

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 14 JANUARY 2010

PRESENT:- The Worshipful The Mayor in the Chair; Councillors Andy Albinson, Junab Ali, Steve Allsopp, Paul Baker, John Ballman, Ray Ballman, Rex Barnett, Mike Bawden, Andrew Bennett, Roderick Bluh, Michael Bray, Sinead Darker, Doreen Dart, Michael Dickinson, Melanie Duff, Mark Edwards, Stephanie Exell, Paul Findlow, Raymond Fisher, Fionuala Foley, Brian Ford, David Glaholm, James Grant, Peter Greenhalgh, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Fay Howard, Peter Mallinson, Mary Martin, Nick Martin, Brian Mattock, Des Moffatt, Derique Montaut, William Morton, Stan Pajak, Kevin Parry, Anthony Peake, Garry Perkins, David Renard, David Sammels, Eric Shaw, John Short, Kevin Small, Peter Stoddart, Justin Tomlinson, Vera Tomlinson, Steve Wakefield, Keith Williams, David Wood, Robert Wright and Philip Young.

70. Minute's Silence

The Council held a minute of silence in remembrance of former Councillors Vikki Bryne and Mark Furkins.

71. Mayor's Announcements

The Mayor reported that the BBC had requested permission to film the Council meeting. The Council agreed that, in accordance with Standing Order 12, the BBC be permitted to film the Council meeting.

The Mayor advised the meeting that he had received a request from the BBC for the Council to take the Motion on Wi Fi earlier on the agenda. With the agreement of the Council the Motion on Wi Fi was moved to Agenda Item 6a.

72. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Graham Cherry, Maurice Fanning, Colin Lovell, Glenn Smith and Martin Wiltshire.

73. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2009 be confirmed and signed.

74. Public Question Time

Ms. Martine Steinhardt tabled a question on health issues related to Wi-Fi and a written response was tabled.

Ms. Martine Steinhardt asked the following supplementary question "In light of the fact the European Union Parliament recognises that the limits on exposure to lectromagnetic fields which have been set for the general public are obsolete, why

would Swindon Borough Council roll out a scheme at great speed, with no public consultation or health survey undertaken, that only conforms to these obsolete limits?

Councillor Roderick Bluh indicated that a written response would be provided.

Ms. Rachel Bridden asked the following question "In your reply to Ms. Steinhardt's question you quoted from the Health Protection Agency that "the exposures from Wi Fi equipment are not expected to exceed internationally accepted guidelines" but these are the internationally accepted guidelines set by ICNIRP that many believe are now obsolete, including Sir William Stewart ex Chairperson of the Health Protection Agency, because they only include thermal effects. There have been studies which show biological effects at really low levels, below the thermal limit. Why does Swindon Council think it is ok to go ahead, even though many recognise that the existing limits may be flawed?

Councillor Roderick Bluh indicated that a written response would be provided.

Mr. Peter Newson (Director of Swindon Dial-A-Ride) asked the Leader of the Council, "Why Swindon Dial a Ride had been excluded from tendering for contracts, apparently based on an European Union Directive when he had received legal advice that this should not happen? He asked why he was still waiting for a reply 11 weeks after writing to the Council seeking clarification and asked for assurances on the future of Dial-A-Ride.

Councillor Roderick Bluh noted that he had only heard about the European Union Directive an hour before the meeting. He would seek information on the points raised in time for the meeting he had scheduled with Mr. Newson for the following day, noting that this meeting had been arranged before Christmas. He also noted that the current administration were supportive of community transport and wanted to continue funding it, but that it needed assurance on the services' efficiency and welcomed dialog on this and other issues. There was also a wider transport review that needed to be undertaken. He was not aware that there were letters to him that were awaiting a response.

75. Communications

The Chief Executive reported that no communications had been received.

76. Minutes for Confirmation

(1) Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor Fionuala Foley seconded that Minute 75(2) of the Cabinet (Creation of Swindon Commercial Services as an Arms Length Company – Appointment of Member Representation) be confirmed and adopted.

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

(2) Councillor Eric Shaw moved and Councillor Andrew Bennett seconded that Minute 25(2) of the Licensing Committee (Proposed Designated Public Place Scheme – Cavendish Square) be confirmed and adopted.

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

77.

Standing Order 15 Questions

The Director of Law and Democratic Services reported that Standing Order 15 questions had been received from Councillors Junab Ali, Steve Allsopp, Ray Ballman, David Glaholm, Jim Grant, Fay Howard, Des Moffatt, Derique Montaut, Stan Pajak, Kevin Small and Bob Wright. The questions and answers from the appropriate Cabinet Member are attached as Appendix 1 to the Minutes.

Councillor Fay Howard welcomed the collective working regarding the education funding settlement and asked if representations had been made regarding gifted and talented children and those with special educational needs?

Councillor Garry Perkins confirmed that both he and the Group Director, Children had taken every opportunity to make representations on the education funding settlement to Central Government.

Councillor Montaut noted that he had not received a satisfactory response regarding him or other non-administration Councillors obtaining access to the Wi-Fi Business Plan and asked when this would be available?

Councillor Roderick Bluh responded that it was within Digital City's remit as the company involved to provide the Business Plan and not the Council as a shareholder, and suggested that Councillor Montaut should contact Digital City directly.

Councillor Jim Grant asked whether the Council had been in discussions with BT Netflix regarding contracts prior to Digital City?

Councillor Roderick Bluh indicated that a written response would be provided to this question.

Councillor Kevin Small asked if Digital City would be charged rent/lease for the siting of transmitters and asked if this were the case, whether this was not contrary to the Council not being able to lease lampposts?

Councillor Roderick Bluh indicated that a written response would be provided to this question.

Councillor Steve Allsopp asked if the financial information relating to the Wi-Fi project would be set out in the Council's Annual Accounts?

Councillor Roderick Bluh responded that the Council's Director of Finance would include the information he felt was appropriate in the Annual Accounts.

Councillor Des Moffatt asked who would be responsible for the reinstatement of the play area at Moredon Playing fields?

Councillor Garry Perkins confirmed that Property Services would be paying for the reinstatement of the play area under the terms of the original contract.

Councillor David Glaholm asked why there was no substantive improvement to the bus service from Penill to the Academy as requested at the meeting held at the Penhill British Legion Club attended by the Cabinet Member?

Councillor Garry Perkins noted that local residents had requested a 15-20 minute service in the morning and evening but noted that the existing service was not well used. He also felt the service to the academy was adequate as it stopped within 100 metres of the Pinehurst Academy gates.

Councillor David Glaholm thanked the Cabinet Member for his timely intervention on parking in the Penhill area. He asked if the Cabinet Member would work with him and others to move this issue forward, including the adoption of appropriate highway powers.

Councillor David Glaholm noted that the Ward Councillors would be consulted on any licensing agreement. With regard to the adoption of appropriate highway powers, he was happy to discuss this with Councillor Peter Greenhalgh.

Councillor Fay Howard asked if she could be given some cost and budgetary details regarding the Housing Options Appraisal process?

Councillor David Renard indicated that he would provide a written response to this question.

Councillor David Glaholm asked whether the Leader of the Council agreed with him that the Scrutiny function would perform better if there were more non-councillors serving on the Committees?

Councillor Roderick Bluh noted that there were issues of democracy involved, but he would be happy to discuss this further with Councillor Glaholm.

Councillor Ray Ballman asked the Cabinet Member if he shared her concern that if Tantivy had to close before alternative provision could be provided, that children would need to be placed Out of Bough on placements?

Councillor Garry Perkins noted that alternative provision was being investigated and that this would be put in place as soon as possible.

Councillor Stan Pajak welcomed the proposed reinstatement of Dial-A-Ride's grant funding and asked if the Cabinet would increase Dial-A-Ride's grant in line with inflation because of fuel cost increases?

Councillor Mark Edwards noted that there was concern that inflation could be negative this year and its funding would be looked at now and in the future. If there were an inflationary increase approved this would not give any flexibility to deal with unforeseen circumstances.

78.

Motion - Wi-Fi

Councillor Bob Wright moved and Councillor Junab Ali seconded, and with the agreement of the Council, the Motion was amended to read:

“In view of the lack of evidence to the public and Members of a full credit rating or suitable references for Digital City UK Ltd and the further failure to undertake a review of other possible companies within the ICT industry who could have implemented a Wi-Fi network to the Borough at a more cost effective rate, or without the need of the Swindon Borough Council, to risk loaning up to £450,000 to support the project.

This Council *requests the Cabinet* to engage with industry consultants to evaluate the loan and any possible risk associated with it to the Council and the Council Tax payers of Swindon, and to undertaking a similar review in the future if the Council wishes to make further loans to, or investments in, private sector companies or individuals.”

The Motion, as amended was put to the vote and declared lost.

79. Motion - Sport on Television

Councillor Kevin Small moved and Councillor Keith Williams seconded:

“In light of last November’s recommendations to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, on which listed sporting events should be on free-to-air television, and the proposals to deselect the Epsom Derby from the Group A list and maintain the current provisions that does not see the protection of Test Match Cricket played in England (with the exception of home Ashes series) or home nations Six Nations Rugby Union matches (with the exception of Welsh matches).

This Council resolves to write a letter to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, stating that we believe that there would be a greater benefit for the sport viewing Swindon public if all Test Match Cricket played in England, the Epsom Derby and all home nations Six Nations Rugby Union matches were to be listed within the Group A, thus ensuring that these sporting events will be in the future shown on free-to-air television.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

80. Motion - Swindon Dial A Ride

Councillor Jim Grant moved and Councillor Derique Monuat seconded:

“This Council recognises that, even though Swindon Dial-A-Ride does run itself in a businesslike way, Swindon Dial-A-Ride is a Charity that offers a “valuable service to the affected citizens” of our Borough and has “social value for money importance”, and is not a commercial enterprise.”

With the agreement of the Council the mover and seconder of the Motion on Dial-a-Ride set out on the Agenda Papers withdrew their Motion.

With the agreement of the Council Councillor Russel Holland and Councillor Nick Martin withdrew their Motion on Dial-a-Ride set out in the agenda papers.

With the agreement of the Council Councillor Russell Holland moved and Councillor Jim Grant seconded the following composite Motion:

“This Council recognises the value of community transport and the role it plays in enabling independent living and supporting community cohesion.

We will continue to work with all our valued partners working with the community to support them in delivering value for money for council tax payers.”

The composite Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

81. Councillors’ Allowances 2010/11 – Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel - Minute 74 of the Cabinet.

The Council received Minute 74 of the Cabinet and a report of the Chair of the Independent Remuneration Panel setting out the recommendations of that Panel on the level of Councillors’ Allowances in Swindon for 2010/11.

Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor Derique Montaut seconded:

“That the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel be adopted with the exception that recommendation a, b, d, f, l and n be deleted and that there be no increase in basic and special responsibility allowances for Borough, Parish and Town Councillors and no increase in travel subsistence or dependent care allowances for 2010/11. All these allowances to remain at 2009/2010 levels for 2010/2011.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

82. Appointments to Committees

The Director of Law and Democratic Services tabled a report setting out changes to Committee Memberships for the remainder of the Municipal Year following the resignation of Councillor Steve Wakefield from the Conservative Group.

Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor Fionuala Foley seconded:

“That in order to comply with political balance requirements the following changes be made to its Committee Memberships.

- (1) That Councillor Steve Wakefield retains his seat on the Licensing Committee.
- (2) That Councillor Steve Wakefield replace Councillor Eric Shaw on the Appointments Committee.
- (3) That Councillor David Glaholm replace Councillor Vera Tomlinson on the Appointments Committee.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

83. Special Committee

The Council considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services setting out a report of the meeting of the Special Committee held on 9th

December 2009, and (b) questions to the Leader of the Council and answers received.

84. Cabinet

The Council considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services setting out a report of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18th November, 9th and 22nd December 2009, (b) questions to the Cabinet Members regarding their portfolio responsibilities, as set out within the report, and answers received, and (c) decisions taken by Cabinet Members relating to delegated decisions taken under their portfolio responsibilities.

85. Standards Committee

The Council considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services setting out a report on the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 19th October 2009, and (b) questions to the Committee Members regarding the work of the Committee and answers received.

86. Audit Committee

The Council considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services setting out a report on the meeting of the Audit Committee held on 24th November 2009, and (b) questions to the Committee Members regarding the work of the Committee and answers received.

87. Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Council considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services on the work of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees held between 25th October and 18th December 2009, and (b) questions to the Committee Chairs regarding the work of their Committee, and answers received.

88. Planning Committee

The Council considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services setting out a report on the meetings of the Planning Committee held on 8th and 29th November and 20th December 2009, and Planning Statistics for October and November 2009, and (b) questions to the Committee Chair regarding the work of the Committee and answers received.

89. Regulatory Committees

The Council considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services on the work of the Council's Regulatory Committees held between 12th October and 31st December 2009, and (b) questions to the Committee Chairs regarding the work of their Committee, and answers received.

90. Children Services Bodies

The Council considered (a) a report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services on the work of the Council's Children's Services Bodies held between 1st

November and 31st December 2009, and (b) questions to the Committee Chairs regarding the work of their Committee and answers received.

91. To receive the Minutes of the Police and Fire Authorities

The Council received the minutes of the meeting of the Wiltshire Police Authority dated 10th September 2009. There were no minutes of the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority to report.

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 14TH JANUARY 2010

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Martine Steinhardt has asked the Leader of the Council:

Q1. Have the local authority done any research into the health implications of going ahead with a new wi-fi mesh across the borough, bearing in mind that local governments in other countries who'd looked to implement similar schemes have pulled out on the basis that studies suggest it can cause long and short term health problems?

Q2. In light of the fact Sir William Stewart, Chairman of the Health Protection Agency, told Panorama "I believe there is a need for a review of the wi-fi and other areas. I think it is timely for it to be done now", does the leader of the council agree with me that wi-fi should not be implemented across the town until the Swindon borough council has commissioned a report to be shown to all the elected representatives and residents, into the long term health effects associated with wi-fi?

The Leader of the Council has responded:

Q1

The Council routinely works closely with colleagues in PCT, Joint public health director and through this route has direct liaison with the Health Protection Agency (HPA) As part of our review of this project we took account of the HPA 's position on Wi-Fi and resolved that there was no need to stop the project, however, we will keep a watching brief on key research developments as and when they become available.

The HPA's position on Wi-Fi is that, having looked at studies from around the world, there is no consistent evidence that exposure to the radiofrequency signals from Wi-Fi equipment adversely affects the health of the general population and there is no reason why the equipment should not be used. The signals are very low power, typically 0.1 watt in both the computer and the router (mast). The frequencies used in Wi-Fi are broadly the same as those from traditional radiofrequency applications. Based on current knowledge and experience exposures from Wi-Fi are likely to be lower than those from mobile phones and expected to be well within internationally recognised exposure guidelines. The HPA also considers it sensible, as with any new technology, to adopt a precautionary approach, and keeps the situation under review.

Q2

In 2007 when former HPA chairman Sir William was interviewed on Panorama the Health Protection Agency announced a systematic programme of research on Wi-Fi would be carried out as part of its ongoing work on exposures to electromagnetic fields (which include radiofrequency signals). The first results of the project were reported last summer and were consistent with the HPA position that exposures from Wi-Fi equipment are not expected to exceed internationally accepted guidelines and that they are less than from mobile phones. Information on the results of this project are being added to the HPA website as they are published.

Review of scientific studies relevant to radiofrequency exposures is an ongoing process carried out by the HPA, international organisations such as the World Health Organization and the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection, and national authorities in other countries. Many review reports are published each year, which reference the original scientific studies. HPA develops such review reports and monitors those produced by other organisations.

The independent Advisory Group on Non-Ionising Radiation (AGNIR) assists HPA by *reviewing work on the biological effects of non-ionising radiation relevant to human health and advises on research priorities*. AGNIR is currently reviewing studies relevant to radiofrequency exposures, including those from wireless networks, and this work is expected to take two to three years to complete.

We do not believe, given the position of the HPA, that the implementation of this project should be stopped, Given that there is continuous HPA review on this issue i we do not believe that there is a need for the local authority to commission a research study of this type.

Councillor Fay Howard has asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

1. Following the Review of Secondary School Standards and Support in Swindon January 2009. Could the Lead Member please advise what steps have been taken to

- set up a borough-wide development programme on mathematics?
- set up a cross-phase and borough-wide development programme on improving language skills, including literacy?
- establish a convincing and appropriately resourced approach to meeting the needs of pupils entering secondary schools with limited command of English?

2. Could the lead member please let me know what was the funding per pupil in Swindon schools in 1997 and how much it has increased, by percentage, in real terms since then?

3. Can the lead member advise of any representations been made to the DSFS by SBC in the past five years to alter the funding formula which makes up the funding per pupil system?

4. Can the lead member tell me how much money in total Swindon schools have received over and above the funding per pupil grant since 1997?

The Cabinet Member has responded:

1. The actions relating to development programmes for mathematics and literacy and support to pupils with a limited command of English have been led by the Schools and Learning Directorate.
 - Set up a borough-wide development programme on mathematics
 - Continuing to provide advisory support to teachers and heads of departments for mathematics. 626 hours support provided to 11 secondary schools in 2008-09.
 - Established an Association of Mathematics Education network for teachers to disseminate research evidence and good practice.
 - One secondary school with mathematics as a specialism is organising a mathematics conference in the Borough.
 - Set up cross phase and borough-wide development programme on improving language skills, including literacy
 - The evidence points to mathematics as being the priority to develop, so more time has been devoted to mathematics, rather than literacy. However, work is underway:

- 10 secondary schools (out of 11) received 284 hours advisory support for English in 2008-09. 28 primary schools (out of 62) received 303 hours support in 2008-09.
 - We are trialling a project to develop a publication to celebrate children's writing in Swindon. Initially, we are focussing on year 9 pupils, aiming to publish the best 20 pieces of writing submitted by schools. We hope to involve year 11 students in judging the writing. If this is a successful enterprise, we will extend the scope of the celebration to include a wider age range, eg, 11-19 and eventually 5-19 including special schools.
- Establish a convincing and appropriately resourced approach to meeting the needs of pupils entering secondary schools with limited command of English.
- The strategy and action plan of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service has been strengthened, with robust performance indicators. The resources come from the ring fence Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) Grant. The EMA team is prioritising support to underperforming learners with English as Additional Language (EAL) in year 5 to ensure there are effective induction programmes for EAL learners in schools with a rapidly changing demographic profile. The Local Authority also has a service level agreement with a primary school to provide additional borough-wide support to increase knowledge in schools about effective teaching of pupils with EAL. The primary school has a good record of raising attainment of EAL learners.

3 Can the lead member advise of any representations been made to the DSFS by SBC in the past five years to alter the funding formula which makes up the funding per pupil system?

SBC is part of a group of the 40 Local Authorities which have the lowest funding settlement. And collectively there is representation to the DCSF to make funding more equitable. In addition we have, through local MPs, lobbied for improvements to the funding regimes for gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs.

In addition it is worth noting that Swindon is currently the 17th lowest LA in the country and the per pupil DSG allocation (out of 151) for Swindon for 2009/10 is £3,913. The difference per pupil between Swindon and the lowest funded authority (Leicestershire) is £185.00, however the difference per pupil between Swindon and the highest funded authority (city of London) is £3,691.00. Swindon was also the 17th lowest funded authority in the last financial year 2008/09.

We do not hold data from 1997 to give a complete answer to question 2, due to a change in financial systems. We have tried to obtain the data from the DCSF website, but it is not available.

2. Could the lead member please let me know what was the funding per pupil in Swindon schools in 1997 and how much it has increased, by percentage, in real terms since then?

	Primary Funding Per Pupil	% Increase Primary	Secondary Funding Per Pupil	% Increase Secondary	Special Funding Per Pupil	% Increase Special	Total Funding Per Pupil	% Increase Total
2001/02	1,813		2,383		3,448		2,155	
2002/03	1,938	6.9%	2,572	7.9%	10,752	211.9%	2,311	7.2%
2003/04	2,095	8.1%	2,741	6.6%	10,505	-2.3%	2,487	7.6%
2004/05	2,212	5.6%	2,866	4.6%	11,834	12.7%	2,615	5.1%
2005/06	2,388	7.9%	3,036	5.9%	13,035	10.1%	2,806	7.3%
2006/07	2,593	8.6%	3,336	9.9%	14,056	7.8%	3,063	9.2%
2007/08	2,683	3.5%	3,455	3.6%	15,184	8.0%	3,183	3.9%
2008/09	2,937	9.5%	3,830	10.9%	17,355	14.3%	3,525	10.7%
2009/10	3,054	4.0%	3,872	1.1%	18,519	6.7%	3,626	2.9%

Please note: these figures are based on the total value of the schools budgets divided by the total number of pupils in each sector. This gives you the average per pupil allocation. The reason for this is because the local funding formula allocates budgets to schools based on specific school data i.e. Free School Meals therefore, each schools budget will differ.

4. Can the lead member tell me how much money in total Swindon schools have received over and above the funding per pupil grant since 1997?

	1997/98 £000	1998/99 £000	1999/2000 £000	2000/2001 £000	2001/2002 £000	2002/2003 £000	2003/2004 £000	2004/2005 £000	2005/2006 £000	2006/2007 £000	2007/2008 £000
Education	61,316	67,446	72,554	77,465	80,051	83,369	93,296	97,278	103,039	99,650	103,259
Education Grant	62,804	67,777	73,292	77,259	80,046	82,110	92,781	97,257	103,155	99,650	103,259
Budget as % Grant	97.63%	99.51%	98.99%	100.27%	100.01%	101.53%	100.56%	100.02%	99.89%	100.00%	100.00%

Please note: The figures in the table above show the total budget that is spent on pupils, this doesn't necessarily mean it all goes out to schools. The Local Authority provides alternative methods of education inside and outside of the Borough for the most vulnerable young people.

Councillor Bob Wright has asked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Benefits:

In view of the public and Members' concern on the financial credit status of Digital City UK Limited can all Members be provided with evidence of the check and details to ensure credit worthiness?

The Cabinet Member has responded:

Credit checks were made on Digital City and all the other shareholder partners in the Company before the loan was agreed. These highlighted no specific areas of concern other than the expected issue that the companies are all relatively new ventures with little or no history. In the technology sector this is not particularly unusual. In this context the decision to invest was made primarily on the track record of the key individuals concerned and on the basis that risks and rewards would be fairly apportioned.

Councillor Derique Montaut has asked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Benefits:

What is the reason for members of this council being unable to view the business plan for Digital City UK Ltd?

The Cabinet Member has responded:

The business plan and its contents belong to and are the intellectual property of Digital City UK limited and contains financial details; these are subject to commercial confidentiality.

The Council's Protocol for Member/Officer Relations, sets out what documents members have a right to inspect. It makes clear that a Member of the Cabinet or Committee has a right to inspect documents about the business of that committee as set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules included within the Council's Constitution. A member who is not a member of a specific committee may have access to any documents of that part of the Council if he or she can demonstrate a reasonable need to see the documents to perform his or her duties and the documents do not contain 'confidential' or 'exempt' information.

The market assumptions that were used for the business plan were as follows:

- Target 7% of households connected to getsignal.com; 88,800 households in Swindon, 50 % of these not connected to internet and 20% have no broadband or poor (low speed service only)
- Target 1000 business packages to be sold; This is 10% of 10,000 businesses registered for VAT in Swindon, many more operate here but are not registered.
- Pricing will be competitive in the market place, without the need to pay rental for a fixed phone line.
- The following revenue streams are not critical to the business case, however, they have been identified as important additional sources of income, which if realised will allow the Council to re-invest in frontline services :
 - partnering with other Councils to deliver similar town and city wide Wi-Fi and a commercial model to generate revenue. (16 interested Councils have already approached us)
 - partnering with other telecoms providers to bring next generation mobile services (for example 4G) across Swindon.

- wholesale Wi-Fi services for mobile network operators seeking to “offload” or supplement the capacity of their 3G networks.

Councillor Junab Ali has asked the Leader of the Council:

I understand from a colleague that Council officers are relaxed that Council and public ICT traffic is sufficiently insulated each from the other. Has any independent advice been sought to verify this presumption?

The Leader of the Council has responded:

The Council takes Information Security extremely seriously. In the last few months we passed a very stringent Government security audit of our network and IT procedures. This was the culmination of 12 months hard work with the external security consultants NCC, Capita within Swindon in addition to Capita's team of network security experts.

The audit covered over 100 criteria which all had to be satisfied. Several applied to networks carrying public and Council data traffic such as the link between Euclid Street and the Central Library.

The sharing of physical network cables does not pose a security hazard to the traffic being carried. Given the work that has only just been completed on ensuring our network is capable of carrying public and private traffic securely, we do not see the need to consult with external consultants and incur further costs for the Council tax payers of Swindon over 1 additional connection. In order to design, configure and implement this link we worked closely with the same partners in Capita who helped ensure we passed the security audit.

Due to us meeting the Government Code of Connection security standards the Council is now allowed to be part of the 'Government Connect' network. I thank Councillor Ali for highlighting this achievement with his question

Councillor Jim Grant has asked the Leader of the Council:

1. Can the leader of the Council confirm that the Swindon Borough Council is providing the connection to the World Wide Web for Digital City UK Ltd through its own connection and to do this the council has upgraded its connection to the World Wide Web from 25MB to 100MB?
2. What arrangements are in place to defend the Council's interests in the event of Digital City UK Ltd becoming insolvent and the enhanced World Wide Web connection being under-utilised?

The Leader of the Council has responded:

Re: Use of the Council's link to the World Wide Web

It is correct that Digital City are using an existing Council link to route traffic to the World Wide Web. Digital City will have other links into the World Wide Web as the network grows; however, it is not envisaged that any of these will be shared with the Council.

Re: Defending the Council's interest

The cost of the upgrade is approximately £4,500 p.a. which is paid for by Digital City and for this connection the Council uses a British Telecom product called 'BTnet Flex' this is specifically designed to allow 'premium' customers such as SBC to "flex" up or down the connection bandwidth. In reality our exposure is about £380 if all the following three eventualities take place :

1. Digital City becomes insolvent
2. Council cannot secure a replacement partner.
3. The Council's own use (including library traffic) of the internet has not increased to make use of this bandwidth

In this case, if we have extra bandwidth that we cannot use via Digital City then we will be able to mitigate our exposure in three ways:

1. The Council's connectivity contract permits the level of bandwidth to be varied up or down from time to time: a request to reduce bandwidth to a level commensurate with the Council's needs this will typically be implemented in 5-10 days. The Council's real exposure is therefore limited to a single monthly billing period or about £380
2. Re-profile this extra bandwidth across our total network, i.e move the extra bandwidth to another part of the network that is experiencing a 'bottleneck'. The Council's internal network is continuously being monitored and generally the traffic between the data centre and our office increases each year.

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3. If the Council does not have a need to re-profile this extra bandwidth then we will be able to offer this to our public sector partners in Swindon in order to cover the £4.5k p.a exposure.

Councillor Kevin Small has asked the Leader of the Council:

How are the Wi-Fi routers located on lampposts powered?

The Leader of the Council has responded:

In general the power for the Wi-Fi routers will be taken directly from the lamp posts. Typically peak power consumption for these devices is 20W i.e only a third of the power consumed by an average domestic light bulb. Digital City will be charged for electricity usage from lamp posts.

Councillor Steve Allsopp has asked the Leader of the Council:

1. In view of the fact that a number of offices in the David Murray John Tower have been made available to Digital City free of charge, what accounting procedures are in place to reflect this gift to Digital City UK Ltd?
2. Is Digital City UK Ltd liable for the incidental charges, such as insurance, that flows from occupying the free offices in the David Murray John Tower?

The Leader of the Council has responded:

As part of the Council's shareholding agreement with Digital City, they have been granted the use of three rooms on the 10th floor of the David Murray John Building whilst the project is being implemented in Swindon. This space was previously empty for some years mainly because there is no lift access on this floor and the condition of the space is generally poor and because of the access issues it cannot be used as an office space for Council purposes.

The Council has had no commercial interest in this space over the last few years; given this and the issues with access we believe that we would not be able to let these rooms at a commercial rate. There has been no loss of income for the Council and Digital City pay all running costs (utilities, rates, telephone) therefore there is no overall cost to the Council in providing this accommodation. It is worth pointing out that there is a benefit to the Council in Digital City paying business rates, because the Council would normally be liable for any rates on empty business property.

Digital City are not paying for any buildings insurance. Given that the realisable value of this arrangement is minimal, no value has been assigned in accounting terms.

Digital City have spent approximately £4,000 in replacing the carpets and making good areas of the office and generally making the space fit for use.

Councillor Des Moffatt has asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

Can the lead member tell me when the temporary access road built across Moredon Playing fields for the construction of Nova Hreod School will be removed and the land returned to recreation purposes?

The Cabinet Member has responded:

The removal of the temporary haul route including the hoardings was originally the responsibility of Laing O'Rourke (LOR) the building contractor.

In November 2006, the Council issued a Variation to the signed contract, removing that obligation on LOR, to enable demolition of the old school to be accessed from the same road to avoid the conflict of pupils/vehicles on the school entrance off Akers Way.

The former Hreod South school buildings have now been demolished. Planning permission for the temporary haul route runs out later this year and the Head of Property Services and Head of Leisure will need to determine whether the route is retained to assist future development of the former Hreod South school site (in which case an extension to the planning permission will be required) or whether the haul route is removed.

However in the interim Leisure services are planning to reinstate the car park that serves the pitch and putt course and adjacent recreational facilities in the near future. If the haul route is not retained to help future development Property Services will seek funding for the demolition of the remainder of the hoardings out of next years budget as there is no identified funding for this work.

Councillor David Glaholm has asked the Chair of the Licensing Committee:

Can the Chair of the Licensing Committee explain why every applicant for a taxi or private hire licence has to get proof from the College they can speak and understand English?

Would his Committee review this requirement please?

The Chair of the Licensing Committee has responded:

The Licensing Committee has a responsibility to ensure a high standard of service to the Swindon public and to ensure their safety whilst traveling in taxi and private hire vehicles.

Following a rise in the number of complaints in 2006 and public comments regarding the perceived ability of drivers to understand English and their unfamiliarity with English road signs it was determined that this issue should be examined.

At a meeting of the Licensing Committee meeting held in December 2006 it was agreed that as from 1st April 2007, all applicants for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire driver licence would be required to attend an interview at Swindon College at which there will be an appraisal of his/her spoken English, English comprehension, a test of reading, basic written English and basic mathematics. Drivers not reaching a satisfactory level would be refused a licence.

In order to maintain consistency, robust monitoring and to ensure the tests were recognised as being fair and independent it was agreed at they would be undertaken by Swindon College who would receive a £15 fee, payable by the applicant.

This policy to improve standards was supported by Mr Jaginder Bassi (Director of Swindon Racial Equalities Council) and had unanimous support at the meeting.

Any applicant who felt aggrieved with the tests would retain their right to appeal against the refusal of the Council to grant a drivers licence. The Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Sub-Committee would hear any such appeal.

I believe that the current policy is fair and transparent and I see no reason to review this policy at this time.

Councillor David Glaholm has asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

1/ How much money was provided to improve bus services when planning permission was granted for the Academy at Pinehurst.

2/ What will the money be used for and will ward members be involved in the discussions.

3/ What is the recommended "safe walking route" to the new Academy building in Pinehurst for a student living in Imber Walk Penhill.

4/ Has it been measured and how far is it.

5/ What temporary crossing facility will be laid on and what hours will be covered.

6/ When the crossing patrol is not on duty will the students be advised to use the crossing at Stratton Cross roads and how would that affect the walking distance.

7/ Will any students qualify for free transport

The Cabinet member has responded:

1 & 2. As a condition of planning a budget was set aside for various highways works related to the development of the Academy, should they be required. Consideration was given to the following elements.

Public Transport

Increase in Service 24 to every 30 minutes – Budgeted sum was £52.5k

Increase in service 10 to hourly between Town Centre, Pinehurst and Hayden Wick – Budgeted sum was £15.5k

Since the approval of the original Planning Consent the Services 24 has received additional funding due to service revisions by Thamesdown Transport in May 2008. Service 10 has been revised and renumbered service 21 and this supplements the regular service 17 to Penhill. Subsequent to a number of meetings with Ward Members, officers and local residents, it is considered that the current service is fit for purpose.

3. The recommended safe walking route is via:

Starting from the entrance to the Academy on Beech Avenue, along Beech Avenue to The Circle, across the road and on the footpath adjacent to Pinehurst Road, across the Circle and onto Pinehurst Road, across the road at the bottom of Pinehurst Road where there is an island, down Pinehurst Road to Whitworth Road, along Whitworth Road to the Moonrakers pedestrian

crossing (963m). Down the footpath behind the Moonrakers pub to Fairford Crescent, along Fairford Crescent onto Penhill Drive. Along Penhill Drive to the bus stop as Penhill Drive splits into 2 (1621m), across the road near the Roundabout onto Penhill Drive, across Lacock Road, Charlton Close, Wilcot Avenue, Durnford Road, Grafton Road, Warminster Avenue and Enford Avenue, staying on Penhill Drive, and then turning down Downton Road (2574.8m), along the footpath on Downton Road crossing Odstock Road and leading onto Ramsbury Avenue, along Ramsbury Avenue onto Atworth Close finishing at the fence of the North Swindon Family Centre (2938m)

4. The total distance measured is 2.938km which is 1.83 miles.

5. The local Neighbourhood Policing Team were asked to visit the site of the double mini-roundabout at the end of Crossways to monitor the situation and advise pupils during the first few days. However the school was shut due to the weather conditions.

6. All pupils will have received pedestrian training several times during their school careers, when they will have been taught about safe crossing places. This is reinforced regularly, both by individual schools and by road safety staff. Secondary school pupils are reluctant to cross with 'lollipop ladies' as they perceive them as being for 'little children'. This has been experienced by the existing patrol on Beech Avenue, where young people are choosing to cross elsewhere. We will continue to monitor the situation.

7. Based on the response to answer 4 no students will qualify for free transport to school.

Councillor David Glaholm has asked the Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Adult Social Care:

1/ Can the Lead member for Housing and Social care advise me and the residents of Marston Avenue who handed in a petition nearly 4 years ago when a solution can be suggested to there request for more parking.

2/ Can he also advise me what action he will take to force people to stop churning up the verges around Penhill the land being in the ownership of the Housing Department.

3/ In the event of a member of the public slipping on mud dragged on to the pavement can the Council be sued ??

The Cabinet Member has responded:

1. Officers from different departments have been working together to reach a solution that satisfy the need to increase the parking capacity for residents in Marston Avenue as well as ensuring that the Council's interests are met as well. This has resulted in a number of meetings between officers and some have included the Local Ward member for Penhill as well. To reach a solution to this matter, a further meeting was held on the 11th January 2010 and attended by Senior Officers from a number of different departments.

To ensure the maximum take up of the scheme and to keep the costs to individual residents to a minimum the Council are proposing to offer the land to residents on a peppercorn lease arrangements under license conditions. The Council will deal with the planning arrangements and layout plan with a single planning applications.

Officers are currently working on the details of the above arrangements and when these are finalised will be arranging to contact residents in Marston Avenue.

2. As is well know this is a common problem issue that not only impacts on Housing land but also other Council land across the borough. A lot of investment has been undertaken by the Council to increase the parking capacity in Penhill recently including the provision of individual curtilage parking for a considerable number of Council tenants.

The tenancy agreement and handbook for Council tenants advises that tenants, members of their household and visitors should not park on grass verges.

Housing Officers have worked and will continue to work with colleagues in other department notably Street Scene to try and resolve these matters, where residents or ward Councillors raise their concerns with officers.

However it must be recognised that the Council has limited resources to manage and enforce this matter

3. Members of the Public have the right to take out an action to sue the Council, if they slip on pavements, which is covered, by mud. However under any action of this nature, it would have to be determined that the Council was negligent in its action or failed to do something for the action to be successful.

Councillor Fay Howard has asked the Deputy Leader of the Council:

Could the Lead Member for the Environment please comment on the number of fixed penalty notices, which have been given out for fly tipping?

The Deputy Leader has responded:

Fly tipping offences cannot be dealt with by fixed penalty notice. They may only be dealt with by prosecution. In the last 12 months 13 prosecutions were taken, all of which succeeded, with the majority recovering full Council costs. In particular one case resulted in a £615 fine and £1526 costs. Cases are publicised in local news papers.

Incorrect waste presentation, specifically where waste is placed for collection in a manner which is unacceptable to the Council can be dealt with by fixed penalty. In the majority of cases informal means are used to deal with these offences as a method to support the changes in the Council waste service. However in the last 12 months 2 fixed penalty notices were issued where residents persistently presented waste in overflowing wheelie bins.

Offenders charged with littering offences may avoid Court proceedings by electing to pay a fixed penalty. Failure to pay or elect to take this option requires the Council to prosecute. In the last 12 months 96 littering offences resulted in the opportunity to pay a fixed penalty being offered. Typically these offences were witnessed in the town Centre and other hot spot areas. In addition to reducing the amount of litter this action has a favourable impact on antisocial behaviour.

The failure of commercial businesses to provide information on their waste disposal arrangements (i.e. demonstrate they have a trade waste contract) or failure of waste carriers to prove they have a waste carriers licence can be dealt with by use of a fixed penalty notice. In the last 12 months 10 fixed penalty notices have been used for this purpose. This power has been used to challenge commercial vehicles presenting waste at the civic amenity site and where commercial premises are disposing of trade waste alongside household waste.

Councillor Fay Howard has asked the Deputy Leader:

Over the very snowy, icy period recently Swindon Borough Council employees did a fantastic job at clearing roads and paths. Many residents commented how pleased they were that after the initial day of snow, the town got moving again:

Can you please pass on our thanks and appreciation?

If these kinds of weather conditions occur again in Swindon in the near future, could the Lead Member for the Environment please let all members know how much grit we have?

The Deputy Leader has responded:

I thank Cllr Fay Howard for her positive comments, employees from across many departments of the council have work extremely hard in ensuring we could keep all possible front line services in operation and our highways open. They are still working hard as this cold weather continues.

In regards to keeping members informed we have been updating our web page and also ensuring daily communications through radio and local papers. We are still in a good position regarding our levels of salt but as I am sure you can appreciate this is changing on a daily basis. We currently have approx 2,150 tonnes of salt.

We have taken account of the national directive that was issued last Friday requesting that all local authorities reduce the amount of salt they are applying to the highway by 25%.

The officers responsible for winter maintenance have been meeting daily with senior officers to agree daily action plans and we have been ensuring all relevant service areas have been included in these discussions.

This weekend in addition to keeping the highway open our priority was to ensure all our senior schools could open so the planned exams could proceed. This was achieved as all senior schools are on our gritting routes.

Councillor Fay Howard has asked the Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Adult Social Care:

Regarding the Housing options appraisal- Who is paying the independent advisers? Where does the money come from for all the leaflets that get printed on this?

Homeless People - Could the lead member please let me know the number of homeless people that there are currently within the Borough? Could he also please let me know when and how this was last measured and what extra provision was made over the recent cold spell?

The Cabinet Member has responded:

Housing Options Appraisal

As part of the Housing Options Appraisal process, there is no obligation for tenants to receive the services of an Independent Tenant Advisor (ITA). However, it is good practice and tenants' groups advised that they would welcome the services of an ITA as had occurred during the previous Options Appraisal carried out by the former Administration in 2001.

The process for managing a Housing Options Appraisal, as dictated by Government, is that the Housing Revenue Account pays for the Independent Tenant Advisor (ITA) and leaflets produced in connection with the options appraisal. DWA were the appointed ITA, selected by tenants via a competitive tendering process.

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Homelessness

I presume the Member is referring to rough sleepers. The last official count was in 2008, however, our information on rough sleeping is kept up-to-date through the Rough Sleeper Panel chaired by the Homeless Operations Manager. We meet every month with the voluntary & statutory agencies. The number of persons rough sleeping can change daily, however there are excellent working relationships between the agencies to minimise those rough sleeping. On average this figure will vary between 1-3 known persons rough sleeping at anytime.

The Council will pay debts owed to supported housing schemes to help persons back into accommodation, with a re-payment plan.

The Council will help persons find accommodation in the private sector with our deposit scheme and financial payments to Landlords if appropriate.

The homeless dept are regularly contacted to carry out assessments on rough sleepers to determine if they are a priority under the homeless legislation and if the LA has a duty to provide them with accommodation.

During the recent cold spell, we have seen an increase in single person requiring accommodation and these have been accommodated in hostels or B&B. The Council have made every effort to ensure no persons have slept rough over the past 14 days and this will continue until the temperatures increase & beyond. The Council will house all rough sleepers provided they meet the statutory requirements but there is a small number that decline our offer to be housed.

The homeless dept negotiated an additional 4 emergency beds at Booth House at no additional cost, the Council provided mats & sleeping bags for those sharing an emergency room. This is a demonstration of the excellent joint working that happens for Rough Sleepers.

Councillor David Glaholm has asked the Leader of the Council:

Does the Leader believe the Scrutiny function in its present form gives value for money?

The Leader of the Council has responded:

The Scrutiny function does deliver value for money in its present form in my opinion. Those who exercise executive function and spend public money should expect to be held to account for what they do and of course they are in a whole variety of ways and by all sorts of people, from auditors to electors. They also need the sort of scrutiny that comes from critical friends, especially

those friends that are representing the users of the services that we provide. All Cabinet members are required to face question and answer sessions on their portfolio's, I as Leader am required to attend 2 Q&As where I must explain my cabinet's performance, all Cabinet decisions are subjected to scrutiny and now our partners are often involved in the Scrutiny process too.

Scrutiny is the function that involves the majority of elected members, therefore the success of scrutiny depends on us as elected members to grasp the role and for the council to support elected members in carrying out the function successfully.

The model of Overview and Scrutiny that we have here has been purposefully created to ensure that the function is able to clearly meet the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Police and Justice Act 2006, to ensure that the function is able to work alongside and scrutinise our partners, and provide opportunity for backbench members and the public to get involved in topics that they are interested in. The model we have is used in 64% of local authorities according to the Centre for public scrutiny's annual survey (2008 results). That survey shows the following committee structures in operation:

Committee Structure:

Multiple overview and scrutiny committees 64% (our structure)

One "scrutiny" committee and multiple "overview" cttees 7%

One OSC that commissions time-limited panels 19%

One OSC that does all the work 11%

I understand that this year alone policy proposals are being developed through Overview and Scrutiny that will hopefully benefit service delivery from not just the council but also the PCT, the NHS, the Police, and our Local Area Agreement. In the past the Scrutiny function in its current form has represented the people of Swindon in scrutinising Thames Water and the Environment Agency following the floods and questioned First Great Western and Network Rail regarding rail services to and from the town. The regeneration proposals for

Regent Street were subjected to review by the Economic, Environmental and Sustainability Committee and I understand there is an exciting project developing through the Safer and Stronger Committee looking at the issue of alcohol and how it affects the borough. The average number of scrutiny reviews per year in 2008 was 6 according to the annual cfps survey, we have not had less than 7 reviews per annum since 2006.

We can clearly improve in terms of public consultation as like many of our committee meetings we often see an empty public chamber, however our scrutiny unit is one of the few units across the country that does conduct a dedicated consultation exercise every year to find out what topics the public would like to see scrutinised and reviewed. The average number of suggestions for scrutiny topics from the public was 4 with 55% of authorities reporting receiving no suggestions in 2008, since 2006 we have received over 30 suggestions per year, including over 100 suggestions in 2007 and 2008 and have also in the past conducted dedicated consultation exercises involving public focus groups to help boost the numbers of public suggestions. In addition we have an online facility to allow the public to suggest scrutiny topics and we have specially tailored leaflets in council buildings that have self addressed slips on them for people to put down their views and send them to the scrutiny unit.

The cfps survey of 2008 shows that the average number of scrutiny staff across all authorities (that have a dedicated unit) was 2.9 staff, and was 3.3 staff for unitary authorities like ours. As you know we currently have 1.5 staff in the Scrutiny Unit. Despite this only last year the Great Western Ambulance Review which was led by Swindon won the best health scrutiny review at the Centre for Public Good Scrutiny awards and continues to chair the South West Scrutiny Network which was created by Swindon and represents the South West region on the National Scrutiny Forum. The average discretionary budget for Scrutiny is £17,336 in top tier authorities and £9,917 across all authorities, our budget is £13,800.

The Overview and Scrutiny Unit regularly reviews the outputs of the various committees and in the past has evaluated the scrutiny function using the Centre for Public Scrutiny's self-evaluation framework which was completed by the Scrutiny Committee itself. Completion of this framework again by the Scrutiny Committee may be an option that members would like to consider to provide an up to date analysis of our current position but please consider the impact that this may have on existing workloads.

If members are not satisfied that Scrutiny is delivering value for money that I suggest that it be raised at the Scrutiny Committee, the Scrutiny Unit will also be happy to meet with any members to discuss any issues of concern and discuss how these concerns can be dealt with.

Councillor Ray Ballman has asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:

I understand that the clients at Tantivy have been given notice that this service will be withdrawn. Can the Lead Cabinet Member confirm if this is due to the state of the building, costs or issues with management of the service?"

"Could the Cabinet Member explain why alternative provision for children's respite care cannot be delivered on the same site as the proposed Short Breaks unit?"

The Cabinet Member has responded:

NHS Swindon provides residential short term breaks for severely disabled children and children with complex needs at Tantivy in Stanton Fitzwarren.

NHS Swindon asked another NHS service from Oxfordshire to look at the care Tantivy provides to disabled children. We are pleased to say that they said that it was a good service provided people working there but said there were a number of problems with the building. The Board of NHS Swindon read the report and decided that it could not allow any new children to be admitted to Tantivy knowing that there were problems but would continue meeting the needs of children already attending Tantivy and find alternative solutions for new children.

The Board of NHS Swindon has asked that a new service for disabled children should be considered in partnership with parents and people working with disabled children. This will include a home similar to Tantivy for children who need that type of care. NHS Swindon wishes to agree the new service model with parents, carers and children before any board decision is taken.

The money NHS Swindon spend for short term breaks will remain the same and still be used to provide short term breaks for disabled children.

NHS Swindon has contacted all parents who already have a service from Tantivy and reassured them that an overnight short term break provision will be available according to their child's individual needs and that they will be involved in developing a new service. In the meantime Tantivy will continue to be available to those children already receiving this service and will not close until an alternative is found.

We will work with parents of disabled children to look at the different services for the future. This will be in groups and individually. From these meetings a draft plan for future services will be written and shared with parents.

We held our first meeting with parents in December and have two further meetings arranged for February.

The draft timetable for the planning of new services is meetings with parents and stakeholders in January/February to identify services required. This issue

will then be reconsidered by the Board of NHS Swindon. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Swindon Borough Council will be fully involved. NHS Swindon has invited the Lead Member for Children and Councillor Ballman to participate in the visioning days and would welcome any further contributions.

Alternative provision for children's respite care on the same site as the proposed Short Breaks unit will be considered along with the other options for a new service.

Councillor Stan Pajak has asked the Cabinet Member for Finance and Benefits:

Would the lead member share with me the acknowledgement of gratitude to the controlling Council group in not implementing the proposed cut to the Dial a Ride budget and can we assume the subsidy/grant to Dial a Ride will be increased with the inflation/cost pressure amount given to other Council services so as not to reduce the organisation's funding by default?

The Cabinet Member has responded:

I would like to thank the Liberal Democrat Leader for his acknowledgment to the Conservative Group of their decision on Dial-a-Ride, which was brought forward by Conservative Cllrs and supported unanimously.

Although Swindon Borough Council is recognising the impact of inflation in its budgets, compensating savings are having to be found as the level of funding available is not increasing for most Groups. Budgets are increased by inflation each year where a contract is in place. The amount paid to Dial a Ride is a grant rather than a contract. As a result, the budget for 2010/11 will not be increased for inflation.