions? The police service would be the principal agency, with the Chief Constable having briefed the Council and other partners through the Local Resilience Forum.

Resolved – (1) That the Gold response to the recent localised Covid-19 outbreak be noted.
(2) That the progress towards delivering the Covid-19 Recovery Plan (attached at Annexes One and Two to the main report) be noted.

(3) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be invited to review the recovery workstreams of the Covid-19 Recovery Plan, and collate lessons learnt since March 2020 as set out below.

(a) Adults' Health, Adults' Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Social Care, Housing & Vulnerable Groups workstream.

(b) Children's Health, Social Care and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Social Care, Housing & Vulnerable Groups and Education, Skills & Learning workstreams.

(c) Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Social Care, Housing & Vulnerable Groups and Operational Services workstreams.

(d) Growing the Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee - the economy workstream.

(e) Resources and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee – the organisation workstream.

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

18. Budget Management Update (September)

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

Councillor Holland advised Cabinet that while the position was of concern, the final government grants had not been determined and that he remained confident that there

would be further support.

Councillor Jim Grant and Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for the Town Centre, Culture, and Heritage, asked a number of questions, to which the Leader, Councillor Brian Ford - Cabinet Member for Adults and Health – and Councillor Holland responded at the meeting.

- Could Members have copies of the letter and response to the government following the Council's resolution (Minute 24, 9th July 2020)? The Leader undertook to circulate any correspondence at the next Council meeting.
- How would the Council address any potential shortfall in government funding? The Council would use its ongoing programme of reviewing how it could provide all services more efficiently. The Council, working with local MPs and the LGA would continue to lobby central government.
- If there were a shortfall, would there be redundancies? The Council would only use compulsory redundancies as a last resort and after due consultation with staff and Unions.
- Did the current government grants cover higher expenditure rather than lost income? It would not be possible to comment until the Council had received the final round of grants. Prior to Covid-19, the Council still faced higher demand for personalised care services due to demographic pressures, although in the main spending area, Adult Social Care, officers had already generated additional savings to reduce any potential overspend.

Resolved – (1) That the 2020/21 revenue budget forecast out-turn for each service area set out in Table 1 and Appendix 1 to the main report be noted;

(2) That the update on the COVID-19 funding support be noted;

(3) That it be noted that the Corporate Management Team will develop plans to mitigate the current forecast overspend;

(4) That the virements set out in Appendix 2 to the main report be approved;

(5) That the maintenance of Members' Allowances at the current approved level be approved.

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

19. Capital Monitoring Quarter 1 update

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

Resolved - (1) That the 2020/21 year end projected out-turn position as set out in Tables 1 & 2 and Appendices 1 and 2 to the main report be noted;

(2) That the additions to the programme detailed at paragraphs 3.5 to 3.9 in the main report and set out below be approved

(a) That funding from Line 5 - HR & Finance System be re-allocated to provide a capital contingency for investment or improvement as required.

(b) That Line 31 - M4 Junction 15 be updated to show the inclusion of £12.35m of funding

from other sources in addition to the contribution previously agreed by the Council bringing the total scheme value to £17.15m.

(c) That Line 50 - South Marston Primary School be amended from £3.1m to £4.9m to cover high construction costs, amended specifications for the kitchen, meeting the latest environmental standards, providing a temporary community car park and pedestrian routes.

(d) That £2.137m of developers' S106 contributions be allocated to allow Dorcan Academy to increase in its Permitted Admission Numbers (PAN) of 20 pupils per year group.

(e) That £115.5k of Section 106 and Diocese funding be allocated to Swindon Rugby Football Club to replace pitches lost to the construction of a primary school.

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

20. Swindon Borough Local Development Scheme Review 2020

Councillor Gary Sumner, Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport, and Planning, along with the Director of Strategic Development, introduced a joint report seeking agreement for the revised Swindon Borough Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2020. This Scheme outlines the work programme for the production of Local Development Plans, (principally the Local Plan), including joint working arrangements with Wiltshire Council, and for the arrangements to make it publicly available.

Resolved – (1) That the Swindon Borough Local Development Scheme as attached at Appendix 1 is approved and authorised for publication in accordance with the arrangements set out in paragraph 3.27.

(2) That the Director of Strategic Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Infrastructure, Transport & Planning, is authorised to make minor non-material changes to the content of the Swindon Borough Local Development Scheme if required, prior to publication.

(3) That the Director of Strategic Development is authorised to commence joint working with Wiltshire Council in the review of Minerals and Waste Development Plan documents.

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

21. School Place Planning Study 2020

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, Education, and Skills along with the Corporate Director, Children's Services, submitted a joint report to identify the number of school places required to meet Swindon's long-term educational place planning needs until 2026. The report included the expected demographic projections, proposed housing development areas, and the need to support attainment and opportunities for young people across the Town and Borough.

Councillor Holland informed the meeting of an error in the body of the report and the words with sixth form should be deleted from paragraph 3.31. He also referred to a communication that he had received from the Principal of New College.

Councillors Gary Sumner - Cabinet Member for Strategic Initiatives, Transport and Planning - and Brian Ford - Cabinet Member for Adults and Health - asked the Cabinet Member if the study could take into account the need for town centre provision so as to reduce the need for pupils to travel to existing schools. Councillor Holland and the Strategic School Admissions Manager agreed to note these issues.

Resolved That the School Place Planning study update 2020 attached as Appendix 1 to the main report be approved.

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