



SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
Municipal Year 2012/13

Thursday, 21 February 2013

**COUNCIL CHAMBER
CIVIC OFFICES
SWINDON**

13 February 2013

Dear Councillor,

Summons to attend Council Meeting

A MEETING of the **Council**, which you are requested to attend, is to be held at the CIVIC OFFICES, SWINDON, on **Thursday, 21 February 2013 at 7.00 p.m.**

The business to be transacted will be as follows:-

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Communications**
To receive any communications or letters which the Mayor or Chief Executive may have to bring before the Council.
- 3. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 8)
To receive the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th January 2013.
- 4. Declarations of Interest**
Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

5. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below.

6. Council Budget 2013/14 (Pages 9 - 192)

To approve the Council's Budget for the Financial Year, 2013/14. The Cabinet met on 6th February 2013. The following reports considered at this meeting relate to the Council's Budget, 2013/14.

(i) Special Expenses (Pages 9 - 18) (For Information)

(ii) Budget 2013/14 and Beyond (Pages 19 - 162)

(iii) Capital Programme and Treasury Strategy Statement 2013/14
(Pages 163 - 186)

Appendices 2, 3 and 4 of (ii) above have been updated by the Board Director, of Resources to reflect the decisions made by the Cabinet.

Minutes 93, 94 and 95 relating to these reports are attached.
(Pages 187 - 192)

7. Council Tax Setting 2013/14 (Pages 193 - 210)

To enable Members to formally resolve the Borough's Council Tax for 2013/14.

8. Housing Revenue Account - Rents and Charges 2013/14 (Pages 211 - 236)

To approve the Council's Housing Revenue Account Budget for the Financial Year, 2013/14. The Cabinet met on 6th February 2013. The attached report on the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Revenue and Capital Investment Budget 2013/14 was considered at that meeting. (Pages 211 - 234)

Cabinet Minute 96 relating to this report is attached. (Pages 235 - 236)

9. Motions

(a) Motion - Housing

Councillor Des Moffatt will move and Councillor Ray Ballman will second:

“That this Council instructs the Board Director of Service Delivery to present a report to Cabinet detailing how the HRA could lease a parcel of land from the general fund in The Hawthorns, Pinehurst and use HRA capital resources to build an “extra support” housing scheme of not less than 40 units, and advise on whether this housing provision should be managed by the Housing Department and additional accommodation let under advisement by the Adult Social Care Team.”

(b) Motion - Groundwell Park and Ride

Councillor Joe Tray will move and Councillor Teresa Page will second:

“That this Council notes that the former Groundwell Park & Ride site remains unused since it was closed by this Council in 2009. This Council further notes that Ward Councillors, residents and community groups have proposed ideas about a future use for this site, which at present the Council has not followed up.

Penhill and Upper Stratton Ward Councillors believe that this site should be

urgently put back in to use in order for it not to be left derelict.

The Council requests:

- (i) The Cabinet Member for Finance to present a report to Cabinet detailing the options available to restore this site
- (ii) The Cabinet Member for Finance to consult with the Penhill and Upper Stratton Ward Councillors before presenting this report.”

(c) **Motion - Number 11 Bus Service**
Councillor Peter Watts will move and Councillor John Ballman will second:

“That this Council notes:

(i) That Thamesdown Transport has re-routed the number 11 bus service without consultation with the Ward Councillors in the area affected.

(ii) That the Ward Councillors in the affected area have been contacted by many residents who have said this re-routing will prohibit them from being able to use public transport.

In light of this, Council requests that the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport write to the Managing Director of Thamesdown Transport to urge him to put the number 11 bus service back to its original route until proper consultation with Ward Councillors and affected residents has happened.”

10. Pay Policy Statement 2013/14 (Pages 237 - 264)

To approve the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2013/14. The attached report on the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2013/14 was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 6th February 2013 and has been updated to reflect the Cabinet decision. (Pages 237 - 262)

Cabinet Minute 101 relating to this report is attached (Page 263)

11. Minute to Note - Motion (Pages 265 - 274)

To note minute 103 of the Cabinet (Motion at Council – Green Waste Collections)

12. Councillors Question Time

Questions (if any) of which notice has been given by Councillors in accordance with Standing Order 15.

Yours faithfully

Director of Law and Democratic Services

Questions by Members of the Public in accordance with Standing Order 11

Swindon Borough Council is committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. Up to 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from members of the public about the work of the Council (except for confidential matters and specific planning applications). Questions must be relevant, clear and concise. Because of time constraints Public Question Time is not an opportunity to make speeches or statements. Prior notice of a question to the Director of Law and Democratic Services is desirable - particularly if detailed background information is needed.

COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 17 JANUARY 2013

PRESENT:- The Worshipful The Mayor in the Chair; Councillors Junab Ali, Steve Allsopp, Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Ray Ballman, Rex Barnett, Mike Bawden, Andrew Bennett, Alan Bishop, Roderick Bluh, Wayne Crabbe, Mark Dempsey, Michael Dickinson, Mark Edwards, Toby Elliott, Claire Ellis, Emma Faramarzi, Fionuala Foley, Brian Ford, Mary Friend, Jim Grant, John Haines, Peter Heaton-Jones, Neil Heavens, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Fay Howard, Richard Hurley, Colin Lovell, Nick Martin, Cindy Matthews, Brian Mattock, Des Moffatt, Derique Montaut, Teresa Page, Stan Pajak, Garry Perkins, Julian Price, David Renard, Ann Richards, James Robbins, Rochelle Russell, Nicky Sewell, Kevin Small, Vera Tomlinson, Joe Tray, Steve Wakefield, Nadine Watts, Peter Watts, Steve Weisinger, Keith Williams, Robert Wright and Julie Wright.

86. Minutes Silence

The Mayor reported that the recent death of Mr. Denys Hodson CBE, former Director of Arts and Recreation for the Council. The Council held a Minutes Silence in respect of Mr. Denys Hodson CBE.

87. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Baker, Maureen Penny and David Wood.

88. Section 100(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972

In accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Mayor determined that an additional item concerning “a Motion on the recent redundancies at Honda” be considered as a matter of urgency in order to allow Council to consider this matter which had been announced following the dispatch of the Notice of Meeting. (Minute 94 refers.)

89. Communications

The Chief Executive reported that no communications had been received.

90. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2012, be confirmed and signed.

91. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Michael Dickinson made a personal and prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of Agenda item 6(1) (Cabinet Minute 71(3)) as he was an employee of New College.

Councillors Derique Montaut and Teresa Page made personal declarations of interest in respect of the urgent Item (Motion – Honda) as they had family members who worked for the company.

92.

Public Question Time

Mr. Brian Cockbill submitted written questions regarding (a) Bus Routes, (b) Ward Councillor notification prior to changes, (c) the former No. 23 Bus Service, (d) complaints received regarding changes to bus services, (e) compensation to bus companies for over 60's National Bus Pass journeys, (f) cuts to services to the Great Western Hospital, (g) outstanding responses to questions asked at Scrutiny Committee, (h) current Council consultation exercises, (i) Community Governance reviews, and (j) Standards training for the Deputy Mayor. Written responses were tabled.

Mr. Brian Cockbill asked a supplemental question regarding the Council seeking a suspension of alterations to bus services to allow further consultation.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport responded at the meeting.

Mr. Brian Cockbill asked a supplemental question regarding Community Governance returns.

The Leader of the Council requested that Mr. Cockbill liaise with the Director of Law and Democratic Services regarding this matter.

Mr. Des Morgan submitted written questions in respect of Digital City UK Limited.

The Leader of the Council indicated that in light of Mr. Morgan not being in attendance to ask his questions a copy of the written response tabled at the meeting would be sent to him.

Mr. James Boyd asked a public question regarding usage figures for Moulton Hill Country Park that had been quoted by the Deputy Leader of the Council.

The Deputy Leader of the Council responded at the meeting.

Mr. James Boyd asked a public question regarding whether the proposed site for a school at Moulton Hill was suitable because of potential flood issues.

The Deputy Leader of the Council responded at the meeting.

Mr. James Boyd asked a supplemental question seeking clarification on whether costings had been undertaken for the works required to put a school at the proposed Moulton Hill site.

The Deputy Leader of the Council responded at the meeting.

Mr. James Boyd asked if work on costings for the proposed site had not been undertaken, and if not, how the Cabinet report could say it was a viable option?

The Deputy Leader of the Council responded at the meeting.

Mr. Richard Symonds asked a public question regarding the contractual relationship between Enterprise Works and SEQAL.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care indicated that a written response would be sent to Mr. Symonds and would be copied to all Councillors.

Mr. Richard Symonds asked a public question regarding how Enterprise Works could be better publicised and developed.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care responded at the meeting.

Mr. Tim French asked a public question regarding the future of the Clapham Hobbs Care Centre site when it became empty.

The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care responded at the meeting.

Mr. Tim French asked a public question regarding disabled car parking provision.

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport responded at the meeting.

93. Minutes for Confirmation

(1) Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor Jim Grant seconded:

“That Minute 55(4) of the Cabinet (Review of Town Twinning) be confirmed and adopted.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

(2) Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor Jim Grant seconded:

“That Minute 71(3) of the Cabinet (Economic Strategy for Swindon Consultation and Adoption) be confirmed and adopted.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

(Councillor Michael Dickinson made a personal and prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of this as he was an employee of New College and left the room during the discussion.)

(3) Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor David Renard seconded:

“That Minute 79(1) of the Cabinet (Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors’ Allowances – Recommendations 2012/13) be confirmed and adopted.”

Councillor Mark Dempsey moved and Councillor Bob Wright seconded that the Motion be amended to read:

“That subject to the removal of the Vice-Chair Allowance for the Joint Police and Crime Panel, Minute 79(1) of the Cabinet (Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors’ Allowances – Recommendations 2012/13) be confirmed and adopted.”

The amendment was put to the vote and declared lost.

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

(4) Councillor Dale Heenan moved and Councillor Roderick Bluh seconded:

“That Minute 82(1) of the Cabinet (Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Sites Allocation Plan – Inspectors Report and Adoption) be confirmed and adopted.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

(5) Councillor Mark Edwards moved and Councillor Roderick Bluh seconded:

“That Minutes 52(9) and (10) of the Cabinet (Financial Update 2012-13 and 2013-14) be noted.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

(6) Councillor Russell Holland moved and Councillor Roderick Bluh seconded:

“That Minute 80 (6) of the Cabinet (Houses in Multiple Occupation) be noted.”

94. Motion - Honda

Councillor Rod Bluh moved and Councillor Jim Grant seconded and Councillor Stan Pajak concurred:

“That this Council notes with regret the announcement that Honda, a key local employer, will be making 800 posts redundant as a result of the company’s current trading position in the European market.

The Council requests:

The Leader of the Council to continue to work with Swindon’s Members of Parliament to do all they can to attract Government support for the workers and their families who will be affected by these job losses; and

The Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture to bring a report to Cabinet no later than 20th March 2013, with a report to Council no later than 11th April 2013 setting out what the Local Enterprise Partnership and One Swindon partners can do most effectively to help those employees in finding new employment or re-training.”

The Motion was put to the vote and unanimously carried.

(Councillor Derique Montaut made a personal declaration of interest in respect of this item as a member of his family worked for Honda.)

(Councillor Teresa Page made a personal declaration of interest in respect of this item as a member of her family worked for Honda.)

95. Motion - Swindon Dial A Ride

Councillor Nadine Watts moved and Councillor Steve Wakefield seconded:

“This Council notes the Administration’s proposal to cut £70K from Swindon’s Dial a Ride service and to tender the service out to the private market.

With further cuts also being proposed to Swindon’s Bus Services subsidised by the Council’s Revenue Budget, this Council believes it is likely that demand from Swindon’s elderly and disabled for Dial a Ride services in the Borough will likely increase. This Council is concerned that if it doesn’t meet that need then more elderly and disabled people in the Borough will feel isolated from society.

The Labour Group does not believe £70K should be cut from Swindon’s Dial a Ride service and also doesn’t believe another transport provider could provide as quality a transport service to Swindon’s disabled and elderly as Swindon Dial a Ride.

Cabinet is requested to have regard to these concerns in its final budget proposals to be determined by Council on 21st February 2013.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared lost.

96. Motion - North Swindon Schools

Councillor Mark Dempsey moved and Councillor Rochelle Russell seconded:

“This Council supports the principle of building a new primary school in North Swindon to meet the increasing demand for school places and to ensure that every child in Swindon is provided with a school place in their local area.

In order to meet the demand for primary school places in North Swindon, this Council notes Cabinet’s preference to build a primary school on the Mouldon Hill Country Park.

Cabinet is requested to ask for a report explaining:

(i) All possible options for providing the required new school places. These options include building a new primary school at the following sites:

- Redhouse Village Centre
- An additional school on Tadpole Farm
- The Groundwell Park & Ride Site
- The Clary Road Site;

(ii) The option of expanding existing schools in North Swindon, including PFI schools, in order to provide more school places.

This Council calls on Cabinet to make a decision regarding which site it will use to provide more primary school places in North Swindon as urgently as possible in order to ensure new school places are in place by September 2014.”

Councillor David Renard moved and Councillor Toby Elliott seconded that the Motion be amended to read:

“This Council supports the principle of building a new primary school in the Borough to meet the increasing demand for primary school places as needed and notes that currently 98% of families applying for primary school places secure one of their top 3 preferences.

In order to meet the demand for primary school places in North Swindon, this Council notes Cabinet is consulting on 2 options to provide more places in September 2014. Cabinet will receive feedback from the consultation in March.”

The amendment was put to the vote and declared carried becoming the Substantive motion.

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

97. Motion - Chief Officer Terms and Conditions

Councillor Julian Price moved and Councillor Des Moffatt seconded:

“This Council endorses the Special Committee’s decision to review existing and future Chief Officers’ terms and conditions.

This Council recognises the hard work and dedication senior officers provide to make Swindon Council as effective an organisation as it can possibly be. Notwithstanding that salaries should reflect the responsibilities and skill sets of officers employed; this Council does not believe that senior officers should receive more favourable terms and conditions than lower-level Council staff in respect of redundancy payments (based upon a pro-rata formula of salary), bonuses, daily expenses or officer mileage allowance.”

Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor Fionuala Foley seconded:

“This Council recognises the hard work and dedication senior officers provide to make Swindon Council as effective an organisation as it can possibly be, and considers that their terms and conditions should reflect those officers’ accountabilities, responsibilities and skill sets. This Council endorses the Special Committee’s decision to review existing and future Chief Officers’ terms and conditions.”

The amendment was put to the vote and declared carried becoming the Substantive Motion.

With the agreement of the Council the Substantive Motion was amended to read:

“This Council recognises the hard work and dedication all levels of officers provide to make Swindon Council as effective an organisation as it can possibly be, and

considers that their terms and conditions should reflect those officers' accountabilities, responsibilities and skill sets. This Council endorses the Special Committee's decision to review existing and future Chief Officers' terms and conditions."

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

98. Motion - Statements on the Council's Financial Position 2002-2004

Councillor Dale Heenan moved and Councillor David Renard seconded:

"This Council notes that in March 2002 its external debt was £34.6m, and in 2003 this increased to £46.4m, therefore any statement by a political party that Swindon Borough Council was debt free and "in surplus" in either of these years are incorrect.

This Council requests the Director of Law and Democratic Services writes to each Councillor to ask if he or she has made any statement in the last three months that Swindon Borough Council was "debt free and in surplus" in 2002, 2003 or 2004 and to report back to the Council on any responses on 21st February 2013."

With the agreement of the Council the mover and seconder amended the Motion to read:

"This Council notes that in March 2002 its external debt was £34.6m, and in 2003 this increased to £46.4m, therefore any statement by a political party that Swindon Borough Council was debt free and "in budget surplus" in either of these years are incorrect.

This Council requests the Director of Law and Democratic Services writes to each Councillor to ask if he or she has made any statement in the last three months that Swindon Borough Council was "debt free and in budget surplus" in 2002, 2003 or 2004 and to report back to the Council on any responses on 21st February 2013."

The meeting was adjourned for five minutes to allow the removal of a member of public from the Public Gallery.

Following a debate and with the agreement of the Council the Motion was withdrawn.

99. Appointment of Directors to Forward Swindon Ltd

Councillor Roderick Bluh moved and Councillor David Renard seconded:

"(1) That Ms Jeanette Harris be appointed, with immediate effect, to serve on the Board of Forward Swindon Ltd and that her term of office run until 17th May 2013.

(2) That Mr. Robin Bailey, Ms Tina Cumpstey, Mr. Mark Beard and Mr. James Lockhart be re-appointed, with immediate effect, to serve on the Board of Forward Swindon Ltd and that their term of office run until 17th May 2013."

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

100. Minutes of Cabinet and Decisions Delegated to Cabinet Members

The Council considered (a) the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 31st October and 12th December 2012, and (b) questions to the Cabinet Members regarding their portfolio responsibilities and answers received.

101. Minutes of other Council Bodies

The Council (a) received the Minutes set out in the “Minutes of Other Council Bodies” circulated with the Agenda, and (b) considered questions to Chairs regarding the work of their Committees and other bodies and answers received.

102. Councillors Question Time

There were no Standing Order 15 Questions for consideration.

Special Expenses

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Authors: Cabinet Member for Finance and Board Director, Resources
 Wards: All
 Locality Affected: All
 Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1. To seek approval of the amounts to be charged as Special Expenses for the Financial Year 2013/14.
- 1.2. To enable the Council Tax calculations to be undertaken, which have to be set by statute by 11th March and are scheduled to be considered by Council on 21st February 2013.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to:-

- 2.1. Note that a Cabinet Member Advisory Group has reviewed the methodology for calculating the level of Special Expenses being incurred within the Borough and advised that the new methodology represented a more accurate reflection of the costs associated with providing parish-type services in the non-parished area of the Borough;
- 2.2. Agree the level of Special Expenses for 2013/14 shall be £1,001,388;
- 2.3. Note that the charge per household is unchanged from 2011/12 and 2012/13;
- 2.4. Note the list of sites that will be charged as Special Expenses in 2013-14 set out in Appendix 1; and
- 2.5. Note the expenses listed in Appendix 2 shall be charged to all households of the Borough and shall **not** be Special Expenses.

3. Detail

Process to update the Special Expenses Methodology

- 3.1. The Cabinet Member for Finance established a Cabinet Member Advisory Group to oversee a fundamental review of the costs that it is proposed should be charged by way of Special Expenses to the non-parished area of the Borough only. This involved reviewing the location and purpose of each asset located within the non-parished area of the Borough and determining whether each site was mainly used by local people or had a wider strategic purpose. Members of the Advisory Group confirmed at its meeting on 23rd October 2012 that they were content with the new methodology and that it represented a more accurate reflection of the costs associated with providing parish-type services in the non-parished area of the Borough.

Special Expenses

Cabinet

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- 3.2. In order to calculate the level of Special Expenses, the Council needs to be mindful of the three key inputs to the calculation; the proposed level of Council Tax increase, the tax base for the Special Expenses area and the level of budgeted expenditure on Special Expenses items.
- 3.3. The Coalition Government has offered a two-year grant to authorities that freeze Council Tax levels in 2013-14. For Swindon, this amounts to £851k for each of the two years 2013-14 and 2014-15, which equates to the level of additional income it would raise from a 1% Council Tax increase in 2013-14 using the 2012-13 methodology for calculating the tax base. The grant is time-limited and funding levels would drop back from 2015-16.
- 3.4. Should Council wish to freeze Council Tax and also show no change to both the general and Special Expenses elements of the Council Tax bill, then the charge per Band D household needs to be maintained at £27.81 for the Special Expenses element. With a tax base for the non-parished area of 36,008.2 Band D equivalent properties, this would mean the total level of Special Expenses for 2013/14 should be set at £1,001,388.
- 3.5. The tax base for 2013-14 is lower than in 2012/13 due to changes to the Council Tax Support (CTS) Scheme. Essentially, under the current arrangements, Council Tax Benefit is treated as Council Tax income and those households on benefit are included in the tax base of a council area. Under the proposed new Council Tax Support Scheme, the Council Tax Support is treated as a discount in the tax base calculations so effectively, the tax base becomes the number of households that actually pay Council Tax (and excludes a pro rata proportion of those in receipt of CTS). This effectively reduces the amount of Council Tax income for councils. The Coalition Government is then replacing most of this lost Council Tax income with additional grant.
- 3.6. The reduction in the tax base would result in the Special Expenses charge per household increasing with no change in the total level of expenditure. However, the introduction of the new methodology for calculating the charge results in a reduction in the total level of Special Expenses without any change in service levels. This therefore partly mitigates the impact of the Council Tax Support changes.
- 3.7. Using the calculated tax base for the Special Expenses area and level of expenditure on Special Expenses items assumed in the Draft Budget for 2013-14, the charge per household would increase marginally above the 2012-13 level per household. However, in order to avoid confusion for tax payers receiving their Council Tax bills and potentially showing an increase in part of their Council Tax bill, the Advisory Group opined that a minor adjustment be made to the level of overheads charged in the calculation and that the charge per household for 2013-14 be set at the same level as 2012-13. This equates to a charge of £1,001,388 in total and Members are asked to agree that this be the level of Special Expenses for 2013-14.

Special Expenses

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Table 1 – Changes to level of Special Expenses as a result of new methodology

	2012-13	2013-14
	£	£
Allotments	50,930	47,067
Open Spaces/Recreation	580,360	672,223
Bus Shelters	17,310	16,951
Community Centres	472,508	238,757
Dog Bins	41,130	26,390
	1,162,238	1,001,388
Divided By the tax base for the non-parished area	41,792.1	36,008.2
Charge per Band D Household	27.81	27.81

- 3.8. Table 1 above shows changes to the level of service expenditure chargeable as Special Expenses in 2013-14 compared to 2012-13. These changes are not as a result of changes to the level of service provided but are instead as a result of changes to the way the costs are apportioned between the General and Special Expenses areas. For Community Centres, there has been no change in service levels but the budgeted expenditure has been increased in 2013-14 to recognise the overspend on the service in 2012-13 as a result of greater than anticipated Council involvement in the management of the centres.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1. Members could decide to recommend a different level of Special Expenses, which would result in the charge per household shown on the Council Tax bills being greater or smaller than that for 2012-13. As the Special Expenses form part of the Council's overall Budget, any increase or reduction would need to be compensated with a corresponding change to the level of general expenses, if Members were minded to keep the overall Council Budget unchanged. Each £100k change in the level of Special Expenses would result in a 10% change in the Band D Council Tax charge for the non-parished area and a corresponding 0.1% change in the General Expenses charged across all households in the Borough. The table below sets out the impact for a range of alternative sums.

Table 2 – Impact of Alternative Levels of Special Expenses

	Special Expenses			General Expenses		
	Total	Band D	Change	Change	Band D	Change
	£'000	£	%	£'000	£	%
100k lower than proposed level	901	25.03	-10.0%	100	1,132.33	+0.1%
Proposed Level 2013-14	1,001	27.81	0.0%	0	1,130.80	0.0%
100k higher than proposed level	1,101	30.59	+10.0%	-	1,129.27	-0.1%

Special Expenses

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1. Where there are financial implications these have been reflected in the body of the report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2. Legal and human rights implications have been taken into account in drafting this report. It is considered that the recommendations are compatible with Convention Rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3. There are no such direct implications.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4. The effective management of financial resources through robust financial management processes underpins the Council's ability to achieve its plans and priorities.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5. The report is making no recommendations around changes to services so no diversity impact assessment has been undertaken.

6. Consultees

- 6.1. The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

7. Background Papers and Appendices

Background Paper:-

- 7.1. Report to the Corporate Government Working Group – 23rd October 2012

Appendices:-

- 7.2. Appendix 1a – Open Spaces proposed to be charged as Special Expenses in 2013-14
- 7.3. Appendix 1b – Recreation Sites proposed to be charged as Special Expenses in 2013-14
- 7.4. Appendix 2 – Sites proposed to be charged as General Expenses in 2013-14

Special Expenses

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Appendix 1a

Special Expenses 2013-14 - Open Spaces

Location	Previously listed as:-
Angel Ridge	
Camden Close Grange Park	
Eastleaze Field	Play Area
Folly Field.	
Freshbrook Field	
Greendown Field	Bess Road Play Area
Greendown Plantation	
Hayland Copse	Hay Lane Copse
Hesketh Crescent Play Area	
Horseshoe Crescent	
Kiln Field	
Langstone Way	
Liden Green	
Liden parkway	
Mayenden Field	
Mead Field Freshbrook	
Okus Wood	
Plough Furlong	Nine Elms
Royal Mead	
Sandringham Rd Open space	
Shanhill Field Freshbrook	
Snodshill Park Eldene	
Sparcells Farm Field	
Toothill Parkway	
Toothill Park	
Turnpike Field Freshbrook	
White Edge Moor Play Area	
Whitehill Field	
Wick Lane, Liden	
Wick Lane Play Areas	
Withymead Field	The Chesters

Special Expenses

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Appendix 1b

Special Expenses 2013-14 – Recreation

Location	Previously listed as:
Alanbrook Crescent Play Area	
Alton Close Play Area	
Barnum Court Play Area	Deaves Court
Broad Green Play Area	
Cambria Bridge Rec Ground	
Churchward Park	Penzance Drive under open spaces
Clay Hill Play Area	
Clay Pit Park	
Colingsmead Play Area	
Concord Drive	
Edinburgh St Rec Ground	
Elm Ridge Play Area	
Euclid St Recreation Ground	
Godolphin Close Play Area	
Guildford Avenue Open Space	
Haylane Grange Park	
Huntley Close Play Area	
Iffley Road Open Space	
Lordsmith Green Play Area	
Minety Road Play Area	
Munro Close Play Area	
Nine Elms Play Area	
Oliver Close Play Area	
Pembroke Park Play Area	
Penhill Park Play Area	
Pinehurst West Play Area	
Quarry Road Rec Ground	
Rodbourne Recreation Ground	
Savenake Street Play Area	
Spring Gardens Rec Ground	
The Circle	
The Holbeins Play Area	
The Park, Faringdon Road	
The Quarries	
Uxbridge Close Play Area	
Walcot West Play Area	Eastern Avenue Play Area
Westcott Recreation Ground	
Wilcox Close	
Wills Avenue Play Area	

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from
Kirsty Cole on Direct Dial No. 464610 or Email kcole@swindon.gov.uk

Special Expenses

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Appendix 2

List of sites, by statute, which are recommended to be charged generally

Function	Power / Duty	Location	Reason
Recreation	Purchase/lease plant & lands for public walks or pleasure grounds	Bruddel Woods.	2
		Canal Walk.	2
		Cheney Manor Ponds	2
		Cheney Manor Rec. Ground.	2
		Clanfield Road Play Area	3
		County Ground.	2
		Covingham Walk.	1
		Cowdrey Close Play Area	3
		Crawford Close East Play Area	3
		Crawford Close West Play Area	3
		Croftwoods	2
		Deerhurst Way Play Area	3
		Dorset Green Play Area	3
		Dulverton Play Area	3
		Fleetwood Court Play Area	3
		Freshbrook Way Play Area	3
		Gainsborough Way Play Area	2
		Great Copse	3
		Hawthorn Road Play area	2
		Hreod Burna Parkway.	2
		Kimberley Play Area	3
		Kingshill Canal	3
		Leslie Close Play Area	3
		Linden Avenue Play Area	3
		Longthorpe Close Play Area	3
		Lydiard Country Park	2
		Lyndhurst Crescent Play Area	2
		Mannington Recreation Ground	2
		Markenfield Play Area	3
		Marlborough Road Recreation Ground	2
		Medlar Court Play Area	3
		Melksham Close Play Area	3
		Monkton Close Play Area	3
		Moredon Canal	2
		Moredon Playing Field & Sports	2
		Oakham Close South Play Area	3
		Penhill Copse.	2
		Penhill Park Area.	2
		Pheasant Close Play Area	3

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole on Direct Dial No. 464610 or Email kcole@swindon.gov.uk

Special Expenses

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Function	Power / Duty	Location	Reason
Recreation <i>ctd.</i>		Pilgrim Close Play Area	3
		Queens Park	2
		Ramsbury Avenue Play Area	3
		Risingham Mead Play Area	3
		Rodbourne Cheney Rec. Ground.	2
		Wheeler Avenue Play Area	3
		Sevenfields	2
		Shaftesbury Avenue Play Area	3
		Shrewton Walk & Play Area	3
		Southbrook Recreation.	2
		Stamford Close West Play Area	3
		Stanfield Close East Play Area	3
		St Marks Recreation Ground.	2
		Swindon Road Park	1
		The Meads Play Areas Eldene	3
		The Lawn Amenity Area.	2
		The Park	2
		Tintagel Close Play Area	3
		Tovey Road Play Area	3
		Town Gardens	2
		Tulip Tree Close Play Area	3
		Wakefield Play Area	3
		Walcot Recreation Ground.	2
		Weedon Rd. Open Space.	1
		Winterslow Road Play Area	3
Open Spaces	Power to acquire &	Basil Close.	1
	Power to maintain.	Blackland Copse	2
		Blagrove Parkway	2
		Bryony Way Field	1
		Caraway Drive	3
		Clover Park Woodhall Park	1
		Conisborough Play Area	3
		Dalefoot Woodhall Park	3
		Fenland Close	3
		Fiveways Field Play Area	3
		Francombes	2
		Freshbrook Parkway	2
		Gutters Close Field	2
		Haydon Brook Parkway.	2
		Haydon Brook Walk	2
		Heaton Close	1
		Highdown Way	1

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Special Expenses

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Function	Power / Duty	Location	Reason
Open Spaces ctd.		Highland Close Shaw	3
		Liden Drive Play Area	3
		Liden Park	2
		Little Copse	1
		Mellow Ground Copse (Bluebell Copse)	1
		Mellow Ground Field.(Westfield Way Field)	1
		Newark Close Play Area	3
		Oasthouse Middleleaze	3
		Oliver Close	3
		Peatmoor Copse.	2
		Peatmoor Lagoon.	2
		Picton Close Middleleaze	3
		Peatmoor Park	2
		Rectory Field	2
		Redcap Gardens Shaw	3
		Richard Jefferies Parkway.	2
		Riverside Park	2
		Shaw Forest Park	2
		Shaw Ridge	2
		Shaw Valley Parkway	2
		Standon Way	1
		Tadpole Brook	1
		Tamworth Drive	3
		The Ridge Woodhall Park.	1
		Wallis Drive	1
		Westlea Park	2
		Westlea Parkway	2
		Westfields Way Copse	1
		Wick Farm Orchard	1
		Woodhall & Moredon Parkway	2

Reason

- 1 This indicates a function provided within a Parish by the Borough Council, which has not been charged specifically to the Parish concerned. These cost have historically been charged as a general expense, and it as proposed that this should be continued.
- 2 These are sites provided and maintained as part of the strategic aim of the Council to enhance the overall environmental look of the Borough and to improve the quality of life for people seeking a more leisurely way to spend their spare time. Sites set aside for football, cricket and similar games are part of the Council's strategy to encourage outdoor sports and are therefore included in this category.
- 3 Play spaces used for informal play, which incur inspection and maintenance costs.

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Budget 2013-14 and Beyond

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Authors: Cabinet Member for Finance, and Board Director, Resources

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report proposes a Budget for 2013/14 and sets out the financial context for 2014-15 and beyond.
- 1.2 Under the Council's Constitution, the Cabinet is required to recommend a budget and level of Special Expenses to Council as part of its formal Council Tax Setting responsibilities.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to note:-

- 2.1 That the Council does not expect to need to replenish General Reserves as part of the 2013-14 Budget Setting process;
- 2.2 The feedback received to the Borough-wide consultation process on the Draft Budget, set out in Appendix 5;
- 2.3 The level of uncertainty relating to the level of funding available to support the 2013-14 Budget due to the lateness of the Local Government Finance Settlement and that, subject to materiality, the Board Director Resources recommends that any change in the forecast settlement position will be accommodated by amending the level of New Homes Bonus funding included in the 2013-14 budget proposals;
- 2.4 That a Consultation Meeting with business representatives from Swindon, on behalf of non-domestic rate payers took place on 4th February 2013 and the minutes will be provided to Council on 21st February 2013;
- 2.5 That in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Board Director, Resources, in his Section 151 capacity, confirms the robustness of the estimates underlying the recommended Budget and having reviewed the financial risks being faced by the Council concludes that the proposed level of General Reserves (£6m) is adequate in the context of the earmarked reserves held, specific contingencies and the proposed general contingency of £1.2m;

Cabinet is requested to agree:

- 2.6 The proposed changes in fees and charges set out in Appendix 1, that fall outside of the assumed Council-wide 3% blanket increase;

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole on Direct Dial No. 464610 or Email kcole@swindon.gov.uk

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- 2.7 That there be no change in the level of Special Expenses charged per household for 2013-14 with the total level of Special Expenses for 2013-14 being £1,001,388;
- 2.8 The Specific Reserves held in support of the 2013-14 Revenue Budget set out in Appendix 7;
- 2.9 That no funding will be passed from the Borough Council to parish councils to mitigate the impact of changes to the tax base linked to the Council Tax Support scheme; and
- 2.10 To recommend to Council, subject to any changes resulting from the Government's announcement of the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013-14 that:-
 - 2.10.1 The 2013-14 Budget be set at £148.041m;
 - 2.10.2 There be no increase in Council Tax for 2013-14, and
 - 2.10.3 It be determined that the proposed increase in the basic amount of Council Tax for 2013-14 is not excessive in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011.

3. The Medium Term Picture

- 3.1 The 2013-14 Budget is the first under the new Local Government Funding reforms for 2013-14 and 2014-15. These include the introduction of a number of changes that alter the level and local profile of Local Government funding as follows:-
 - 3.1.1 Localisation of Business Rates, which brings a local opportunity to benefit from growth in Business Rates income but with it also brings increased income risk;
 - 3.1.2 Localisation of Council Tax Support, which transfers funding from national to local government with a stated intention by Government of incentivising Councils to help people back into work but again transfers risk locally;
 - 3.1.3 Amalgamation of a number of specific grants into the formula grant that have the effect of increasing the net Budget of the Council despite there being an overall reduction in government support; and
 - 3.1.4 Generally reducing the overall level of income available to Councils.
- 3.2 Within this context, it will be necessary for the Council to continue to drive savings from its services and set aside any resources delivered in advance of future year grant reductions to help achieve the annual budget challenges from 2014-15 onwards. Current indications are that the 2014-15 funding settlement will be tougher for local authorities generally than 2013-14, although the position for Swindon will depend to a large extent on whether more funding is diverted from local authorities to academies, given the

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relatively high proportion of schools in Swindon that have been granted academy status.

- 3.3 As changes are being made to the way councils are financed, it is becoming increasingly noticeable that the level of on-going base grant funded is getting smaller and this core level of funding is being supplemented with new grants with uncertain durations. From 2013-14, the Government has top-sliced the national sum available to finance the new Business Rates Retention Scheme to fund increases in the New Homes Bonus (NHB). For Swindon, the 2013-14 level of NHB is around £4m which is now a significant proportion of its annual Budget. On this basis, and recognising that the Government had stated that this funding stream will continue to be available until at least 2016, it is proposed that a proportion of the New Homes Bonus is used to finance the base budget from 2013-14 despite it not forming part of the on-going core element of grant funding.

4. The 2013-14 Provisional Finance Settlement

- 4.1 On 19th December 2012, the Government published information to advise councils of the impact of the 2013-14 Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement. There were a number of key differences between the Council's funding assumptions and the provisional settlement in the following areas:-
- General Grant levels were lower than predicted;
 - Specific grants linked to Adult Social Care and Health were higher than expected by £999k (although how this is spent will be subject to a negotiation with Health); and
 - The Early Intervention Grant (EIG), which was £1.7m lower than predicted, and Council Tax Support Grant, which was £792k higher than predicted, have been rolled up into the formula grant which removes their ring-fencing and has the effect of artificially increasing the net Budget of the Council.
- 4.2 A reduction in the tax base of the Borough linked to changes to the Council Tax Support scheme, reported as part of the Draft Budget report to Cabinet on 12th December 2012, coupled with an overall increase in the net Budget of the Council means that Council Tax income in future will represent a smaller proportion of the Council's total income.
- 4.3 In determining the overall financial impact of the settlement the Council needs to take a view on whether the level of Business Rate receipts in 2013-14 is likely to vary from the Baseline level calculated by the Government. Given the lack of detailed information available from the Valuation Agency around historic success levels of appeals in particular, combined with the general economic uncertainty, this is proving to be an extremely difficult exercise. To put this in context, the total rateable value under appeal for Swindon is £79m, which equates to approximately £39m payable and reductions can be backdated over 3 years.

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- 4.4 In this climate of uncertainty, Finance Directors are having to balance the need for prudence against the possibility of being over cautious, which would result in a potentially significant surplus on collection during the year. Although local authorities would benefit from any such surpluses in future years, the impact on 2013-14 would be a need to identify a higher level of cuts than would potentially be required.
- 4.5 The Board Director, Resources and his team have closely examined past trends and attempted to estimate the impact of any known changes to business properties during the year that are already under construction or have been signalled through the Planning process. As a result of this work, the Board Director, Resources feels that an increase in income from Business Rates above the Baseline of £0.45m is the best estimate at this point in time, which would supplement the level of grant being received. The actual level of income received will be closely tracked during the year to see whether it is in line with expectations.
- 4.6 Taking all of these factors into account, the assumed level of grant income in overall terms was £1.3m lower than the level assumed in the Draft Budget considered by Cabinet on 12th December 2012. However, at the time of writing this report the final Local Government Finance Settlement has not been announced. In addition, the Government has signalled that not all the information required to fully understand the level of funding available will be made available prior to local authorities needing to set their budgets. In particular, the latest forecast for when the allocation of funding between Councils and Academies will be confirmed is March 2013.
- 4.7 Over the last couple of weeks, informal soundings from the Government and information received from the Local Government Association suggests that more funding may be released back to Local Government at some point for 2013/14, either in the final settlement or during the year, related to the following:-
- The £150m National top-slice of Early Intervention Grant
 - The National top-slice to fund the New Homes Bonus
 - The National quantum of assumed business rates
- 4.8 This recognises that the top-slices made at a national level are greater than the total of the allocations made to Councils. With this in mind, it is likely that additional specific grant income will be released during the year, as happened in 2012-13.
- 4.9 Recognising the scale of reductions required over the medium-term, the Board Director, Resources recommends that any additional funding received in-year be used to replace one-off funding sources such as New Homes Bonus and Council Tax Freeze Grant within the 2013-14 Budget, unless it is accompanied by unavoidable additional spending requirements. This will

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have the impact of reducing the scale of savings required to be delivered in 2014-15 and beyond.

5. The Forecast Out-turn 2012-13

- 5.1 The starting position for the 2013-14 Budget is the current year's Budget for 2012-13. A report elsewhere on the agenda sets out the forecast position to 31st March 2013 which shows that the Council has a number of risks and challenges to manages but expects to be able to deliver the 2012-13 Budget without drawing on General Reserves. On that basis, no provision has been included in the Proposed Budget for 2013-14 to replenish Reserves as a result of projected drawings in-year. However, it should be noted that many of the pressures being experienced in the current year are expected to be recurring, while a number of the mitigations to remain within budget are one-off.

6. Structural Changes Budget Realignment

- 6.1 Following adjustments to management structures and a realignment of accountabilities at Board Director and Head of Service level, the 2013-14 Budget will be mapped to the new operating structure with effect from 1st April 2013. The first Budget Management report to Cabinet in the summer 2013, will set out the changes in reporting structures to map the Budget from the 2012 structure to the new operating model.

7. Council Tax 2013-14

- 7.1 One of the new Grants announced as part of the 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) was the Council Tax freeze grant, which replaces the level of income generated from an assumed Council Tax increase with one-off grant funding. Swindon has frozen its Council Tax levels since 2010-11 and Cabinet Members have indicated that they propose to do so again in 2013-14. The Draft Budget assumed that the 2013-14 grant would be based on the tax base for 2013-14 using the new methodology described in the December Budget paper, generating £720k in 2013-14. The actual level of grant funding is based on the original tax base calculation methodology and amounts to £851k payable in both 2013-14 and 2014-15 if the Council freezes its Council Tax levels in 2013-14. As this funding is payable for two years only, it has not been used to balance the Base Budget and is instead available to fund one-off initiatives.
- 7.2 The "freeze" relates to the Council's Basic Amount of Council Tax, which includes its own Special Expenses but not Parish Precepts. Therefore, some households may experience a minor change in the amount paid due to fluctuations in the level of parish precepts.
- 7.3 In accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council has a duty to determine whether any increase in its basic level of Council Tax is considered to be excessive in which case it would be required to hold a referendum. For 2013/14, the Government has set the threshold at 2% for

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Swindon and, as the Council is proposing no change to the level of Council Tax in 2013/14, no referendum is necessary.

8. Special Expenses 2013-14

- 8.1 The proposed level of spend for 2013/14 is a small change in the overall level of Special Expenses to reflect the change in the tax base compared to 2012-13 (£1.001m from £1.162m in 2012-13) within the area with the charge per household unchanged from 2012-13 levels. The detail is set out in a separate report on this agenda.

9. Tax Base and Collection Fund Surplus / Deficit

- 9.1 In line with assumptions in the December Cabinet report, the Tax Base for 2013-14 and the Council's share of the estimated Collection Fund Surplus for 2012-13 are 65,420.8 and £2m respectively. These two figures feature in the formal Council Tax setting calculations to be considered by Council on 21st February 2013.

10. Council Tax Support Scheme Changes and impact on Parish Councils

- 10.1 As set out in the Draft Budget Report to Cabinet on 12th December 2012, changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme being introduced from April 2013 have the impact of reducing the tax base of Councils, and the resulting level of Council Tax income, and the Government has replaced this with additional grant income added to the Formula Grant. During the consultation period for the changes, it was expected that the tax base of parish councils would not be affected but in the final agreed scheme, the impact relates to all Councils.
- 10.2 The Grant will be payable to Swindon Borough Council which has the option of passing a proportion of this on to parish councils to mitigate the reduction in Council Tax income.
- 10.3 Analysis undertaken shows that the non-parished area of the Borough Council is impacted by the change more severely than parishes and that the impact for every parish is less than the Borough-wide average of 11%. The impact on the non-parished part of the Borough is a reduction in tax base of 13.8% compared to a parish average of 6.2%, after allowing for a growth in the number of households in some areas. If the Council was minded to compensate parishes for the reduction, £167k of the Council's £9.9m grant would need to be passed on to parish councils.
- 10.4 Parish councils have to set their annual Budgets and notify the Council of their 2013-14 precept by 31st January 2013 to feed into the Council's Budget and Council Tax setting timetable. As this date was before the Cabinet meeting, the Leader of the Council sought views from Cabinet Members in order that officers could advise the parish councils of the likelihood of the grant income being shared with them. On 11th January 2013, a letter was sent to parishes confirming that the view was that Council should not offer any financial

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assistance to the Parishes on the basis that the Council had not yet balanced its own Budget and that parishes have more flexibility over the level of annual increases in their Council Tax levels than the Borough Council. Members are asked to endorse this and confirm that no funding will be passed on to parish councils to mitigate the impact of this change.

11. The Proposed Budget 2013-14

- 11.1 The Council consulted on its draft Budget proposals following their approval by Cabinet on 12th December 2012 and is undertaking further consultation with the Business community. The meeting with business representatives from Swindon, on behalf of non-domestic rate payers will take place on 4th February 2012. The general consultation feedback is set out at Appendix 5 and the minutes of the meeting with Business Representatives will be circulated as Appendix 6 either at the meeting or directly to Council on 21st February 2013.
- 11.2 No changes to the Draft Budget are proposed as a result of the general consultation feedback.
- 11.3 The assumed level of funding gap in the Draft Budget was £3.1m, the level of provisionally announced funding is £1.3m lower than that assumed in December but this has been partly mitigated by an assumed increase in Business rate income of £450k creating a net gap of £3.95m. In addition, new cost pressures have been identified totalling £1.05m creating a total funding gap post settlement of £5m. Further savings have therefore been identified to balance the Budget. The majority do not impact on current front-line services. Where proposals do affect service levels, the amount of savings assumed from those proposals has been dampened to reflect only a part-year benefit, recognising the need to undertake further consultation.
- 11.4 It is proposed that the level of Contingency held is relatively high compared with that in previous years, recognising that a number of proposals have not yet commenced implementation. With this approach and assumptions for a part-year benefit in 2013-14 for the new proposals, enough flexibility remains within the Budget to ensure it is robust and deliverable in global terms with the capacity to absorb some minor modifications in response to any consultation feedback. All proposals that have been added or amended since the Draft Budget was presented to Cabinet on 12th December 2012 are shown in bold in Appendix 4. Should any changes be required to any of the proposals in response to consultation feedback prior to implementation, these will be reported to Cabinet as part of the 2013-14 scheduled Budget Management reports.
- 11.5 As a result of the funding changes announced as part of the 2013-14 Local Government Finance Settlement, funding has been switched from specific income to the Council's gross Budget to forming part of the Council's overall Formula Funding. These changes have resulted in the Net Budget of the Council increasing by nearly £11m despite reductions in the level of

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Government Funding. The adjustments required to reflect these changes are set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1 – Funding Adjustments to show movements in Net Budget

	£'000
2012-13 Net Budget	137,391
Add back 2012-13 Budgeted levels of specific grants switching to Formula Grant	16,765
2012-13 Budgeted 2-Year Old Funding transferred to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)	-428
Impact of Net Draft Budget proposals excluding funding changes (Cabinet 12-12-12)	-670
Impact of Net New Budget Proposals & Specific Grants required to close the gap (Cabinet 6-2-13)	-5,017
Net Budget 2013-14	148,041
Financed By:	
~ Formula Grant	70,611
~ Council Tax Income	74,980
~ Collection Fund Surplus – Council Tax	2,000
~ Business Rates income over and above Base-Line in Formula Grant	450
	148,041

12. Contingencies and Risk

- 12.1 The table below sets out the level of contingencies and general reserves held in support of the 2013-14 Budget and the specific reserves held are set out in Appendix 7. Each of the savings proposals put forward as part of the Budget setting cycle has been individually risk assessed and the levels of contingency built into the proposed Budget for 2013-14, and alongside the level of general and earmarked reserves, reflect the overall potential risk associated with delivering the Budget proposals. In light of this approach, the Board Director, Resources, as part of his Section 151 responsibilities, is content that the 2013/14 Budget as proposed, including the specific and general contingencies described in the table below, is deliverable.

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Table 2 – Contingencies held against the 2013-14 Budget

	£'000
Contingency against slippage in Savings Proposals	200
Contingency against higher-than budgeted care package costs	500
General contingency	500
	1,200

13. One-Off Resources Commitments

- 13.1 Alongside the detailed proposals for 2013/14, a small number of one-off allocations of funding are proposed in order to commence work on strategies that will release further savings in 2014-15. Members are asked to approve the following allocations of funding.

Table 3 – One-Off Commitments 2013-14

	£000
Change Programme resources (to be confirmed in March 2013)	TBC
Investment in Digital Strategy to realise savings in future years	125

14. Fees and Charges

- 14.1 In the Draft Budget considered by Cabinet on 12th December 2012, a 3% increase in fees and charges was assumed. Where using market intelligence a 3% increase is not proposed, the proposed charges for these services are set out in Appendix 1.

15. Equalities and Diversity

- 15.1 Achieving equality and diversity underpins the Council's aim of providing high-quality services, which reflect and support the needs of the wider community. Swindon Borough Council is committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting best practice in all areas of its work and the 2013-14 Budget has been prepared with this in mind. As part of the process to draw up budget proposals, each Board Director has considered equalities and other risk issues, including community safety, both in respect of investment and reductions in spend. For those proposals with an impact on stakeholders, a full Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been completed. Copies of the DIAs undertaken to support the Budget proposals can be obtained from the Council's Change Manager, Equality and Diversity on telephone number (01793) 463221.

16. General Reserves

- 16.1 The Comprehensive Performance Assessment 'rule of thumb' introduced for 2003/04 suggested that a level equivalent to not less than 5% of net revenue

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expenditure excluding School budgets should be considered, unless there is a formal risk assessment, which would justify a lower level. This implies a level of around £7m for Swindon. However, despite the significant level of savings identified since 2006/07, the Council has not overspent and is on track to deliver the Budget in the current year despite the challenging financial climate. Protection against budget risks is also provided through earmarked reserves and contingencies and benchmarking suggests that Swindon is holding higher levels of reserves than other Councils of a similar size and complexity. In this context, it is recommended that the level of General Reserves the Council holds is maintained at £6m. Members are advised that changes to the funding system in future years are expected to introduce more risks for local authorities and that this may well imply that General Reserves will need to be higher in the years ahead.

17. Alternative Options

- 17.1 The full range of options is set out in the body of the report.

18. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 18.1 Where there are financial implications these have been reflected in the body of the report and in the appendices.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 18.2 All legal and human rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with Convention rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 18.3 There are no such direct implications.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 18.4 The effective management of financial resources through robust financial management processes underpins the Council's ability to achieve its plans and priorities.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 18.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been produced for each of the savings proposals that could impact on minority groups. These have been published on the Council's Internet alongside the Cabinet papers. Copies can be obtained from the Council's Equalities Manager, Nick Stephenson on 01793 463221.

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19. Consultees

- 19.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted on all reports.

20. Background Papers and Appendices

- 20.1 Appendix 1: Proposed Changes to Fees and Charges outside the 3% Blanket Council-wide increase
- 20.2 Appendix 2: Summary of Proposed Budget By Group 2013/14
- 20.3 Appendix 3: Summary Budget Proposals By Directorate 2013-14
- 20.4 Appendix 4: Detailed Budget Proposals 2013/14 By Group
- 20.5 Appendix 5: Consultation Response
- 20.6 Appendix 6: Minutes of the Ratepayers meeting on 4th February 2013 – To follow or be presented to Full Council on 21st February 2013
- 20.7 Appendix 7: Reserves Policy and Specific Reserves held to support the 2013-14 Budget

21. Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

- 21.1 This is a not a key decision as the Council will determine the Council's Budget and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme / Forward Plan for February 2013.

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Service Delivery (excluding Childrens & Families and Housing) - Proposed Changes to Fees & Charges

Appendix 1

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3%

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase	Increase %	Reason for increase above 3%
Contractors Permits (Builders) - per week	£10.00	£12.00	£2.00	20%	Proposed increase benchmarked to other authorities
Wheelchair / Walker Hire - One Night	£5.00	£7.50	£2.50	50%	Increase in pricing to reduce temporary day price abnormally
Administration Fee	£7.00	£10.00	£3.00	43%	No increase since 2008/09.
Private Hire - Hackney Carriage & Taxi licencing - Operators licence Extra 10 Vehicles over 20 vehicles	£10.00	£11.00	£1.00	10%	rounded to next whole pound
Planning Applications - Householder Application	£150.00	£172.00	£22.00	15%	The fees and charges levied in respect of planning applications are set by statute by central government. We have been notified that the increase is 15% wef 22 November 2012.
Planning Applications - Developer Application (per Property)	£335.00	£385.00	£50.00	15%	The fees and charges levied in respect of planning applications are set by statute by central government. We have been notified that the increase is 15% wef 22 November 2012.
Planning Applications - Lawful use certificates (existing developments)	£170.00	£195.00	£25.00	15%	The fees and charges levied in respect of planning applications are set by statute by central government. We have been notified that the increase is 15% wef 22 November 2012.
Planning Applications - Lawful use certificates (proposed developments)	Half the normal planning fee	Half the normal planning fee		15%	The fees and charges levied in respect of planning applications are set by statute by central government. We have been notified that the increase is 15% wef 22 November 2012.
Land Searches - Electronic - Residential	£11.50	£12.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - Postal - Residential	£13.50	£14.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q4. Road proposals by Private Bodies	£21.00	£22.00	£1.00	5%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q6. Advertisements	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q7. Completion Notices	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q8. Parks & Countryside	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q9. Pipelines	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q10. Houses in multiple occupation	£10.50	£11.00	£0.50	5%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q11. Noise abatement	£11.50	£12.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q12. Urban development areas	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q13. Enterprise zones	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q14. Inner urban improvement areas	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q15. Simplified planning zones	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £

Service Delivery (excluding Childrens & Families and Housing) - Proposed Changes to Fees & Charges

Appendix 1

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3%

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase	Increase	Reason for increase above 3%
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q16. Land maintenance notices	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q17. Mineral consultation areas	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q18. Hazardous substances consents	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q19. Environmental & pollution notices	£11.50	£12.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q20. Food safety notices	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q21. Hedgerow Notices	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted with a standard search - Q22. Common Land & Town or Village Green	£6.50	£7.00	£0.50	8%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q4. Road proposals by Private Bodies	£27.00	£28.00	£1.00	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q6. Advertisements	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q7. Completion Notices	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q8. Parks & Countryside	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q9. Pipelines	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q12. Urban development areas	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q13. Enterprise zones	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q14. Inner urban improvement areas	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q15. Simplified planning zones	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q16. Land maintenance notices	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q17. Mineral consultation areas	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q18. Hazardous substances consents	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q20. Food safety notices	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q21. Hedgerow Notices	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Land Searches - CON290 when submitted separately - Q22. Common Land & Town or Village Green	£12.50	£13.00	£0.50	4%	Rounded to nearest whole £

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3%

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase £	Increase %	Reason for increase above 3%
Highway Licensing - Banners - 1 site - Week 1	£33.50	£35.00	£1.50	4%	Round to nearest £5 - the cost has not increased for a number of years and will still provide a very reasonable cost effective advertising medium.
Highway Licensing - Banners - 2 sites - Week 1	£67.00	£70.00	£3.00	4%	Round to nearest £5 - the cost has not increased for a number of years and will still provide a very reasonable cost effective advertising medium.
Highway Licensing - Banners - 3 sites - Week 1	£100.50	£105.00	£4.50	4%	Round to nearest £5 - the cost has not increased for a number of years and will still provide a very reasonable cost effective advertising medium.
Highway Licensing - Skip license	£28.00	£30.00	£2.00	7%	additional administration of notices
Highway Licensing - Express skip approval fee	£0.00	£55.00	£55.00	100%	additional administration of request
Highway Licensing - Skip renewals	£15.00	£16.00	£1.00	7%	Rounded to nearest whole £
Highway Licensing - Scaffold license	£82.00	£85.00	£3.00	4%	Rounded up to nearest £5
Highway Licensing - Express Scaffold approval fee	£0.00	£105.00	£105.00	100%	to cover officer time dealing with express approval
Highway Licensing - Hoarding license	£82.00	£85.00	£3.00	4%	Rounded up to nearest £5
Highway Licensing - Express Hoarding approval fee	£0.00	£105.00	£105.00	100%	to cover officer time dealing with express approval
Highway Licensing - Crane license	£82.00	£85.00	£3.00	4%	Rounded up to nearest £5
Highway Licensing - Express Crane approval fee	£0.00	£105.00	£105.00	100%	to cover officer time dealing with express approval
Highway Licensing - Section 50 - new	£350.00	£375.00	£25.00	7%	additional administration of notices + bond to be secured against works (TBC) (See Surrey CC S50 process)
Highway Licensing - Section 50 - extg	£200.00	£225.00	£25.00	13%	additional administration of notices + bond to be secured against works (TBC) (See Surrey CC S50 process)
Highway Licensing - Drop kerbs domestic	£65.00	£95.00	£30.00	46%	additional administration of notices - post approval - to coordinate private contractor notices
Highway Licensing - Drop kerbs commercial	£100.00	£125.00	£25.00	25%	additional administration of notices - post approval
Highway Licensing - Section 171 license	£200.00	£220.00	£20.00	10%	additional administration of notices - post approval
Temporary Road Orders - Notice (Up to 5 days)	£170.00	TBA			dependant on DfT consultation changes
Temporary Road Orders - Order (Over 5 days)	£1,100.00	TBA			dependant on DfT consultation changes
Streetsmart - Commercial Sacks (Each)	£2.70	£2.80	£0.10	4%	Rounded to nearest 10p
Streetsmart - Commercial Sacks (Each) - paper recycling	£1.35	£1.40	£0.05	4%	Rounded to nearest 10p

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3%

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase £	Increase %	Reason for increase above 3%
Streetsmart - Commercial Labels (Each) - paper recycling	£1.35	£1.40	£0.05	4%	Rounded to nearest 10p
Streetsmart - Commercial Sacks (For 25 labels) - paper recycling	£26.00	£27.00	£1.00	4%	Rounded to nearest £
Streetsmart - Household Waste Recycling Centre - Tyres	£2.60	£3.00	£0.40	15%	Reflects latest costs on handling and rounded up to simplify dealing with cash.
Streetsmart - Household Waste Recycling Centre - Asbestos (per bag)	£7.50	£8.00	£0.50	7%	Reflects latest costs on handling and rounded up to simplify dealing with cash.
Streetsmart - Household Waste Recycling Centre -Asbestos (per sheet)	£7.50	£8.00	£0.50	7%	Reflects latest costs on handling and rounded up to simplify dealing with cash.
Allotments - Full Size - Swindon Card	£37.00	£48.00	£11.00	30%	
Allotments - Full Size - Concession 1	£18.50	£48.00	£29.50	159%	
Allotments - Full Size - Concession 2	£11.30	£36.00	£24.70	219%	
Allotments - Half Size - Swindon Card	£18.50	£24.00	£5.50	30%	
Allotments - Half Size - Concession 1	£10.30	£24.00	£13.70	133%	
Allotments - Half Size - Concession 2	£6.20	£18.00	£11.80	190%	
Fishing - Coate - Day Ticket - Non Card	£5.30	£5.50	£0.20	4%	Rounded up to keep the price difference between adult and junior
Fishing - Coate - Day Ticket -Non Card (Junior)	£2.70	£2.80	£0.10	4%	Rounded to the nearest 10p
Fishing - Coate - Day Ticket - Concession 1	£2.70	£2.80	£0.10	4%	Rounded to the nearest 10p
Fishing - Coate - Day Ticket - Concession 2	£1.30	£1.40	£0.10	8%	Rounded to the nearest 10p
Fishing - Coate Water -Day Ticket - Specimen - Concession 1	£5.30	£5.60	£0.30	6%	Rounded to simplify cash handling
Fishing - Coate Water - Day Ticket - Concession 2	£2.70	£2.80	£0.10	4%	Rounded to the nearest 10p
Fishing - Coate- Day Season - Non Card	£47.50	£50.00	£2.50	5%	Rounded to simplify cash handling
Fishing - Coate- Day Season - Concession 1	£23.80	£25.00	£1.20	5%	Half of the non card fee
Fishing - Coate- Day Season - Concession 2	£11.90	£12.50	£0.60	5%	Half of concession 1 charge
Nature Reserve - Non Card	£2.80	£2.90	£0.10	4%	Rounded to the nearest 10p
Nature Reserve - Concession 1	£1.35	£1.40	£0.05	4%	Rounded to the nearest 10p

Service Delivery (excluding Childrens & Families and Housing) - Proposed Changes to Fees & Charges

Appendix 1

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3%

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase	Increase %	Reason for increase above 3%
Nature Reserve - Key Deposit	£2.00	£5.00	£3.00	150%	Increased cost of deposit due to costs of keys not covering the expenditure for having keys replaced.
Cremations - Double service time - adds 30 minutes to 9am, 9.30am & 3pm services (additional fee)	£150.00	£165.00	£15.00	10%	Not increased since 2008.
Cemeteries - Use of Chapel	£50.00	£75.00	£25.00	50%	No increase since 2008/09.
Cemeteries - Use of Organ	£50.00	£55.00	£5.00	10%	No increase since 2008/09.
Cemeteries - Use of organ for Non-viable foetus, still born and child up to 15 yrs	£28.00	£30.00	£2.00	7%	No increase since 2008/09.
Interment (purchased and unpurchased grave spaces) - Over 16 years (single depth)	£420.00	£500.00	£80.00	19%	Fees amended to encourage better use of plots.
Interment (purchased and unpurchased grave spaces) - Interment of ashes over 16 years	£160.00	£200.00	£40.00	25%	In line with other local authorities
Purchase Fees - Kingsdown Cemetery - In white on plan - no selection	£520.00	£600.00	£80.00	15%	In line with other local authorities and to cover costs of maintenance of the Cemetery.
Purchase Fees - Kingsdown Cemetery - In yellow on plan - with selection	£635.00	£800.00	£165.00	26%	In line with other local authorities and to cover costs of maintenance of the Cemetery.
Purchase Fees - Kingsdown Cemetery - In green on plan - with selection	£765.00	£900.00	£135.00	18%	In line with other local authorities and to cover costs of maintenance of the Cemetery.
Purchase Fees - Kingsdown Cemetery - Burial plot for cremated remains	£200.00	£250.00	£50.00	25%	In line with other local authorities and to cover costs of maintenance of the Cemetery.
Traditional Graves - Unselected Graves (3rd row inwards - Allocated by council)	£865.00	£900.00	£35.00	4%	In line with other local authorities and to cover costs of maintenance of the Cemetery.
Traditional Graves - Selected Graves (yellow plots - Selected by members of public)	£1,040.00	£1,100.00	£60.00	6%	In line with other local authorities and to cover costs of maintenance of the Cemetery.
Traditional Graves - Unselected Graves - Green Eco Area (To now be inclusive of interment fee)	£865.00	£900.00	£35.00	4%	This fee has increased, but will now include the interment fee.
Monuments, Gravestones - for the right to erect or place - Vase with inscription	£72.00	£75.00	£3.00	4%	Rounded to nearest £5
Monuments, Gravestones - for the right to erect or place - Cremation tablet	£72.00	£75.00	£3.00	4%	Rounded to nearest £5
Monuments, Gravestones - for the right to erect or place - Inscription - additional to the first inscription	£51.00	£55.00	£4.00	8%	Rounded to nearest £5
Monuments, Gravestones - for the right to erect or place - Vase - with inscription placed on existing base	£51.00	£55.00	£4.00	8%	Rounded to nearest £5
Book of Remembrance Fees - 2 line entry	£44.00	£50.00	£6.00	14%	In line with other Local Authorities
Book of Remembrance Fees - 5 line entry	£74.00	£80.00	£6.00	8%	In line with other Local Authorities
Book of Remembrance Fees - 5 line with flower	£154.00	£180.00	£26.00	17%	One fee for either badge or emblem. This will avoid confusion for the public when ordering and is in line with other Local authorities

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3%

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase	Increase %	Reason for increase above 3%
Book of Remembrance Fees - 5 line with badge/emblem	£164.00	£180.00	£16.00	10%	One fee for either flower badge or emblem. This will avoid confusion for the public when ordering and is in line with other Local authorities
Book of Remembrance Fees - 8 line with flower	£180.00	£210.00	£30.00	17%	One fee for either badge or emblem. This will avoid confusion for the public when ordering and is in line with other Local authorities
Book of Remembrance Fees - 8 line with badge/emblem	£190.00	£210.00	£20.00	11%	One fee for either badge or emblem. This will avoid confusion for the public when ordering and is in line with other Local authorities
Wall plaque - 10 years	£265.00	£300.00	£35.00	13%	Cost of plaques have increase, new fee in line with other local authorities
Vase Block Tablet - - replacement plaque	£155.00	£180.00	£25.00	16%	Increase is to cover the increase from supplier.
Bench Plaque - Cemeteries (5 per bench)	£210.00	£260.00	£50.00	24%	Increase covers cost of the bench and the plaque.
Bench Plaque - Cemeteries (5 per bench) - - Renewal	£0.00	£120.00	£120.00	New fee	Continues Lease for 10 years, covers maintenance and replacement of bench if it breaks or is vandalised
Bench Plaque - Cemeteries (5 per bench) - - Replacement Plaque	£0.00	£160.00	£160.00	New fee	Reduced to reflect that a new plaque does not extend lease.
Memorial Seat - Parks (Town Gardens, etc)	£940.00	£1,400.00	£460.00	49%	These benches are £400 more expensive to purchase as they have metal ends
Memorial Seat - Parks (Town Gardens, etc) - - Renewal	£600.00	£880.00	£280.00	47%	Continues Lease for 10 years, covers maintenance and replacement of bench if it breaks or is vandalised
Bench Plaque - Parks (5 per bench)	£210.00	£350.00	£140.00	67%	These benches are £400 more expensive to purchase as they have metal ends. Increase covers the cost of the bench and plaque.
Bench Plaque - Parks (5 per bench) - - Renewal	£0.00	£160.00	£160.00	New fee	Continues Lease for 10 years, covers maintenance and replacement of bench if it breaks or is vandalised
Bench Plaque - Parks (5 per bench) - - Replacement Plaque	£0.00	£160.00	£160.00	New fee	Reduced to reflect that a new plaque does not extend lease.
Exhumation - - Cremated Remains from Lawn of Remembrance	£132.00	£240.00	£108.00	82%	Same as Cremated Remains from Cemetery, but including VAT
Exhumation - - Cremated Remains from Cemetery	£110.00	£200.00	£90.00	82%	Fee to exhumation has not increased in 4 years. Should be the same as the interment fee.
Tree of remembrance (Small)	£110.00	£115.00	£5.00	5%	Rounded to the nearest £5
STEAM admission price - adult	£6.60	£8.50	£1.90	29%	Proposed increase following benchmarking exercise with similar facilities in other locations outside of the Borough
STEAM admission price - children	£4.40	£5.00	£0.60	14%	Proposed increase following benchmarking exercise with similar facilities in other locations outside of the Borough
STEAM admission price - seniors	£4.40	£7.50	£3.10	70%	Proposed increase following benchmarking exercise with similar facilities in other locations outside of the Borough

Registration Services - Proposed Changes to Fees & Charges above 3% for 2013/14

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3%

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase £	Increase %	Reason for increase above 3%
Marriage & CP Ceremony Fees					
Garden Room					
Administration Fee					
Mon-Thurs	£150.00	£175.00	£25.00	16.7%	Market based pricing
Fri	£150.00	£195.00	£45.00	30.0%	Market based pricing
Sat	£200.00	£225.00	£25.00	12.5%	Market based pricing
Juno Room					
Mon-Thurs	£85.00	£95.00	£10.00	11.8%	Market based pricing
Fri	£85.00	£115.00	£30.00	35.3%	Market based pricing
Approved Premises					
Mon-Thurs	£300.00	£330.00	£30.00	10.0%	Market based pricing
Fri	£300.00	£350.00	£50.00	16.7%	Market based pricing
Sat	£330.00	£375.00	£45.00	13.6%	Market based pricing
Sun	£360.00	£400.00	£40.00	11.1%	Market based pricing
Other (Non- Statutory) Ceremony Fees					
Garden Room					
Mon-Thurs	£150.00	£165.00	£15.00	10.0%	Market based pricing
Fri	£150.00	£185.00	£35.00	23.3%	Market based pricing
Sat	£150.00	£200.00	£50.00	33.3%	Market based pricing
Juno Room					
Mon-Thurs	£95.00	£105.00	£10.00	10.5%	Market based pricing
Fri	£95.00	£125.00	£30.00	31.6%	Market based pricing
Approved Premises					
Mon-Thurs	£150.00	£175.00	£25.00	16.7%	Market based pricing
Fri	£150.00	£195.00	£45.00	30.0%	Market based pricing
Sat	£195.00	£220.00	£25.00	12.8%	Market based pricing
Ceremony date changes/amendments					
	£0.00	£25.00	£25.00	New	Market based pricing
Nationality Checking					
Nationality Checking -Adult	£50.00	£60.00	£10.00	20.0%	Market based pricing
Nationality Checking - Child	£25.00	£30.00	£5.00	20.0%	Market based pricing
Nationality Checking - Adult - Saturday	£55.00	£65.00	£10.00	18.2%	Market based pricing
Nationality Checking - Child - Saturday	£27.50	£35.00	£7.50	27.3%	Market based pricing
Private Citizenship Ceremonies					
Single	£50.00	£60.00	£10.00	20.0%	Market based pricing
Family	£75.00	£85.00	£10.00	13.3%	Market based pricing
Certificates					
Fast Track (within one hour)	£10.00	£15.00	£5.00	50.0%	Market based pricing
While You Wait (when available - 15 minutes)	£0.00	£25.00	£25.00	New	Market based pricing
Civil Funerals					
	£150.00	£160.00	£10.00	6.7%	Market based pricing

Children & Adults - Proposed Changes to Fees & Charges above 3% for 2013/14

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3%

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase £	Increase %	Reason for increase above 3%
Day Services Transport - Lower rate (return journey)	£1.05	£1.10	£0.05	4.8%	Coinage - 5p is minimum increase
Day Services Transport - Higher rate (return Journey)	£2.10	£2.20	£0.10	4.8%	Coinage

Children & Families - Proposed Changes to Fees & Charges above 3% for 2013/14

For 2013-14 changes being proposed to fees and charges above 3% are agreed as a basis for consultation by the relevant Cabinet Member as part of a Cabinet Member Decision Note.

Service	Actual 2012/13	Proposed 2013/14	Increase £	Increase %	Reason for increase above 3%
Workplace Nursery - Mornings	£20.55	£21.30	£0.75	3.6%	An approximate 3.5% increase here will help to offset the additional costs involved with children who attend for part days or who result in 'gaps' we are unable to fill because it is difficult to find a child who wants the mirror image of one who has a partial day attendance pattern. Although this is a higher increase this is moving The Children's Nursery fee structure into one which more closely resembles that of other settings in the borough
Workplace Nursery - Afternoons	£19.75	£20.45	£0.70	3.5%	An approximate 3.5% increase here will help to offset the additional costs involved with children who attend for part days or who result in 'gaps' we are unable to fill because it is difficult to find a child who wants the mirror image of one who has a partial day attendance pattern. Although this is a higher increase this is moving The Children's Nursery fee structure into one which more closely resembles that of other settings in the borough

Summary of Proposed Budget By Group 2013/14

	Chief Executive's	Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property & Corporate	Transformation and Strategic Projects	Localities	Commissioning	Delivery	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
2012-13 Budget	528	(10,569)	4,676	1,493	108,977	32,286	137,391
Changes in levels of Specific Grant Funding used to finance the Net Budget	0	(1,471)	0	0	(800)	0	(2,271)
Inflation	0	764	(2)	(1)	1,961	854	3,576
Other Cost Pressures	0	2,688	0	0	4,724	950	8,362
Savings not directly impacting front-line services	0	(7,417)	0	(5)	(5,051)	(1,238)	(13,711)
Service Changes	0	(255)	0	(75)	(456)	(858)	(1,644)
Net Changes in Appendices 3 & 4	0	(5,691)	(2)	(81)	378	(292)	(5,688)
Add back 2012-13 Budgeted levels of specific grants switching to Formula Grant		16,765					16,765
2012-13 Budgeted 2-Year Old Funding transferred to the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)					(428)		(428)
Funding Adjustments	0	16,765			(428)		16,337
2013-14 Budget	528	505	4,674	1,412	108,927	31,994	148,040

NB. Budgets will be realigned to the new Senior Structure from 1-4-13

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Summary of Proposed Budget Changes for 2013/14 by Function (Department)

Appendix 3

Function (Department)	Specific Grant Funding	<-----Inflation----->			Other Costs	<-----Savings & New Income----->				Proposed Changes for 2013/14
		Inflation - Pay	Inflation - Cost Pressure	Inflation - Income		Back Office / Efficiency Savings	Front Office Transformation	New Income	Service Changes	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive's										
PF100 - Stronger Together	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PF110 - Internal Audit	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property										
PF200 - Finance	0	0	40	(1)	0	0	0	0	0	39
PF210 - Revenues & Benefits	147	0	5	0	170	(100)	0	0	0	222
PF220 - Property Assets	0	0	33	(16)	0	(281)	0	0	0	(264)
PF230 - Design & Architecture	0	0	51	0	0	(70)	0	0	0	(19)
PF240 - Corporate	(1,618)	643	9	0	2,518	(6,966)	0	0	(255)	(5,669)
Transformation and Strategic Projects										
PF300 - Strategy & People	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
PF310 - Law & Democratic Services	0	0	2	(7)	0	0	0	0	0	(5)
Localities										
PF400 - Locality & Partnerships	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(75)	(75)
PF410 - Communication & Insight	0	0	0	(1)	0	(5)	0	0	0	(6)
Commissioning										
PF500 - Management	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PF510 - Children and Adults	(800)	0	1,331	(119)	3,895	(2,396)	(2,155)	0	(390)	(634)
PF520 - Economy / Attainment	0	0	85	(2)	0	(20)	(200)	0	(66)	(203)
PF530 - Commercial Services	0	0	666	0	829	(280)	0	0	0	1,215
Delivery										
PF600 - Children and Families	0	0	109	(16)	350	(199)	0	0	0	244
PF610 - Public Protection & Streetsmart	0	0	644	(35)	0	0	0	0	(10)	599
PF620 - Leisure, Libraries, Culture and Traded Services	0	0	196	(182)	100	(182)	0	(80)	(142)	(290)
PF630 - Housing Services	0	0	7	(45)	0	0	0	(200)	(20)	(258)
PF640 - Highways & Transport	0	0	218	(75)	500	(118)	0	0	(670)	(145)
PF650 - Planning	0	0	1	0	0	(158)	0	0	(16)	(173)
PF660 - Business Services & Support	0	0	35	(3)	0	(45)	(250)	(6)	0	(269)
Total	(2,271)	643	3,435	(502)	8,362	(10,820)	(2,605)	(286)	(1,644)	(5,688)

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	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Confirmed on-going funding for Drug Intervention Grant when the base budget assumed that funding would not continue at this level into 2013-14. The Budget assumes that should the grant be reduced in future, the planned expenditure would reduce accordingly.	(150)
Confirmed on-going funding from the Adults Learning Skills Council when the base budget assumed that funding would not continue at this level into 2013-14. The Budget assumes that should the funding be reduced in future, the planned expenditure would reduce accordingly.	(272)
Reduction in Housing Benefits Admin Grant as a result of new claims transferring back to Central Government.	147
Additional Housing Benefit Subsidy income generated by reducing the level of overpayments made following the implementation of the new Atlas computer system	(100)
Redirection of £2.1m (was £2m) of New Homes Bonus to fund base budget expenditure recognising that this is the estimated sum that Central Government are taking from the Council's base grant funding to divert additional funding into the New Homes Bonus.	(2,106)
New Specific Grant - the Government has released the unused part of the national clawback for New Homes Bonus back to local authorities through a new specific grant	(239)
Use of Council Tax Freeze Grant to partly fund contingency to cash flow any timelag on the delivery of savings and mitigate against risks in the Budget and Funding assumptions	(851)
Assumed net change in Education-related specific grants affecting the general fund resulting from a range of school funding reforms, most particularly LACSEG (Local Authority Central Services Equivalent Grant) - was £1.8m	2,000
Reduction in contingency fund to £1.2m to mitigate risk of uncertainty in funding levels, placement costs and slippage in the delivery of savings proposals	(222)
Capita contract Annual Service Charge price reduction as profiled when the original contract was let.	(250)
Capita contract Annual Service Charge price reduction from savings in management overheads	(30)
Remove Private Financial Initiative (PFI) Base Budget Funding to match the payments profile within the contract whereby the net costs after grant do not step up above current funding levels until 2016/17 when approximately £100k will need to be added to the base budget.	(1,348)
External Audit Fees Saving based on downward trends in nationwide fee rates.	(100)
Removal of income target for recovery of overpayments on Council Tax (CT) following changes in CT benefits rules.	170
Increase in the net cost of services provided by SCS (partly through increased client charges and partly from a reduction in the level of SBC rebate budgeted recognising the level of risk in the SCS Target to maintain the rebate at the Budgeted level for 2012-13 (£3.5m)	1,382

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Reduction in central support recharges to the Dedicated Schools Grant to reflect the reduced level of support to schools linked to the transfer of some to Academy status.	200
General loan repayments increase to reflect the full year impact of financing schemes added to the Capital Programme in 2012-13 and funding for statutory schemes plus an estimated £4m (£2m Borrowing + New Homes Bonus) for other priorities in 2013-14. Assumes a modest reduction in the Repairs and Maintenance Programme (£250k) and trimming back existing scheme Budgets)	1,158
Income from advertising on the Council's web-site	(5)
Reduction in Base Budget funding that was earmarked in the 2012-13 Budget to cash flow expenditure to help manage the medium term funding position. One-off money will be released for this purpose instead.	(590)
Targeted reduction in Council-wide non-essential expenditure budgets that underspent in 2011-12.	(707)
Council-wide cost of inflation and demographic growth	3,576
Reduce Repairs and Maintenance funding from £1.6m to £1.4m	(200)
Increase in Commercial rental income as a result of successfully letting a unit at Cheney Manor plus increased residential rental income by increasing rent levels in line with the Housing Revenue Account	(81)
Targeted new fee income - Capital Property work	(70)
Council wide staff savings from the join up of similar types of work and some targeted reductions in Team costs. The Council has been enforcing a freeze in the recruitment to all non-essential posts in order to maximise the number of vacant posts within the organisation to reduce the level of compulsory redundancies.	(3,438)
Targeted reduction in the level of Base Budget Funding paid to Forward Swindon Limited to reflect the joint work that has been undertaken to reduce costs within the partner organisation and the level of unspent reserves it is holding.	(200)
Reduction in pension liabilities within Capita and Swindon Commercial Services Limited where the Council has underwritten changes in the on-going pension liabilities to cover the risk of future uplifts by the actuary. In lieu of the Council taking on this risk, it also benefits from the reductions between actuarial reviews of annual employer liabilities as a result of staff leaving the partner organisations and being replaced by staff on non-Local Government pension scheme terms and conditions.	(95)
Property disposals - saving on debt repayments net of associated lost rental income from some targeted disposals within the commercial estate.	(100)
50% reduction in Locality community grants recognising that only £37k of the £150k in 2012-13 has been on pump-priming the growth in community capacity building	(75)
50% Reduction in Young People Raising Participation contracts	(66)
Reduction in the Council's annual contribution towards the running costs of InSwindon	(20)
Charge part of Newburgh House Out of Hours service to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) recognising welfare benefits to Council estates (£40K) and maintain HRA Central Support Charges at the current level which is £200k above the General Fund Budgeted sum	(240)

**2013-14 Detailed Proposals - Resources, Strategic Commissioning
and Corporate (Lead Kirsty Cole)**

Appendix 4

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Contribution from Health organisations towards the Council's infrastructure costs where partner organisations are occupying Council office accommodation and using the Council's ICT infrastructure as part of the joint working arrangements between Social Care and Health plus £24k saving on ICT running costs.	(250)
Saving on the running costs of Sanford House as part of the estates rationalisation project to consolidate office accommodation on the main Civic Campus	(98)
Total	(3,270)

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Demand for services to Older People with Physical Disabilities (OPPD) - based on latest information from public health population figures and trend analysis of recent activity.	1,125
Demand for services to people with Learning Disabilities (LD) including children transitioning into adulthood. This extra cost is based on the latest information from public health population figures, trend analysis of recent activity and known service users due to transition from Children Services.	1,039
Additional reablement services provided by SEQOL partly mitigated by a contribution from Health for 50% of the cost.	175
Targeted work to partly mitigate the rising demand for Social Care which supports potential service users to have access to the full range of services available to them to help them remain independent for longer.	(950)
More efficient and fuller utilisation of older people day centre provision, which will produce £100k and remove under-utilised residential services, in particular respite provision and maximise capacity in Fessey and Whitbourne House.	(225)
Work with partners to transform care provision to enable people to make personalised choices on how they want to be supported whilst also enabling the Council to live within its budget. This means giving people more choice and control, increasing the value and return on council investment, and looking at different outcomes to meet care needs.	(290)
Cooperate with providers to manage inflation pressures down to @1%.	(571)
Reshape the 14 Children's Centres into four clusters and join up the management arrangements to reduce staffing costs (Full year saving £380k - assumes September 2013 implementation date)	(190)
Contract efficiencies within the Council's partner organisation, SEQOL which will allow some of the additional cost pressures being faced by the Council to be managed within the current funding envelope.	(190)
Integration of Public Health Services transferring from Health with Council services (estimated grant funding transferring from Health around £7m in total)	(517)
Reduction in Extra Care - reduce informal care / floating support. Redesign extra care contract to reflect personalisation and choice agenda. High cost support replaced by assistive technology. (Improve choice of clients and reduce level of floating support)	(100)
Voluntary sector. Review performance of existing voluntary contracts and redesign to improve effectiveness in supporting disadvantaged groups. (Impact of front line services should be minimal. Improvements in performance from recommissioned services should limit impact of reduction in resources)	(100)
Savings in relation to care packages for older people by planning support more cost effectively through using brokerage and on-line advice and information sources	(50)
Saving on the administration of disabled childrens breaks - in future the newsletter listing activities will be produced primarily on line and distributed by email with paper copies produced for those parents who request it	(10)
Removal of one-off funding 2012/13 - this funding was used to meet the cost of slippage in savings in previous years and contribute towards the additional one-off funding for SEQOL in 2012/13. This will no longer be required in 2013/14.	(300)

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Increase in specific grant income from Health (NHS Transfer rising from £1.953m to £2.753m)	(800)
Difference between the cost of back-office services and the levels bought back from SEQOL.	81
Reduction in VAT and Pension Costs for services provided to the Council by Seqol	(267)
New responsibilities transferring to the Council from Health linked to the Local Reform and Community Health Grant	140
Procurement savings on Drugs Treatment contracts.	(175)
Reduction in spend through Supporting People Contracts.	(516)
Total	(2,691)

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Cost pressure on Out of Borough placements (those not provided directly by Swindon Borough Council) - plans are being put in place to meet the pressure on the service from rising numbers of young people coming into care by using alternatives to high cost out of borough placements however this budget pressure reflects current levels of demand in the system	1,335
Pressure on adoption and family placements	250
Reduction in Departmental training budgets to reflect underspends in recent years.	(100)
Savings on property costs by creating a single point of delivery for YOT, U Turn, On Trak within Children's services. There are also staff savings associated with the proposal which are included in the Council wide staff savings.	(89)
Low turnover of staff has resulted in pressure on salary budgets as budgeted levels of vacancy factors have not been achieved.	100
Through the children's demand enquiry work, plans are being put in place to meet the needs of increased numbers of children being looked after through alternatives to high cost out of borough placements. This will include developing more capacity in borough as an alternative to out borough residential placements.	(500)
Total	996

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Business rates reduction on car parks due to appeals relating to reduced income levels.	(118)
Accelerate programme of closures of surplus car parking spaces to mitigate the impact of the 850 space car park opening earlier than originally anticipated and to reduce provision of Council-operated car parking spaces to 4,000 in the town centre. Saving relates to operating costs.	(400)
Reduction in car parking income as a result of a proposed reduction in season ticket prices for major businesses within the Town Centre. This is an initiative to increase the number of season ticket sales in the Town Centre.	100
Car parking - the new 850 space car park will be in service in the summer of 2013 with estimated annual running costs of £300k per annum. At that stage there will be circa 5,300 fee paying spaces operated by the Council in the town centre. Cabinet approved a reduction to 4,000 spaces in the town centre in October 2011.	300
Car parking - fewer cars are using pay and display car parks in the town centre. (There were 35,000 fewer cars in first 5 months of 2012/13). It is anticipated that this reduced level of demand will continue into 2013/14	100
Saving on loan repayments through a £3m reduction in the Highways Capital Programme reducing it from £8.4m to £5.4m (was a £2m reduction in Draft Budget)	(255)
Public Transport - Review and revise the Bus Subsidy strategy in relation to current criteria for revenue support of bus services. The network is currently 95% commercial. Targeted work with bus companies to achieve a higher proportion of commercial routes (was £400k in Draft Budget).	(200)
Public Transport - review and revise the strategy in relation to current criteria for demand responsive community transport.	(70)
Total	(543)

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Culture commissioning - Reduce funding to Sixth Sense theatre group and REACH - theatrical drama group for people with disabilities.	(2)
Community Centres - additional operating costs for SBC funded community	100
Sports Development - reprioritise the work programme to ensure staff work on externally funded projects. This will result in no resource to organise the Swindon Half Marathon event in this team.	(30)
Increase in entrance charges at Steam by around £2 per person to reduce the Culture subsidy	(140)
Reduction in the net cost of the Leisure and Culture service through a reduction in back-office non-operational Budgets (£23k) and savings on the cost of the fleet at Broome Manor (£20k)	(43)
Reduce opening hours in all libraries. Provide 10 hours in smaller libraries, 30 hours in medium libraries, 45 hours in larger libraries and 55 hours in Central library. Reduction in staff costs. No savings in buildings or IT costs. (assumes	(99)
Leisure centres - New income to be generated by new marketing / sales team.	(50)
Lydiard staff restructure and small increase in sales of plants from garden.	(10)
Additional funding from South West Grid for Learning to fund an ICT post.	(30)
Total	(304)

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Postage - reductions in postage costs over and above the procurement savings from switching some services from the Post Office to TNT by using the Service Improvement team to target a 1-% reduction in high postage users to find alternative methods for contacting customers. In addition, a staffing reduction is included within the Staffing Reductions line elsewhere within the paper.	(10)
MFD charges - reduction in printing costs from the move from colour to black and white printing and a targeted 10% reduction in the number of copies undertaken by high-volume service users.	(35)
One stop shop & contact centre - Working with Capita to reduce operating costs through reviewing opening times, key performance indicators and managing demand transactional services. This may be an 18 month change plan to achieve all the expected benefits with a small level of savings being supplemented from telephones and a contributions towards office accommodation space in 2013-14.	(250)
Equality traded service - opportunity to sell some of Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) officer time to other public sector partners to support their Equality objectives.	(6)
Total	(301)

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Review of allotments service around concession levels and/or a self management model to reduce net costs.	(10)
Green Waste - increase in cost of the service payable to SCS due to higher than budgeted levels of waste being collected	250
Streetsmart - estimate for Landfill Tax increases for 4 months pending introduction of the waste solution to be provided by Swindon Commercial Services effective 1st August, 2013. Figure based on 48,500 tonnes at an increase of £8 per tonne for 4 months	129
Net cost pressure of additional landfill volume penalty costs less lower disposal charges of opening the new Refuse derived Fuel (RDF) facility at SCS in August 2013	450
Total	819

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Local Development Frameworks - The Local Plan is expected to be adopted during 2013/14. Focus will then shift to Site Allocation Plans and Neighbourhood Plans which will not require the same level of evidence as for the Local Plan. A saving of £40k is therefore proposed for 2013-14.	(40)
Building Control - Bring income and costs into equilibrium . Consider cost of statutory provision. We will assess commercialisation opportunities in Building Control if this is still a significant income pressure at the end of the financial year.	(68)
Landscape services grants. Rigorous assessment of the benefits of grants. (1) Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (reduce by £2k); (2) Areas of outstanding Natural Beauty (reduce by £500 as part of an on-going agreed year on year reduction in spend); (3) Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership (reduce by £1k); (4) Cotswold Water Park (remove grant of £10k); (5) Project Costs contingency (remove £2k contingency); (6) National Initiatives (reduce by £500).	(16)
Planning Development - reduction in net cost of service linked to a review of fee levels associated with national changes.	(50)
Total	(174)

	Final Budget 2013-14
Proposal	£'000
Proposed cessation of grant funding to Threshold who provide a street outreach service. This service provides support homeless people who sleep on the streets.	(20)
Take on the management of an additional 100 properties under PSL (Private Sector Lease Scheme). The £200k income is a net figure made up of a target of 100 additional properties, partly offset by a required increase in staff and the impact of the proposed 40% Benefits cap as part of welfare reform changes.	(200)
Total	(220)

Budget Consultation – feedback report

- 1.1 Detailed budget proposals for 2013/14 were published on Council's website for consultation on the 19th December 2012, and were accessible through a prominent link on the front page. The consultation and budget proposals were also promoted through the local media. Responses to the consultation were invited via written submission to the Leader of the Council or via email. The period for comments and responses to the Council concluded on the 25th January 2013.
- 1.2 Alongside this, in November 2012 the Council, as part of the Big Conversation, published an illustrated online explanation of the Council's financial challenges, over the short and medium term. The presentation, which has been displayed at public buildings, such as libraries, leisure centres and community centres, has also been introduced at public meetings across the Borough, helping to stimulate constructive debate. Residents have been sharing their opinions and ideas with elected members, staff and other residents both in person, via email and on social media. The Big Conversation is an on-going dialogue to help build better mutual understanding and make it easier for people to recognise our growing challenges, in particular the increasing demand for all services and reduced resources to deliver them.
- 1.3 Feedback to the budget proposals has been elicited from both residents and stakeholders in the form of emails to the Council although the response has been notably low. A total of 17 emails were received by the closing date although some of these comments related to more than one proposal. Details are summarised below.

Proposed: Reduce Public Transport Bus Subsidies by £400k

Number of responses	Mode of communication	Respondents	Summary of comments
3	3 emails	Local residents,	<p>Opposition to the proposal. Views that public transport is fuel-efficient and that not all routes can be self-supporting.</p> <p>Suggestion to increase season ticket prices for</p>

			<p>all-day parking /commuters, and for investment in park-and-ride sites and improved bus services.</p> <p>Concern for those on benefits and ability to afford fares, and impact on town centre.</p>
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Proposed: Stop grant funding for Homeless Support of £20k

Number of responses	Mode of communication	Respondents	Summary of comments
3	3 emails	Local residents	<p>Concern that support will be discontinued and that number of people who find themselves homeless will increase as a result of government cuts to welfare benefits. View that £20k is insignificant and that proposal should be withdrawn.</p>

Proposed: Changes to Adult Social Care.

Number of responses	Mode of communication	Respondents	Summary of comments
1	1 email	Local resident	<p>Opposition to 'further reductions' to adult social care</p> <p>Reductions will reduce capacity to provide necessary support.</p>

Proposed: Changes to Council Tax Financial Support to save £1.532m.

Number of responses	Mode of communication	Respondents	Summary of comments
2	2 emails	Local residents	<p>Agreement in principle; but query whether this does include empty business premises? If not, why not?</p> <p>Concern that ending the six month discount on empty properties by levying a charge of 50% of the Council Tax after three months and the full 100% after six months</p> <p>Suggestion that households awaiting probate and subsequent sale should keep the 6 month discount.</p>

Proposed: Reduce One Stop Shop & Contact Centre opening times and service levels to save £250k.

Number of responses	Mode of communication	Respondents	Summary of comments
1	1 email	Local resident	Concern that proposal states the internet is preferred means of contact. Need to be able to have a conversation.

Proposed: Close Town Centre car park to save £400k .

Number of responses	Mode of communication	Respondents	Summary of comments
1	1 email	Local resident	There needs to be a surplus of parking spaces to

			encourage people to come into town.
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Proposed: Reduce Landscape services grants saving £20k

Number of responses	Mode of communication	Respondents	Summary of comments
1	1 email	Local resident	Support for proposal. Support should be for charities that are providing a service that assists the people of Swindon.

Other suggestions/comments:

1.4 Residents also submitted alternative suggestions for savings and general feedback on information supplied about the Council's budget proposals. Most of these were single-issue comments, whilst others ranged more widely across other issues.

1.5 The following points were raised in these submissions:

- Raise Council Tax (3 comments): The Council should raise council tax by the maximum 2% permitted without a referendum this is, less than inflation and there has been no increase in the last two years. If it is to provide the services that the public want, there must come a time when, in order to do so, the 'income' (i.e. Council Tax) will have to be increased
- Why are paper and cans collected weekly instead of fortnightly? Recycling collection should fortnightly (2 comments)
- Join up information systems on Council tax debts and housing and commercial rents debts to reduce outstanding monies owed to the Council (1 comment)
- Replace the mayor with a chair of Council to reduce costs of the Mayor's office (1comment)
- Abolish Forward Swindon. - appears to duplicate Council functions (1 comment)
- Reduce expenditure on consultants (1 comment)
- Reduce Councillor allowances (1 comment) .

- Support for proposals in principle but would require full details about grant expenditure to understand scale of reductions (1 comment)
- Some areas appear untouched at the expense of areas deemed less vital to the council i.e. youth services (1 comment).
- Lydiard Park and Coate Water could be provided by charitable or commercial organisations (2 comments)
- Recycling collection should fortnightly (2 comments)
- Libraries should be cut, - are a luxury in the present climate (1 comment)
- Proposals do not provide details about the Council's debt – what it is for, or how it is proposed to reduce it. (1 comment)
- Prefer to have a choice on what the money is spent or suggest that we only pay for the service we actually use - i.e. roads, decent free car parks which might encourage people to visit the town (1 comment)
- Suggest getting rid of any printed material sent out by the Council and simply email the information to residents (1 comment)
- The proposals only detail the £4m savings, yet the introduction talks about £13 identified. Where is the rest? (1 comment)
- Suggest that the Swindon Twinning Forum should be wound up. The twinning organisations of Haydon and Lydiard have already stopped. (1 comment)
- Support for new welfare reform legislation concerning council housing and fairer rents. Concern that many tenants occupy housing that is too big for their needs. (1 comment)
- Comment regarding a range of council services including social care and protection for vulnerable children: :The Council should add assurance that services are well regulated and money isn't spent on those who don't really need it – needs to be well regulated to prevent misuse (1 comment)
- Concern for perceived cuts to Dial a Ride Service facilitates independence and reduction will have a personal impact in terms of travel and attending day support clubs (1 comment).
- Bin collections should not be cut any more (1comment),
- There should be help for disabled children.

- Youth Clubs provide benefits to the community, such as less anti-social behaviour (1 comment).
- Leisure, recreation, libraries and culture should be run by a private organisation unless lots of money is being made to plough into other services. (1 comment)
- Street cleaning, etc. - - possibly need some campaigns in schools, about dropping litter and chewing gum. (1 comment)
- Surprised community safety is lower spending area Need a better overview on youth and anti- social behaviour in the town. (1 comment),

BUDGET CONSULTATION - NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATEPAYERS

MONDAY, 4 FEBRUARY 2013

PRESENT:- Councillors Roderick Bluh (Chair and Leader of the Council), Councillor Garry Perkins (Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture), Councillor Stan Pajak (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council) and Councillor Des Moffatt (Labour Group Spokesperson on Resources).

Swindon Borough Council: Stuart McKellar (Board Director Resources), Kirsty Cole (Change Leader and Head of Finance) and Paddy Bradley (Head of Commissioning, Economy/ Attainment).

Representatives of Swindon Non-Domestic Ratepayers: Mr. Les Durrant (Develop (Development Planning Design Services Consulting; Swindon Chamber of Commerce), Mr. Richard Lay (Lay Holdings Group), Mr.Hiren Varvadekar (Menzies Hotels).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mark Edwards (Cabinet Member for Finance), Mr Paul Jenkins (Thamesdown Transport Ltd), Mr Paul Booth (McDonalds Restaurants Ltd), Mr Paul Kelly (Asda Stores Ltd), Mr Alan Thomas (Zimmer Ltd), Mr Matthew Rowlands (Iceland Frozen Foods Plc), Mr Jalal Bagherli (Dialog Semiconductor Ltd), Mr Simon Wells (Zurich Financial Services Ltd), Mr David Wray (Voluntary Action Swindon), Mr Ian Piper (Forward Swindon Ltd), Mr Martin Draper (Zurich Financial Services Ltd), Mr Andy Rohrer (Federation of Small Business – 2 Let 2 You).

4. Welcome and Introduction

Councillor Roderick Bluh welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting. He explained that the meeting was designed to inform local businesses of the Council's Budget proposals for 2013/14 and to set out the financial context for 2014 /15 and beyond.

5. Budget 2013/14 and Beyond

Mr. Stuart McKellar Board Director Resources) referred to the report, previously circulated to those attending, and that was to be considered by the Council's Cabinet on 6th February 2013. He outlined the context of the Council's Budget for 2013/14, and the impact of this for the Council's finances and future spending. He explained that the Council was facing challenging times and drew attention to the following points:

- Central Government funding changes would continue to negatively impact on future budgets.
- The implications of the return of Business Rates being the ability for Swindon Borough Council to retain 28.5% of future business rates growth.
- Future planning was impacted by uncertainties relating to final settlement figures from Government.
- Little capital investment was currently being undertaken and this impacted on local businesses.

- Proposals in the report were to be submitted to Cabinet on the 6th February 2013. The recommendations of the Cabinet would then be submitted to the full Council meeting on the 21st February 2013 for approval.

Councillor Roderick Bluh (Leader of the Council) stated this had been the most challenging Budget undertaken to date and confirmed these challenges, presented by the current economic conditions facing the country generally and local government particularly, would require careful strategic planning for the future.

Mr Richard Lay (Lay Holdings Group) highlighted the following concerns felt by businesses:

- The apparent optimism expressed within the report regarding predicted income from business rates.
- Car parking charges within Swindon Town Centre and the impact of out of town retail parks on businesses within the town centre.
- High business rates that acted as a deterrent to internal investment and were seen as extra taxation to businesses.

He recommended the Council consider a decrease or removal of car parking charges to create a level playing field for Town Centre businesses and a reduction in Town Centre business rates in order for businesses to compete effectively with other areas. Mr Stuart McKellar (Board Director, Resources) explained that Business Rates calculations could only be based on the current economic situation. He confirmed there would be future challenges but the present model for Business Rate predictions was felt to be sound.

In response to concerns regarding car parking charges, Councillor Roderick Bluh referred to past initiatives that were aimed to help businesses in Swindon Town Centre. Councillor Garry Perkins (Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture) advised that businesses had welcomed the past reductions in car parking charges and over time this had resulted in an increase in Town Centre footfall. Councillor Perkins stated that Town Centre businesses do not generally pay the car parking charges of their employees.

In response to a query by Mr Richard Lay (Lay Holdings Group) regarding the possibility of Swindon setting its own Business Rates, he was informed that whilst there was some local discretion, this was a national scheme and that minor variations in rates that the Council was likely to have discretion over would be unlikely to attract further large businesses to Swindon.

Further discussions took place on the impact of business rates on businesses and there was general agreement that support should be focused on small business development and new business start-up support.

Mr Les Durrant (Development Planning Design Services Consulting; Swindon Chamber of Commerce) commented on the work undertaken by Forward Swindon Ltd on the economic strategy for Swindon and expressed his concern that Swindon was not performing as well as its neighbours and was well down the league in comparison with other similar towns. He expressed his concern at the business practice of downsizing by demolishing buildings and leaving the site empty to avoid business rate costs. This was particularly disturbing at a time when Swindon was trying to attract new business.

He further enquired about the capital expenditure involved in the Wichelstowe project and when the Council would put infrastructure, such as the Junction 16 connection, into place that would allow income delivery. Councillor Roderick Bluh referred to a report relating to the Wichelstowe project that was to be presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on the 6th February 2013. Mr. Stuart McKellar referred to the direction of travel and explained that the proposal was to move the project forward by way of a joint venture arrangement.

In response to a question regarding Section 106 Planning Agreement funding and the Community Infrastructure Levy, Mr Stuart McKellar (Board Director, Resources) confirmed that the Community Infrastructure Levy contribution to overall infrastructure / development costs as detailed in the report to be presented at the Cabinet meeting on the 6th February 2013 was not significant.

Ms. Kirsty Cole (Change Leader and Head of Finance) referred to the predicted savings to be made within the Council's Budget for 2014/15. She referred to the six change programmes that impacted on the 2014/15 Budget. These included the Wichelstowe project, StreetSmart Services, Leisure, Libraries and Cultural services, Economic Growth and the re-design of Council service delivery for both Vulnerable Adults and Young People and Families that was to be achieved through joint working with communities and voluntary groups to foster closer relationships and community self-help involvement.

Councillor Stan Pajak (Leader of the Minority Group on the Council) asked if the Business Community felt that the One Swindon concept was understood. Mr Richard Lay (Lay Holdings Group) commented that Swindon was well located geographically and small businesses were very important within the Borough, but it was not apparent that everyone within Swindon was heading in the same direction for the benefit of the town.

Mr. Les Durrant (Development Planning Design Services Consulting; Swindon Chamber of Commerce) commented on the importance of promoting inward investment into the Borough as this would help economic growth, bring jobs into the community and improve the quality of life.

Councillor Des Moffatt (Labour Group Spokesperson for Resources) referred to financial and service pressures within Adult Social Care and the Looked After Children areas and on the need to ensure that Budget savings did not have a detrimental effect on service delivery. On the issue of capital spending, he suggested that Swindon needed "shovel ready infrastructure projects". He agreed with comments made regarding the Business rates and confirmed his Group's support for the continuing need to attract businesses to Swindon.

The business community representatives commented on current business practices and advised that due to the current economic climate, speculative building was no longer being undertaken and they were aware of the negative financial impact empty premises had on business rates. "Ready to go" capital projects that needed Government funding were available and should be considered. These were projects where the local authority could enter into partnership with the private sector, in particular the development and construction sector, to develop. Councillor Roderick Bluh confirmed that the issue was well recognised and discussions were

regularly undertaken with the Local Enterprise Partnership on such issues.

6. Conclusion of the meeting

Councillor Roderick Bluh thanked the representatives of the business community and Non-Domestic Ratepayers for attending the meeting and he hoped they found it useful. He concluded by emphasising that over the next twelve months, the Council still faced considerable challenges which it had to meet to deliver the outcomes that residents and businesses required.

Reserves Policy

Swindon is a very ambitious Council with plans to continue transforming services and improve the local area at a time when national austerity measures are putting the finances of local Councils under tremendous strain. The pace of change at the Council and the scale of savings being delivered bring with them risks in relation to the Council's capacity to deliver the planned stepped changes. These risks are both in relation to the complexity of some of the transformational changes required to deliver the 2013/14 budget savings and secondly in respect of the potential need for funds to pump-prime work on future changes. The Council is managing these risks using a number of means:

Risk Assessment

Each of the savings proposals put forward as part of the Budget setting cycle has been individually risk assessed against a number of factors, namely:

- Impact on service
- Complexity of implementation
- Impact on equalities
- Contribution to strategic plans

Contingencies

The Council has a base budget general contingency fund of £1.2m to support its 2013/14 Budget.

Reserves

It is recommended that the minimum level of General Reserves the Council needs to hold to support the 2013/14 Budget is £6m. This is in the context of the Council delivering its services within Budget for the last five years.

Alongside the General Reserves, the Council is holding a number of specific reserves to support key risks and future commitments. These have been established following a thorough review of risks and needs, the details of which are set out below.

The specific reserves potentially available to support the 2013/14 budget total £37 million. By holding these reserves, the Council is accruing investment interest of around £740k per annum (assuming investment returns of around 2%). Should the Council decide to hold lower levels of reserves in future, for every £0.7m brought back into the revenue budget as a funding source, the Council Tax increase for that financial year could be reduced by 1%. However, this would increase the level of risk within the annual budget and make future years' Budgets increasingly unsustainable. The Director of Resources would therefore not recommend using a significant proportion of specific reserves to support the annual budget.

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Description	Balance 1-Apr-12 £000	Estimated Movement 2012/13 £000	Estimated Balance 1-Apr-13 £000	Estimated Life of Reserve	Reason why the Reserve is Held
<u>Major Project Commitments</u>					
PFI Equalisation Reserve	-4,332	50	-4,282	3+	This reserve is to contribute to the Northern Sector Schools' PFI scheme. It will help fund the stages of the project where income is less than expense. The level of the reserve is reassessed annually.
Wichelstowe Cashflowing Reserve	-9,564	2,300	-7,264	3+	Reserve created to cashflow capital financing liabilities for the Wichelstowe development. This will enable the General Fund to be protected from any impact of the Wichelstowe development until around 2015.
<u>Infrastructure Related</u>					
Regeneration Reserve	-652	148	-504	1	Reserve created to support the redevelopment of the Town Centre and other major developments.
Growth Feasibility Studies	-1,083	0	-1,083	3+	Reserve created from CLG Growth Point revenue funding, which was awarded to fund projects that bring forward housing numbers.
New Homes Bonus grant Funding	-1,452	-2,783	-4,235	1	New Homes Bonus grant funding, primarily to be used to support Capital spending and to support bringing empty homes back into use, as approved by Cabinet and Council in February 2012.
<u>Cashflowing Reserves</u>					

Description	Balance 1-Apr-12 £000	Estimated Movement 2012/13 £000	Estimated Balance 1-Apr-13 £000	Estimated Life of Reserve	Reason why the Reserve is Held
Future funding fluctuations	-3,000	-1,171	-4,172	3+	This reserve will supplement General Reserves, with the specific purpose of mitigating the impact of in-year funding changes from 2013/14, when localised business rates arrangements are set to be introduced.
Potential funding for SCS RDF plant	-3,258	0	-3,258	1	Cabinet has approved, subject to a robust business case being developed, that the Council will provide funding through a loan to Swindon Commercial Services Ltd for a plant to produce Refuse Derived Fuel. Costs are not yet known and may well be higher than the level of the reserve. Potential funding sources will depend on the exact nature of the scheme, including payback period which the business case will set out, and precise accounting arrangements that will need to be agreed with the Council's Auditors.
Transition Costs of Stronger Together Model	-413	413	0		Reserve created at the end of 2010/11 to provide funds for the Stronger Together organisational development.
Fund Planning Reserve	-584	159	-426	3+	Funding for future work relating to Local Development Framework / minerals plans and core strategy. The demands of forward planning are such that frameworks need to be required for different aspects of town planning over a period of years. These will cover waste, minerals and plans for the borough covering residential, commercial and industrial development.

Description	Balance 1-Apr-12	Estimated Movement 2012/13	Estimated Balance 1-Apr-13	Estimated Life of Reserve	Reason why the Reserve is Held
	£000	£000	£000		
Invest to Save / Costs of organisational change	-1,512	0	-1,512	3+	To pump prime agreed business cases leading to service transformation, enabling future project and severance costs to be cashflowed to allow some savings to be banked in the MTRP with the costs being spread.
<u>Other General Fund</u>					
Insurance Excess Self Fund	-3,434	0	-3,434	3+	Reserve built up to cover the cost of claims in future years on non-Housing Council property. This is linked to the level of self-insurance and insurance premiums.
Community Enterprise Fund	-500	0	-500	3+	Can be used to support local community initiatives in support of the Stronger Together programme.
Academy Conversions	-50	0	-50	1	To provide funding toward the cost of anticipated academy conversions in 12/13
Equal Pay	-3,556	0	-3,556	1	Created from the 11/12 underspend
Winter Maintenance Reserve	-300	0	-300	3+	Current budgetary provision for highway gritting is not sufficient to deal with exceptional demand, which a particularly bad Winter would create. This reserve would augment the budget in those years. It is reassessed each year.
Balance of 45 other GF reserves	-4,110	1,470	-2,640		
Total GF Reserves	-37,802	586	-37,216		

Description	Balance 1-Apr-12	Estimated Movement 2012/13	Estimated Balance 1-Apr-13	Estimated Life of Reserve	Reason why the Reserve is Held
	£000	£000	£000		
<u>School Related</u>					
School Rollovers	-7,235	2,213	-5,022	On-going	The Schools Finance Regulations allow schools to roll forward balances held. This balance represents the combined total of all schools' rolled-forward balances.
DSG rollover	-1,494	-848	-2,342	On-going	Set up as a ring fenced reserve for DSG non-schools underspend on closing 11/12
<u>Housing Related</u>					
HRA Specific Reserves	-6,129	0	-6,129	On-going	Reserves earmarked within the Housing Revenue Account

Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon

Diversity Impact Assessment for Council Tax Empty Property Discount Reduction

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality groups

What is it there for? What is it set up to deliver? What is the proposed change?

Currently empty and unfurnished domestic properties receive a 6 months exemption from Council Tax. After the 6 months has expired 100% council Tax is payable. The 2012 Local Government Finance Act gives Local Authorities the power to make Council Tax charges during the 6 month period.

In 2006 Swindon Borough Council reduced both the long-term empty discount (unfurnished over 6 months) and the discount on unoccupied and furnished (or second homes) properties to 10%. In 2010 the 10% discount on longterm empty and unfurnished was ended.

The numbers of properties shown as long-term unoccupied and unfurnished have reduced from 1178 in October 2005 to 515 in October 2010 and 504 as at October 2012. The reduction in discount may have helped encourage owners to sell or rent out such properties. However, the numbers of properties empty and unfurnished less than 6 months has increased from 847 in October 2010 to 1022 in October 2012.

It is now proposed that the 6 months exemption is ended and a 50% charge levied for 3 months followed by a 100% charge thereafter.

Other proposals include:

- Recommendation to charge a 150% Council Tax on empty and unfurnished properties that have been empty for 2 years. There are two exceptions to this. The main residences of members of the armed forces absent from the property as a result of service and an annex deemed unoccupied because it is being treated by the occupier of the main dwelling, as part of that main dwelling.
- End the Second Home (empty & furnished properties) discount of 10%. There are currently 451 properties receiving this discount. This includes all properties that are empty and furnished. This discount can now be withdrawn.
- Properties requiring structural repair (Class A). Currently properties undergoing structural alterations can receive a 12 month 100% exemption from council tax. The new legislation allows Local Authorities to set the amount of any discount (to as low as 0%), but will not allow Council's to alter the period concerned. It is proposed that a charge of 50% is levied, as this will still provide some incentive for such houses to be repaired.
- Mortgage companies – (Class L). Where a property has been repossessed the mortgage company is not charged. Under the proposed changes we would stop this exemption. Some mortgage companies may claim a class C discount, which is recommended to be 50% for 3 months.

There are 3 main reasons for this change:

1. Provide furthers incentive for the owners of empty and unfurnished properties to bring them back into use.
2. Raise an additional income of £640,000 for Swindon Borough Council in 2013/14
3. Reduce the need to make further reductions in Council Tax Benefits. The Subsidy the Council receives in respect of Council Tax Benefits is being reduced by approximately £2

million p.a. and Councils are being asked to reduce the Council Tax Benefit paid to individuals on low incomes. The discount and exemption changes reduce the need for this.

What potential is there to meet the equality duties?

By providing an incentive for owners of empty homes to either sell properties or to let them out increases the stock of housing available. This would help homeless or economically disadvantaged persons find housing.

Raising Council Tax from these measures reduces the need to reduce Council Tax Benefits payments made to persons with low incomes or reducing Council Services which may be provided to help the vulnerable.

What equality benefits does it create?

As stated above it is hoped that this change would help homeless or economically disadvantaged persons find housing.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

Home owners of long-term empty properties already pay 100% Council Tax. Those in possession of houses empty for less than 6 months may be experiencing difficulties in selling or leasing them.

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)? What do you know about them (evidence)?

Homeless persons may benefit from the change as more, cheaper property may become available and all Council Tax payers will benefit from the increased revenue, as the Council may use the money to offset Council Tax increases, maintain services or maintain Council Tax Benefit (Support) payments.

Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service? Do you know why?

Notice of the changes will be produced to advise those potentially impacted.

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality

How will these services be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)

Owners of empty properties may find the charges difficult to afford, but will benefit from the sale of the property or a rental income if they decide to rent out the property. Advanced notice will be issued to advise of the change and what can be done to assist bringing the property back into use (particularly for renting).

Such owners (or leaseholders) may include persons who have left the area as they have found work elsewhere.

The Council Tax system does not hold equality data on the owners of properties, but potentially all groups will be impacted equally. People who have to leave their properties to receive care (often those with disabilities or older people) are entitled to exemptions or discounts from Council Tax

and so will not be impacted. Payment of charges could be more difficult for individuals with low income, but this group is less likely to own properties.

Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?

Nothing further.

Is there anything about the way you deliver your service, which may stop people getting involved? (negative impact)

Individuals faced with the charge may be resentful, but hopefully if they are having difficulty selling or leasing they will take up the offer of any support that is available.

Is that reasonable? How can it be justified? How can it be resolved?

Some owners may be having difficulty selling properties. Sometimes house prices have to be reduced in order to ensure the property sells.

Where difficulties are experienced, the Council Tax Office will try and handle any increased debt sympathetically, within the parameters of the Council Tax legislation and the Council's Debt Management Policy.

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

No external consultation has taken place. Discussions with the Council's Housing officers who are responsible for ensuring more housing is available for the Homeless have been undertaken.

4 So what?

[Link to business planning process](#)

What changes have you identified?

Reduction in the discount and exemption levels is recommended and will be determined by Cabinet and the full Council.

It is believed that no other equality groups will be impacted disproportionately, but in mitigation any available advice will be given to those who are having difficulty selling or renting their property

What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

If agreed notification will be issued to owners of the empty properties once the decision is made and the changes will be implemented in April 2013.

When will this be reviewed?

Annually.

How will success be measured?

Will the number of empty properties reduce further, including those empty less than 6 months.

For the record
Name of person leading this DIA Andy Stevens, Head of Revenues & Benefits
Names of people involved in consideration of impact Greg Sheppard, Senior Revenues Officer
Date Completed 12/11/12
Name of director signing DIA Stuart Mckellar, Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits & Property
Date DIA signed
Date approved by corporate group.

Strategic Planning Framework – Diversity Impact Assessments

1 What's it about?

- What is it there for? What is it set up to deliver? What is the proposed change?
- What potential is there to meet the equality duties?
- What equality benefits does it create?
- What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

2 Who's it for?

- Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?
- What do you know about them (evidence)?
- Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?
- Do you know why?

3 Impact

- How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)
- Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?
- Is there anything about the way you deliver your service which may stop people getting involved? (negative impact)
- Is that reasonable or justified? How can it be resolved?
- What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

4 So what?

- What changes have you identified?
- What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?
- When will this be reviewed?
- How will success be measured?
- Who is signing this off/taking responsibility?

Considerations

Our equality duties

1. Eliminate Discrimination
2. Promote Equal Opportunities
3. Promote Good Relations
4. Prevent Harassment
5. Encourage Participation in Public Life

In the areas of: age, disability, gender (including transgender), race, religion/belief and sexual orientation (socio-economic status).

Dimensions of equality How will the service affect the life chances of different groups? Consider how the service will impact

1. **Longevity:** e.g. premature mortality.
2. **Physical security:** e.g. freedom from violence and physical and sexual abuse.
3. **Health:** e.g. well-being and access to high quality healthcare.
4. **Education:** e.g. being able to be creative, to acquire skills and qualifications, and having access to training and life-long learning.
5. **Standard of living:** e.g. being able to live with independence and security; and covering nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, utilities, social services and transport.
6. **Productive and valued activities:** e.g. access to employment, a positive experience in the workplace, work/life balance, being able to care for others.
7. **Individual, family and social life:** e.g. self-development, having independence and equality in relationships and marriage.
8. **Participation, influence and voice:** e.g. participation in decision-making and democratic life.
9. **Identity, expression and self-respect:** e.g. freedom of belief and religion.
10. **Legal security:** e.g. equality and non-discrimination before the law and equal treatment within the criminal justice system.

For up to date information and advice
contact equality@swindon.gov.uk
or check swindon.gov.uk/dia

Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon

Diversity Impact Assessment for Local Council Tax Support (Benefits) Scheme

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality duties

The Government's proposals on Local Council Tax Support are being introduced as part of the Welfare Reforms. The aims of the Welfare Reform Bill are:

- To Reduce expenditure on Welfare
- Ensure families in work are better off than those on Benefits (incentive to work)
- Localism.

As part of the Government's Proposals the current national Council Tax Benefit scheme is being abolished and each local authority will have the powers to set their own 'Local Council Tax Support scheme.'

Under the current national scheme the Government Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) fully recompenses Local Authorities for every £ of Council Tax Benefit they award claimants. From April 2013 this subsidy is being reduced by at least 10%. Swindon Borough Council currently awards £13 million of Council Tax Benefit and receives a subsidy for this value. A Government circular has suggested that the Council's collection fund (which includes precepts for the Fire and Police Authority) will be given just £11 million for next year.

The Shortfall on the Council Tax Collection fund will therefore be £2 million

The subsidy paid is to be fixed amount for a number of years. Therefore, if the numbers of claims increase, the Council will not receive an increase in the subsidy, as it would have done previously. If the amount awarded to individual claimants remains unaltered this scenario will result in either an increase in the Council Tax charges for all residents or a reduction in the Council's budget (and those of the Fire and Police Authorities)

The Government Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) are encouraging local Councils to reduce the amount of benefit paid to claimants, in order to help create an incentive for those that can work. Sometimes the current Benefits' systems can leave claimants better off on benefits than by taking up offers of employment. Alternatively if the local circumstances are such, the Council may wish to reduce its budget or ask all Council Taxpayers to pay more to fund the reduction in subsidy.

The DCLG are not allowing Council's to change the way in which Council Tax Benefits are calculated and awarded to pensioners. Pensioners are protected from these changes.

Swindon Borough Council is proposing to review the amount of Council Tax Support it awards, since it is felt that it would be inappropriate for the reduction in subsidy of £2 million to be met by a reduction in Services (budget estimates for 2013/14 already predict that there is a shortfall of £15 million between likely income and expenditure) and that it does not wish to create a burden of a

2.5% increase in Council Tax to be paid by all Council Tax payers. Council Tax rises above a certain level would also trigger a public referendum on the increase and it is unlikely that the public would vote in favour of an increase in their Council Tax.

The DCLG have announced that it plans to make changes to the Discounts & Exemptions that Councils currently have to grant on empty properties. When this legislation is introduced it will give Councils the discretion to increase the Council Tax due on these properties. The Council are considering these and is producing an impact assessment of the recommended changes. It is believed that these changes could increase Council Tax revenue by approximately £600,000 for the collection fund and so a further £1.4 million extra income or savings would need to be achieved.

A scheme for delivery is being considered and there a number of items where Council Tax (Benefits) support would be reduced. These items have been consulted on and the impacts of these are being assessed. In considering the impacts the Council consulted on excluding households where an individual receives a disability allowance not having their Benefit or support reduced.

The items where Council Tax (Benefits) support are being reduced and that the Council consulted on and whose impacts are being assessed are:

Options For Reducing Council Tax Benefits				
Change	Reduction Allowing for 25% non-collection where appropriate	Amount Relating to Claimants, partners or non-dependents with Disabilities	Reduction Less Claimants With Disabilities	Numbers Affected
80% Maximum Council Tax Support	£1,215,000	£400,000	£815,000	8,600 – less 2,500 with disability allowance
Capping CTS to Council Tax Band D	£39,000	£10,000	£29,000	160
End Second Adult Rebate	£34,000	£2,000	£32,000	120
Capital Limit of £6,000 (No taper)	£56,000	£30,000	£26,000	50
Non Dependant working – Increase deduction £5pw	£53,000	£3,000	£50,000	190
Income Disregards - Child Benefit income included	£235,000	£35,000	£200,000	800 non automatic benefit cases

Explanations & Implications

1. An 80% Maximum Council Tax (Benefit) Support

Everyone would have to pay at least 20% of their Council Tax bill. There are obvious concerns with creating new expenditure for individuals with low incomes.

The following tables show how much would be due from a full Council Tax Benefit claimant.

Amount Due - 80% Council Tax Support Paid			
Property	Annual	Monthly	Weekly
Band A	£183.76	£15.31	£3.53
Band B	£214.38	£17.87	£4.12
Band C	£245.01	£20.42	£4.71
Band D	£275.64	£22.97	£5.30

2. Capping Council Tax Benefit to Band D (saving £44,000 p.a.)

The highest Band D charge is currently £1454 per annum. Capping Council Tax Benefit at property Band D would save paying Council Tax on more expensive properties. The amount of Council Tax payable on such properties for persons receiving full Council Tax Benefit is as follows:

Band	Council Tax Benefit Currently	Council Tax Benefit Payable Under Option	Annual Reduction in Council Tax Benefit	Numbers of Households Affected
E	£1754	£1454	£300	132
F	£2054	£1454	£600	27
G	£2354	£1454	£900	1
H	£2908	£1454	£1454	0

3. End Second Adult Rebate

Second Adult rebate is payable in cases where there is a second adult in the household who is on a low income, but the main householder is not entitled to benefit. This second adult cannot be a partner of the Council Tax payer nor have joint responsibility for the bill. They are usually a son, daughter or lodger. In these cases the Council Tax liability can be reduced by 25% or 15% depending on the income of the second adult.

Although the availability of this benefit is publicised, it is doubtful that it is always claimed.

4. Reducing the Capital Limit for Claims

Currently Council Tax Benefit can be claimed by anyone with capital under £16,000. Above £6,000 some capital is currently taken into account in the benefit calculations.

The draft scheme will propose to remove eligibility for any benefit if a claimant has over £6,000 of capital. Once below this limit (subject to the usual rules around reducing capital) benefit could be claimed again.

5. Increasing Non Dependant Deductions

If there are other adults residing in a property and working, then they are expected to contribute towards the Council Tax. The amounts that this individual should contribute could be changed.

Weekly Income of Non-Dependant	Current Deduction	Deduction under option
1. Over £394	£9.90	£14.90
2. £316-£393	£8.25	£13.25
3. £183- £316	£6.55	£11.55
4. Less than £183	£3.30	£8.30
Receiving IS or JSA	£0.00	£5.00

6. Including Child Benefit As Income

Child Benefit is currently not included as an income in the calculation of Council Tax Benefit. Prior to 2009 it was included, but Central Government decided to 'disregard' this as an income. The calculation of Council Tax Benefit does however allocate an applicable amount for each child (an assumed amount needed to clothe and feed each child) and additional amounts for families (£17.40 extra a week allowed) and lone parents (an additional £4.80 per week). The Council consulted on whether child benefit should be treated as an income in the calculation of Council Tax Benefits.

The authority has the following equality duties.

- Eliminate discrimination
- Promote equal opportunities
- Promote good relations
- Prevent harassment
- Encourage participation in public life

The Council also needs to consider:

- In addition to Pensioners, the Council has to decide if there should be other vulnerable groups that it should protect or seek to mitigate some of the impacts. These may include the welfare needs of disabled people, who may not have the ability to work & may have potential higher living costs.
- There is a Public Sector Equality Duty and a duty to mitigate the effects of child poverty.
- The Armed Forces Covenant - The Current scheme disregards the first £10 per week of War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payments. Local Authorities are encouraged to top up this up to full amount.
- Local Authorities have a duty to prevent homelessness – One way to do this is to publicise its CTS scheme and other benefits available.

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Council Tax support or Benefit is there to help all customers with low incomes to meet their Council Tax liability. Applications can either be made directly to the Council or currently via an application for income based benefits from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP). Access to Council Tax Benefit is published in the leaflet that accompanies the annual bill, on the back of the bills and on reminder and other recovery documentation. Details are also available on the council's website. This publicity will continue and officers will continue to promote Council Tax (Benefits) Support.

Council Tax is currently claimed by:

Breakdown of Swindon Council Tax Benefit Claimants

- 6,900 Pensioners (42%) £5.6 million p.a.
- 2,500 working age claimants with a member of the household receiving a disability allowance
- 2,200 have a child under 5
- 3,000 with older children
- 2,200 other claimants

Equalities

The Benefits team undertakes equality monitoring from new claims made to it. This includes Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claims. But it does not include those automated (or passported) claims made via the Department of Works and pensions (DWP).

The following is a breakdown of a sample of 335 claims made in 2011 against a 2009 population estimate for Swindon:

	2011 Sample	2009 Population Estimate
British white	75.83%	88.53%
White other	9.65%	4.56%
Mixed	0.91%	1.45%
Asian	9.06%	3.16%
Black	3.64%	1.07%
Other	0.91%	1.23%
Male	51.04%	49.70%
Female	48.96%	50.30%
Disability - Yes	12%	15.26%
Disability - No	88%	84.74%
Age		
Up to 19	6.6%	24.35%
20-29	33.5% (36% excluding 0-19)	12.98% (17.2%)
30-39	21.6% (23.1%)	15.64% (20.7%)
40-49	20.5% (21.9%)	16% (21.2%)
50-59	10.3% (11%)	11.67% (15.4%)
60-69	6% (6.4%)	9.26% (12.2%)
70+	1.5%* (1.6%)	10.1% (13.3%)
*It is likely that persons requiring Benefits in this age group would have claimed prior to being 70 & so no new claim is required or would claim via the Pension Service. Work has been done to increase claims from the elderly.		

Property Bands where Working Age Council Tax Benefits Claimants Reside

A	3674
B	3753
C	1485
D	573
E	143
F	56

Where Claimants Live

Council Tax Working Age Claimants By Postcode As at 2/7/12

SN1	Central Swindon	1,400
SN2	Pinehurst, Penhill, Gorse Hill, Moredon, Rodbourne	2,700
SN3	East Swindon & Lower Stratton	2,700
SN4	Wanborough, Chiseldon & Wroughton	300
SN5	West Swindon	1,300
SN6	Highworth	250
SN25	North Swindon & Haydon Wick	1,200
SN26	Blunsdon	30
Total		9,880

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality and equality groups
Show consideration of: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership,
maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation
and if appropriate: financial economic status, homelessness, political view

Increasing Council Tax for all households to maintain the current levels of Benefits has been considered. But this would impact on many households where individuals and families are having difficulties meeting rising costs of living with low or no income increases.

The Council, Fire and Police Authorities will not be allowed to increase Council Tax above certain levels without having to hold a public referendum on whether or not the increase should be made. It is believed that the results of such referendums would not be in favour of an increase.

The Council is also already reducing expenditure.

Reducing Council Tax Benefits

Pensioners:

Pensioners are protected from these changes so there is no adverse impact on anyone who

reaches pension age.

Persons With Disabilities

It is recommended that households where there are individuals who receive a disability allowance should be protected from any Council Tax Benefit reduction. It is known that persons with disability can have more difficulty finding employment and so the argument that they can be incentivised to work is less appropriate. This will ensure no adverse impact.

Children:

Families with children, receiving Council Tax will be adversely impacted by the reductions. The inclusion of child benefit income as an income in the assessment of Council Tax Benefit will also have an adverse impact on the household budgets of families and single parents. However, other income parents or guardians receive is not included as 'income' in the assessment of Council Tax Benefit (or Housing Benefit). Maintenance and Guardian's' allowances are disregarded.

Families and single parents are also to earn extra income before there applicable amount is reached for benefit calculations. Applicable amounts are the amounts claimants are stated to need to meet every day living costs (food and clothing). The additional amount or premiums that families can earn is an additional £17.40 per week. In addition to the claimant applicable amounts, there are also applicable amounts for each child. Any child care costs are also disregarded and effectively reduce the income used in the calculation.

Lone parents are given an increased family premium of £22.40 per week. If these claimants receive any maintenance payments they are also disregarded, in addition to any child care costs.

There will still be an adverse impact on children by these changes.

Economic Status

Reducing Council Tax Benefit will affect persons with low incomes and with a low economic status. There could be 2 adverse impacts:

1. A lower disposable income for these households &
2. Those households being chased for unpaid Council Tax.

Ethnicity

Looking at the Equality monitoring data for the service it does appear that certain ethnic groups will be impacted more than others. The Asian, Caribbean and African communities would experience a greater impact.

There are some concerns that the Councils' population estimates understate the numbers of some communities, but notwithstanding this some communities will experience a greater adverse impact.

It is also known that some communities of low income households send funds abroad. These tend to be working households, but where wages are low. It is believed that many of this community are receiving partial benefits since they are working. The 80% or 75% maximum CTS will therefore have less of an impact on these claimants.

If they have families then inclusion of child benefit as an income will have an impact, especially as there can be concerns over the feeding and clothing of children from certain communities.

Some of these families share houses, which have shared facilities. The Council Tax on these Houses in Multiple Occupation (H.M.O.) is paid by the landlord and no Council Tax Benefit is currently paid. These families will not be impacted.

Localities.

As can be seen from the postcode data certain areas have a greater percentage of claimants. These areas will have a larger adverse impact.

Other Changes In Welfare Benefits & Homelessness.

From 2013 some benefit claimants will experience reductions in their benefits due to the introduction of a Benefits Cap and reduced Housing Benefit for claimants living in the Social Rented Sector and having or potentially having spare rooms. The cap will reduce the total benefit of couples or single parents claiming over £500 per week in benefits (excluding Council Tax Support) and the reduction in Housing Benefits for those with or potentially with a spare room will be 14% and for those with 2 or more spare rooms a 25% reduction. Around 100 families will be affected by the Benefits Cap and estimates of 2,000 claimants may be affected by the 'under-occupancy changes'.

These and the Council Tax Support changes could have an adverse effect on Homelessness.

Increases or reduction in claims/caseload

Since the Council's subsidy will be fixed at £11 million each year, if there is a high loss of jobs in the area, an increase in the number of claimants would result in difficulties for the Collection fund as well as for the individuals. The Council would have to meet the Support payments as set during the year concerned, but may have to again review what it is able to afford for subsequent years.

An improvement in the economic climate and a reduction in claims would result in the Collection Fund being in surplus. If this arises the Council may wish to review its scheme, reduce Council Tax for all residents or provide additional services.

There appears to be no adverse impacts on religion, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity.

Further Impacts of Individual Reductions :

The impacts of most of the changes are shown, but in addition to the above items the following changes will have the additional impacts:

Non- Dependent deduction increases could result in non-dependants being asked to leave the property if they are not willing to contribute or contribute more to the Council Tax bill. This could

result in an increase in Homelessness and also a rise in the Council Tax Support the Council is paying, since the Council Taxpayer may be able to claim an increase in Support without the deductions.

The inclusion of child benefit as an income will have an adverse effect on children, families and single parents. However, child benefit was include in the calculation of Housing and Council Tax Benefits until 2009 and so is not unprecedented. As stated above Families and single parents are also able to earn extra income before there applicable amount is reached for benefit calculations. The additional amount or premiums that families can earn is an additional £17.40 per week and £22.40 for lone parents. There are also applicable amounts for each child. Any child care costs and maintenance payments are also disregarded and effectively reduce the income used in the calculation.

One Swindon & Emerging Strategies

There are concerns with the adverse impacts shown and the effect these may have on the Council and partners' strategies, but it may be argued that giving claimants an incentive to find work may help with creating the right environment for good economic growth and if they can find employment it may help to rebalance the mix of our interventions to prevent or reduce vulnerabilities. The reduction in claims will help reduce intervention.

Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?

See steps on mitigation.

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

Consultation ran from 16th August 2012 until 9th November 2012. There were 348 formal responses. Of the formal responses 328 were made on online and 20 paper copies were received.

In order to publicise the consultation press releases were made at the beginning and end of period, officers attended a number of Locality meetings and held a Welfare reforms conference. The Welfare Reforms conference was attended by over 200 people and included representatives from the Advice Agencies, Tenants Representatives and other Voluntary Sector bodies. Members of the Swindon Equalities Forums were invited. Letters were also sent to all 10,000 working age Council Tax Benefits claimants who may be impacted in addition to 10,000 other residents.

The consultation exercise suggested that the majority of people were in favour of the reductions, although when reviewing the answers from Benefit claimants in isolation the answers were different.

The answering of surveys seems to reflect the appropriate percentages of the Swindon population. Of the responses:

- 59% of responses agreed that households that contain an individual with disabilities should be protected from the changes
- That the majority of respondents (67%) did not believe that other groups should be protected. But 65% of Council Tax Benefit claimants believe other groups should be. A 109

respondents in total made suggestions and these included:

- Single Parents : 21
- Families/children: 18
- Unemployed: 12
- Low Income: 12
- ESA claimants:10
- Carers: 4 (*many 'live in' carers can qualify for Council Tax discounts)
- Single Persons: 4
- Low paid:4
- War Disability Pensions: 2
- Students : 2 (*already exempt or discounted from Council Tax)
- Foster carers: 1
- The majority of responses (75% or 260 responses) indicated that the maximum support should be 80% or less. But 68% of claimants disagreed.
- 63% of responses stated that child benefit income should be treated as income (in the support calculation (although 65% of the claimants who responded did not agree)
- The majority of responses and Benefit claimants agreed that support should be capped at Band D, the capital limit should be reduced to £6,000 and second adult rebate withdrawn.
- 64% of respondents agreed that non-dependent contributions should be increased by £5 per week. With a further 3.5% of responses stating that the increase should be higher than £5 per week. 53% of claimants disagreed with the increase.

Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?

The Council appears to have little choice but to reduce the Council Tax Benefit (or Support) that it currently offers, as the impacts and the fact it may not be able to increase Council Tax or further reductions in services would be too great.

The Revenues & Benefits Service plans to work with claimants and other Council Departments to plan and mitigate the effects of all the Benefits changes. The Discretionary Housing Payments fund will be used to help the most vulnerable with any Housing Benefit reductions.

In order to help with Council Tax payments that fall due from April 2013 consideration will be given to allowing customers to make Council Tax payments over 12 months where requested, to increase the use of text reminders and to review the levels of court costs, if recovery actions becomes necessary.

Notice of the possible changes has been given through the press releases, Locality meetings, Welfare Reforms Conference and through the letters to all 10,000 working age claimants.

Links to business planning process

What changes have you identified?

As a result of considering the impacts the decision was made to protect households with individuals who claim a disability allowance.

Further work with Localities and other Council Departments is and will be taking place in order to help individuals understand and encourage payments before recovery proceedings are undertaken. The notification of the draft scheme has started this process.

When will this be reviewed?

The 'draft scheme' is now being proposed for adoption. Council members are to be asked to agree the final scheme. This should take place in December 2012. The scheme and customer reactions (payments and other indicators) will be monitored throughout 2012/13.

The Government is implementing a new Benefits system, which will include all Benefits, except Council Tax Benefits/Support, which Local Authorities will administer. The Universal Credits system will be administered by Central Government, Department of Work and Pensions. Currently the Council process Council Tax Benefit claims together with Housing Benefit claims, but from Oct 2013 until March 2015, a transition of the Housing Benefit claims to Universal Credits and the DWP. It may be an appropriate time to review the Council Tax Support scheme in 2014, once the impacts of the initial scheme can be measured (both in terms of persons claiming and the impacts on them and in terms of Council Tax collection).

How will success be measured?

If the draft scheme is adopted the success will be measured in terms of how successful the Council is at helping customers to pay the contributions they are asked to make. Reviews of the claimant breakdown will also be undertaken and it is hoped that the economic climate will improve so that the 'incentives to work' are available and undertaken.

For the record

Name of person leading this DIA Andy Stevens	Date completed 27/7/12 reviewed 14/11/12
Names of people involved in consideration of impact Kyri Jackson	
Name of director signing DIA Stuart Mckellar	Date signed

Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon

Diversity Impact Assessment for Review of Dial a Ride Services Support

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality duties

What's it there for? What's it set up to deliver? What's the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?

In view of the budget pressures facing the Council the existing strategy for financially supporting bus services (as set out in the Local Transport Plan 2011) is to be reviewed. Although this review includes conventional bus services a separate DIA has been produced to cover that specific service area.

The Council provides a Dial a Ride service (through a contract with Swindon Dial a Ride). It provides transport services for any individual within the Swindon Borough Council area who is unable to use conventional public transport due to disability.

All users must be pre-registered. All users must qualify based upon disability. All services must be pre booked. They use vehicles that are adapted to the needs of the clients with drivers that are trained to attend to the needs of the client group.

There are four services –

1. Dial a Ride bus – A pre booking, door to door bus service, wheelchair accessible, to any location within the Borough of Swindon upon request. Service operates between 0730 and 1815 on Mondays to Fridays and between 0830 and 1745 on Saturdays. No service on Sunday, Bank and Public Holidays. Operated by mini bus which can be shared with a number of users.
2. Dial a ride car service – Door to door taxi-type service, wheelchair accessible, to any location within mainland United Kingdom. Service to operate between 0900 and 1630 on Mondays to Fridays and evenings and weekends by arrangements.
3. Shopperbus – Door to door, flexibly routed timetabled service to pre-defined locations within the Borough of Swindon as detailed below:
Monday: Wroughton, Hodson, Chisledon, Badbury and any other rural area of the Borough to Sainsbury's Bridgemoor and the West Swindon Centre
Tuesday: West Swindon area and Sheltered Housing in Old Town and Rodbourne to the West Swindon Centre, Sainsbury's Bridgemoor and Morrisons
Wednesday: Stratton St Margaret Parish* to Sainsbury's Stratton and Sheltered Housing in Moredon to Sainsbury's Bridgemoor.
Shared with other users and operated on demand.
4. Excursions – Day trips led by demand and interest from the regular registered users of the Dial-a-Ride services. Costs are paid totally by the regular registered users attending the day trip. There are usually at least two trips per month but each month will depend upon demand and interest. Offering leisure/social facility for users on a limited number of days per year.

Additional services ancillary to the main operation are –

Group Transport Hire

Hiring wheel chair accessible minibuses to any non-profit, educational, community and voluntary groups in the Borough eg Scouts/cubs, lunch clubs, stroke clubs. The hirer provides a suitably qualified and trained driver. Service operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.

Access car

This service offers a wheelchair accessible car for self-drive hire. The car can be used for journeys of any length and can be hired for any period of time. Using this scheme enables families or small groups with a member with disabilities to travel together in the same vehicle. Service operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.

MiDAS Driver Training

Minibus driver awareness scheme (MiDAS) is provided free to drivers who wish to use the vehicle hire service above for an educational, community or voluntary group and are not MiDAS trained.

The service aims to provide these “mobility impaired” clients with access to services and facilities on a basis that is more equal to the access enjoyed by those who can use ordinary bus services or have their own transport. The journey purposes may involve accessing employment, medical appointments, shopping, non-statutory education, leisure and social activities.

Fares are charged. Concessionary Travel vouchers issued under the Council Concessionary Travel Scheme are accepted. Vouchers are issued as an alternative to bus passes – some users (who can manage to use ordinary buses for some trips) claim the bus pass instead of vouchers and then pay cash for the Dial a Ride service.

Proposed Change - The service provision has been reviewed as part of the tender procurement process and will be tendered during December 2012 to ensure a new contract is in place for the 1st September 2013 when the existing one expires. This will also include an option to reduce the service to meet the savings target as part of the annual Council budget review process for non-statutory functions.

The Council wishes to ensure that scarce resources are directed at the services that have the greatest impacts in terms of delivering its strategic objectives.

What potential is there to meet the equality duties?

Table 1 sets out the projected increase in the elderly population of Swindon through to 2022. It shows the higher increase in elderly people compared to the general increase in population levels. The percentage increase in the number over 85 year olds is particularly significant. The ability to meet the transport requirements of a growing population of older people is vital to them retaining a high quality of life as their income, health and mobility levels change.

Table 2 sets out information from the 2001 Census on household car ownership in Swindon.

There are significant variations from the Swindon average figure of 22.1% of households without a car. In some areas less than 10% of households are without a car while in other areas over 40% have no car. Those areas with the highest number of households without a car are also those that are high on the index of multiple deprivation. While these areas tend to have a good conventional bus service, access to services will be a problem for those in the many households without a car where people with disabilities are unable to use conventional buses. Dial a Ride services will therefore be particularly important in such areas for reducing inequalities in access to services between economic groups as well as between disabled and non-disabled.

Amongst the largest barriers to mobility are physical difficulties associated with walking and accessing public transport. Common concerns include:

- Poor condition of pavements;
- Inadequate crossing facilities;
- Boarding/alighting buses.

Lack of awareness, particularly awareness of special transport schemes like Dial-A-Ride and Shopmobility, can mean that those with the greatest need fail to benefit from services that have been specifically implemented to help them. Older people worry more about their safety because they are likely to be more severely injured, take longer to recover and suffer greater psychological impact than a younger person in a similar incident.

Information from the Department for Transport: **‘Understanding the Travel Needs, Behaviour and Aspirations of People Later in Life (2007):**

- The policy implications suggested as an outcome of this report, recognise the importance of factors other than age in shaping transport use patterns in particular in relation to health status and cost.
 - Transport is important to older people for basic needs (e.g. reaching basic services etc) but also to psychological and emotional needs, visiting friends and family and integrating within the local community.
 - Barriers to using public transport caused by declining health need to be removed through
-

changes in bus design and transport staff training.

Information taken from the Department for Transport on **‘disability and transport difficulties faced by disabled people’**:

In the UK, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defined a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities. In Britain 22% of adults are covered by the Disability Discrimination Act and around one fifth (6.9 million 19%) of people of working age have a long-term disability. The Swindon Borough Council data highlights that 15.26% of the population have some form of disability.

Population by Disability (Long Term Limiting Illness) for the Borough of Swindon						
	2001 Census		Mid 2007 projected estimate		Mid 2008 estimate based on 2007 data	
Disabled	27476	15.26%	29306	15.26%	29900	15.26%
Non-disabled	152575	84.74%	160173	84.74%	163000	84.74%
Total	180051		189479		192900	

Future disability projections:

Whilst the Swindon rates of visual impairments are comparable to the South West region and England, an ageing population will result in an increasing number of people with visual impairments in the Borough. For example for the over 65 years aged group, the number of citizens will increase from 2 467 in 2010 to an estimated 2 654 by 2013.

Approximately 3% of the Borough’s population aged 16-64 years have moderate to severe learning disabilities and this figure is due to rise as the population increases. Trends of this nature will need to be taken into consideration with the provision of the mainstream public transport services.

The Transport Advisory Committee Study on the Attitudes of Disabled People to Public Transport (2002)

- Disabled people travel a third less often than the general public.
- Disabled people drive cars less often, and are less likely to have one in the household.
- The most common mode of transport for disabled people is a car driven by someone else.
- Almost half of disabled people use some initiative for disabled people to make travel easier.
- 13% do not find it easy to get travel information on any kind of travel service. However, overall 39% felt well informed during journeys and 48% do not.
- In many respects the transport priorities of disabled people differ very little from the general population and their main requirement is for frequent and reliable services.
- Other requirements relate to the softer aspects of public transport such as improving staff attitudes to people with disabilities and training staff in dealing with people with disabilities.

Evaluating the Impact of the Disability Rights Commission, The Office for Public Management, September 2007

Evidence collected as part of this evaluation suggests that disabled people’s confidence in using public transport is significantly lower than that of non-disabled people. Disabled people are 4 times more likely to lack confidence in using public transport services than non-disabled people (26 per cent compared to 6 per cent). However a limitation of this source is the lack of comparable data for previous years on the specific question of confidence. This means it is not possible to track change over time.

There is evidence that the physical accessibility of public transport (and buses in particular in some parts of the country) has improved during the lifetime of the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), which is likely to have helped to improve levels of confidence.

What equality benefits does it create? (for people, organisation etc...)

It allows people who are disabled and have no use of a private car and who are unable (or find it very difficult) to use conventional bus services to be able to access services and facilities in a way more equal to that enjoyed by able bodied people. It also allows them to remain independent from relying on carers to provide for their needs. The ability to remain independent and to socialise away from the home may have links to issues such as dignity, mental well being and life expectancy.

There are potential, unquantified benefits to the NHS and local authority around avoiding expensive provision of home care services, hospital admissions and other adult social care interventions arising from allowing people to live independently.

In May 2012 Dial a Ride carried out a survey of its users. Amongst the questions asked was "What benefits do you get from Using the Dial a Ride services". The results are shown in table 5. The two main benefits were –

being able to make and keep health appointments

remain independent from domiciliary care

This supports the view that provision of Dial a Ride enables clients to maintain their independence and continue living in their own homes.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential? The greatest barrier to realising the full potential benefits of the service is the cost of this type of provision and the availability of funding from the Council as the fares are unable to cover the operating costs.

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?

The following groups are entitled to register to use the service –

People of any age with mobility difficulties;

People of any age with visual difficulties;

People with severe learning difficulties (provided the person can travel on their own or is provided with an escort throughout the journey);

Escorts and guides travelling with a registered user.

The service is restricted to those who are disabled. None of the other equality groups are intended to benefit except where they are also disabled. Elderly people (particularly those at the upper end of the age range) are more likely to also be disabled than other members of the community.

What do you know about them (evidence)?

There are currently 2103 individuals registered with Swindon Dial A Ride to use the services. All have disabilities; 25% are male and 75% female; 25% are under 65 and 75% over 65. Ethnicity is not recorded. Table 3 sets out the age profile of the users of Dial a Ride services in June 2012.

Table 4 sets out the number of journeys for each of the four services, by postcode area, for June 2012.

During 2011/12 Dial a ride bus and car services provided 25,220 single passenger trips (an increase of 1.3% from 2010/11). Of the Dial a ride journeys completed 24% were made by wheelchair users. The number of journeys made by wheelchair users increased by 8% from 5,662 in 2010/11 to 6,124 in 2011/12. These figures have been achieved against a 4.8% reduction in operating hours over the same period.

In the May 2012 user survey a question was asked about how often clients use the Dial a ride services. Out of 271 responses, 7 used it every day, 113 at least once a week, 43 at least twice a week, 107 occasionally.

Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service? Demand for Dial a Ride services is known to exceed the service provision that is available. Registered users have reported that they

are often unable to book the service they require because it is fully booked. The requirement to book in advance also restricts the freedom of users to make late arrangements or be flexible about their plans. There is likely to be suppressed demand because of the perceived difficulties in making a booking due to the service often being fully booked. In addition the restricted hours of operation mean that the benefit of the service is only available for users for part of the day and week.

Do you know why? Availability of funding means that the contract let by the Council only provides for restricted hours of operation and numbers of vehicles available.

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality and equality groups

Show consideration of: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation and if appropriate: financial economic status, homelessness, political view

Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved? (adverse impact)

Removal of the service is likely to have an adverse impact on people who do not have access to a private car and are disabled to the extent that they find it difficult or impossible to use conventional public transport services. However in considering where a service revision could be made and reduce its impact overall it was decided to concentrate on the dial a ride core service within the Borough only and with the supplier providing their own choice of vehicle between 4 and 16 seats. The facilities for excursions, group transport hire, access car and MiDAS training would be withdrawn. This action would minimise the effect on service users as excursions are an extra facility which can be done commercially by an operator and not a key essential service, the groups can still hire transport they just have to pay for it, MiDAS training would have to be paid for but the training is available elsewhere in the Borough/County and would have to be paid for, while the access car loss would be minimal. Commercial car hires although a cost would be an alternative to the Access Car. The Shopperbus service is to be renamed and tendered separately to make it more attractive to bidders and sustainable financially.

Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?

The degree to which removal of the service will have an adverse impact is unproven. There is no firm evidence that some or all of the clients could not manage in other ways or that it would reduce independence or result in more need for "home care" services.

Without the service users would need to find alternatives. Improvements to bus stops, bus design and bus driver training may make conventional buses a better option for some disabled people. Distance to bus stops from home and lack of confidence remain issues.

Service users may be able to use taxis – but costs are an issue along with the level of skill and training of drivers for dealing with this user group.

Otherwise clients will need to rely on friends, relatives or social services/voluntary organisations to bring services into the home or provide transport alternatives.

However if only certain elements are removed as described previously the effect on users will be minimal as in many aspects the facilities would still be available at a cost and the effect will be mainly on groups rather than an individuals.

How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)

There are no apparent positive impacts to equality groups that would arise from a reduction in the Dial a ride service.

Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?

It may be possible to refine the service to reduce costs and improve the effectiveness of the service – but this will require a better understanding of the needs of potential users and the prioritising of provision for those who will benefit the most. This is why we are exploring the option described in the tender as the best way to reduce costs but retain the key service.

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?
Consultation has not taken place at this stage in the budget setting process.

4 So what?

Link to business planning process

What changes have you identified?

Proposals have been put forward by officers which will be part of an option in a forthcoming tender and a final decision will be made at the award stage process. This will depend upon how much budget Cabinet decides to make available, as well as the tender prices received.

What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

The principles of the revised bus strategy have been put to Cabinet in October 2012 before consultation with operators. Details of the resulting principles to form a strategy will then be subject to consultation with stakeholders before final approval by Cabinet and application of the new policy from April 2013. The tender will be decided in April 2013.

When will this be reviewed?

The revised bus strategy will be subject to the views of Cabinet when they adopt it.
The tender and options will be decided based on available budget and approval of the Council.

How will success be measured?

There may be metrics around hours of availability of services. There may be a value for money indicator around cost per passenger carried.

The tender bids will show whether the current service is value for money or not. We will also depending upon available comparison, compare the cost of this service with those provided by other local authorities.

For the record

Name of person leading this DIA: Nigel Hale/Philip Martlew

Date completed

Names of people involved in consideration of impact :Gwillam Lloyd

Name of director signing DIA: Gwillam Lloyd

Date signed

Population Forecast – Swindon

Table 1 Forecast growth in elderly population of Swindon

Age Group	2010	2015 Projection	2022 Projection
65+	28,857	32,944	38,721
75+	13,892	15,556	19,391
85+	3,865	4,681	6,161
Total Population	201,053	211,102	231,867

Household Car Ownership

Table 2 Households with/without cars (2001 Census) (Selected Wards)

Area	% households without a car
Swindon	22.1
Ridgeway	5.2
Blunsdon	9.4
Highworth	16.9
Westlea	18.1
Walcot	37.2
Parks	41.6
Penhill	44.8

An overview of Dial-a-Ride services:

There are currently 2103 individuals registered with Swindon Dial A Ride to use the services. All have disabilities; 25% are male and 75% female; 25% are under 65 and 75% over 65. Ethnicity is not recorded.

Table 3 - A summary of the age profile of the users of all Dial-a-Ride services for June 2012

Service	Age (years)										
	<4	5-11	12-16	17-18	19-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80-84	85+	Unknown
Dial a Ride Bus	0	3	3	1	335	102	159	259	366	579	5
Dial a Ride Car	0	2	4	1	404	127	177	302	413	619	5
Shopperbuses	0	0	0	0	19	13	33	49	77	124	17
Excursions	0	2	2	1	235	74	105	187	242	323	6

Home locations of Dial-a-Ride Users (by postcode)

Comment from Dial Ride: We are aware that there are higher concentrations of users in the older parts of Swindon and in the less affluent areas.

Table 4 - A breakdown of number of journeys by postcode area for Dial-a-Ride services in June 2012 (provided by Dial A Ride):

Postcode	Dial a ride bus service	Dial a ride car service	Shopperbuses	Excursions
SN1	205	234	18	133
SN2	393	440	74	265
SN3	591	669	103	399
SN4	148	166	48	82
SN5	204	230	76	119
SN6	63	71	1	44
SN25	189	223	6	125
SN26	9	11	0	2

Table 5 – Results of May 2012 survey of Dial a Ride users

What benefits do you get from using Dial a Ride services?

Tick all that apply. Actual number of responses 273

Access education courses	17
Access employment (paid or voluntary)	14
Make and keep health appointments	149
Gain enjoyment from solitary or communal recreational activities	83
Access a larger range of retail outlets offering better choice and value	114
Able to visit family and friends	69
Being with other people in a social setting makes me feel happy	123
Remain independent from domiciliary care	130

Strategic Planning Framework - Diversity Impact Assessments

1 What's it about?

refer to equality duties

- What is it there for? What is it set up to deliver? What is the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?
- What potential is there to meet the equality duties?
- What equality benefits does it create?
- What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

2 Who's it for?

refer to equality groups

- Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?
- What do you know about them (evidence)?
- Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?
- Do you know why?

3 Impact

refer to dimensions and equality groups

- Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved? (adverse impact)
- Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?
- How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)
- Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?
- What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

4 So what?

- What changes have you identified?
- What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?
- When will this be reviewed?
- How will success be measured?
- Who is signing this off/taking responsibility?

Considerations

Our equality duties

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equality of opportunity
3. Foster good relations

In the areas of age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation.

Extended by SBC policy to include: financial or economic status, homelessness, political view.

Dimensions of equality

How will the service affect the life chances of different groups?

Consider how the service will impact

1. **Life expectancy**
2. **Physical security:** e.g. freedom from violence and physical and sexual abuse.
3. **Health and well-being:** e.g. access to high quality healthcare.
4. **Education:** e.g. being able to be creative, to acquire skills and qualifications, and having access to training and life-long learning.
5. **Standard of living:** e.g. being able to live with independence and security; and covering nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, utilities, social services and transport.
6. **Productive and valued activities:** e.g. access to employment, a positive experience in the workplace, work/life balance, being able to care for others.
7. **Individual, family and social life:** e.g. self-development, having independence and equality in relationships and marriage.
8. **Participation, influence and voice:** e.g. participation in decision-making and democratic life.
9. **Identity, expression and self-respect:** e.g. freedom of belief and religion.
10. **Legal security:** e.g. equality and non-discrimination before the law and equal treatment within the criminal justice system.

Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon

Diversity Impact Assessment for Commissioning a Drug Treatment & Recovery Service

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality duties

What's it there for? What's it set up to deliver? What's the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?

Swindon's population has been growing steadily for the past twenty years; the town situated close to the M4 has continued to attract industry and commerce to the town that in turn has attracted a labour force from across the UK. The male and females population by age peaks from ages 25 – 50. This is reflected in the drug treatment population demographic.

Swindon has a changing population, in the last five years or so the school age BME population has almost doubled. The changing nature of our population will present new challenges for the drug treatment service.

The Glasgow formula estimates that Swindon has around 1300 Opiate and Crack Users (OCU's) of which almost two thirds are in the treatment system. The retention in treatment of those starting a new journey is good and with planned exits are moving in the right direction.

The % growth of planned treatment exits is way above the 'cluster' and national average. The non-OCU cohort is lower than the national average but improving steadily. Most significantly the representations are very low.

The biggest challenge for a newly commissioned treatment service is the improvement of successful completions of drug users that are also within the Criminal Justice cohort.

This DIA is to support the re tendering (due to expiry of current contract) of current tier 2 & tier 3 drug treatment service and in line with the National Drug Treatment Strategy 2010 commission a Drug Treatment and Recovery Service adopting a 'whole systems approach. The outcomes of this DIA will inform and be built into the service specification.

Current Model of Delivery

The current model of delivery is based around the NTA 'Models of Care'. This sets out a national framework for the commissioning of adult treatment for drug misuse and incorporated treatment effectiveness into service delivery.

The expectation was that this framework would be available in every part of England to meet the needs of local and diverse populations. Models of Care (MoC) is an integrated system developed around a four-tier model of drug treatment commissioning and provision. It encompassed a care pathway approach to 'route' service users through the tiers, to provide appropriate assessment and care planning and to care co-ordinate or manage the processes through treatments.

Treatment retention and completion incorporated a single measurement that provided an indication of the effectiveness of the local treatment system to minimise early drop out, as part of on-going work to performance manage improvements in treatment effectiveness. This structure measured the percentage of drug users discharged during the financial year who were retained in treatment for 12 weeks or more, focusing on the effectiveness of the local treatment system in engaging drug users and minimising early drop out. This model has been adapted slightly over the past 9 months to move to the recovery model set out in 2010 National Strategy.

Current Contract Structure

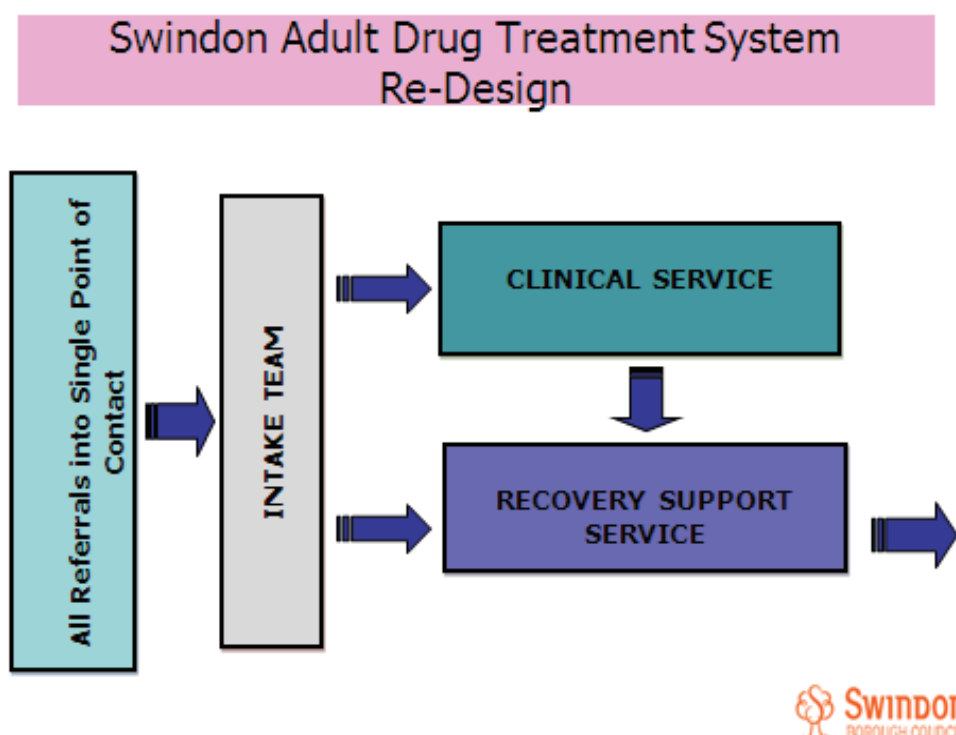
The current contract structure commissions tier 3 and tier 2 services using two provider agencies.

Tier 3 is provided by an NHS provider while the Tier 2 service is provided by a local third sector provider. Tier 4 services are currently commissioned by the DAAT by way of preferred provider agreements. Certain components of the treatment system sit outside the current contract structure and are purchased directly by the DAAT or by the PCT by way of locally enhanced services contracts.

Swindon Adult Drug Treatment System Re -Design

To achieve the aims and objectives set out in the 2010 National Strategy a service redesign has been undertaken with a view to creating a Whole Systems Approach to delivering a drug treatment and recovery system.

Problems with the current system had been clearly identified by all partner organisations, Needs Assessment and current performance measures. The DAAT consulted on the re-design and have agreed to commission on the following structure:



Incorporating the One Swindon Principles into the Swindon Drug Treatment and Recovery System

What is One Swindon?

One Swindon sets out the commitment to a new partnership. Our ambitions go beyond delivering services in Swindon. Our focus is about how we together create good places to live and help local people achieve aspirations for training and work, good health, positive relationships, feeling safe and a sustainable environment. This can only be achieved by public services working together with local people. In recognition of this, One Swindon builds upon the strong partnership working established by the Swindon Strategic Partnership. Working together with businesses, voluntary and community sector organisations, and above all local people, we will deliver on an agreed, shared focus over the next four years.

One Swindon is an invitation to everyone to look beyond public services as the agencies responsible for stepping in, enforcing, removing, directing, funding, delivering, prioritising, deciding and providing. Whilst we will always have a role around public protection, public health, community safety and safeguarding the most vulnerable, we want to move forward with a new focus. We want to be listening, enabling, encouraging, celebrating and supporting, particularly in terms of people growing their independence and more people successfully making a positive

contribution.

We want public services to work more closely together and we will do this by looking at joining up teams and services, creating more opportunities for voluntary and community sector delivery, creating more effective routes for local people to determine what key services they want to receive at a local level, and testing out different ways of working together.

One Swindon will find ways of working that enable local people to make a positive contribution. Thousands of local people give their time, energy and effort on a regular basis in support of their neighbours, community, club or interest group. Many of us could do this and more. Community networks and relationships are fundamental to making positive things happen. Wherever possible we want to ensure that the way we work adds to this valuable community activity. One Swindon is also about really appreciating what is important to people at a local level as well as looking at what we need to provide for the Borough as a whole.

Principles of Delivering the Swindon Drug Treatment and Recovery System.

The principles of delivering the Swindon Drug Treatment and Recovery Service are broad principles that apply to all the component parts of the Swindon Drug Treatment and Recovery Service.

Recovery will underpin the Swindon drug and alcohol treatment system

The Authority supports the UKDPC definition of recovery:

“Recovery is a process, characterised by voluntarily sustained control over substance use, which maximises health and wellbeing and participation in the rights, roles and responsibilities of society”.

Controlled abstinence, social inclusion and employment are viewed as central to recovery for the majority of drug and alcohol users. Key features of a recovery system include short treatment episodes and a vibrant recovery community offering a significant degree of self-help.

It is vital that the system as a whole and individual workers understand the principles of recovery. The term promotes a powerful message for both substance misuse workers and service users alike. The focus of service and worker delivery will be to support and coordinate a holistic package of care that aims to enable the development of individualised plans for positive change. The Contractor will deliver a treatment system where pathways are available to cover both abstinence and non-abstinence based recovery journeys, ensuring that all interventions are underpinned by harm reduction.

Care coordination is essential to ensuring the provision of effective treatment regardless of Contractor and sector. The Contractor will provide effective and consistent care coordination to ensure service users benefit from the spectrum of specialist and non-specialist interventions available in Swindon. Interventions will be dynamic and, in most cases, time-limited to encourage movement through the treatment system.

The Contractor will adhere to the principles of personalisation, supporting service users to be active participants in the selection and delivery of services that meet their individual needs. The Contractor will treat all service users adhering to the principles of dignity, privacy, choice, safety, realising potential, equality and diversity.

Mainstream services offer a variety of interventions to support service users' recovery, including employment, housing and social integration. The Contractor will proactively and constructively work with non-drug and alcohol specialist services such as Job Centre Plus, Work Programme Providers, Registered Social Landlords and others in order to maximise outcomes for service users.

Additional drug and alcohol specialist services may be commissioned within and outside of this contract. The Contractor will work proactively and constructively with commissioners and any new Contractors to ensure pathways are robust and any new services become fully integrated within the treatment system.

The Contractor will work with the other commissioned Contractors to ensure that community provision is a seamless part of the Swindon treatment system and that the service user's experience and perception is that of an integrated service model.

Care coordination across the criminal justice system is essential and the Contractor will actively participate in partnership case management forums including the 'SWITCH' Integrated Offender Management Forum, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (for victims of domestic violence and abuse), Multi agency children in need and child protection procedures, Adult and Children's safeguarding Boards as requested, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement panels (for the most serious violent and sex offenders), High Crime Causing Users (for prolific drug using offenders), Local Case Management Forums (for low level offenders), Sex Worker Case Management Forum, Domestic Violence Offender Management Group, See the Adult, See the Child protocol., Hidden Harm and others.

The integration of drug services for both community and criminal justice service users is of the utmost importance to the commissioners. The Contractor will deliver an efficient and effective integrated system that meets the needs of individuals, their families and their communities.

The Contractor will ensure the effective throughput of service users within the treatment system. Integrated care pathways will be developed at the start of the contract and will be reviewed in line with local clinical governance arrangements and national guidelines (particularly the 'Full Strang Report') in liaison with the commissioners within the first 12 months.

Working across all points within the criminal justice system, the Contractor will bring together existing drug schemes, such as Arrest Referral, Conditional Cautioning, Court Referral, Drug Rehabilitation Requirements (DRR), Alcohol Treatment Requirements (ATR), Prolific and Priority Offender (PPO) Outreach, and prison resettlement services, as well as any new initiatives that emerge.

The Contractor will ensure that substance misusing offenders receive effective treatment with the specific objective of reducing their offending and reducing the harm that alcohol and drugs causes to individuals, their families and their communities, contributing towards breaking the link between drugs and crime in Swindon.

Clinical governance is of the utmost importance to the commissioners. The Contractor will have in place robust clinical governance mechanisms, including an identified clinical lead, to ensure that the quality and safety of its services is of a high standard that is continually improving.

The Contractor will have written policies and procedures relevant to the operation of the service in place at the start of the contract. Staff should be made aware of these and familiar with the content. Policies will include, but not be limited to:

- . Service Audit
- . Risk Assessment
- . Clinical Assessment
- . Care Planning
- . Community Detoxification
- . Supervised Consumption
- . Prescribing
- . Management Supervision and Clinical Supervision
- . Planned and Unplanned Discharge
- . Serious Untoward Incidents
- . Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children
- . Health and Safety
- . Lone Working

-
- . Record Keeping and Information Sharing
 - . Referral and Transfer in/between services
 - . Service User Involvement
 - . Training and Continuous Professional Development

The Contractor will carry out a thorough care planned review (clinical, social, and psychological) of existing community and criminal justice service users. This will be complete within the first 12 months of the contract. Consent will be sought from new service users and re-sought from all existing service users in order to facilitate information sharing within the Swindon Treatment and Recovery System and with NDTMS. This will include consent to transfer all files pertaining to an individual service user's treatment to any future service Contractor as required by the commissioners.

The Contractor will fully support the primary care role including the development of recovery-focused shared care services. The Contractor will ensure effective throughput of service users from criminal justice and specialist services to primary care.

The Contractor will ensure that a dedicated performance management function is established for the duration of the contract. The Contractor will ensure effective reporting as required by the commissioners and stakeholders, and will support the development of both output and outcome monitoring for the Swindon Treatment and Recovery System.

Performance reports and all non-personalised, aggregated data will be available to commissioners for contract review meetings, needs assessment analysis and audit purposes.

The Contractor will ensure attendance at all commissioner-led meetings including monthly contract review meetings, Health and Treatment Group, and the Performance Delivery Group.

The Contractor will work to develop robust and effective information sharing protocols with partner agencies that will promote effective multi-agency working. Where there are children in contact with patients in treatment and/or living with them, information will be shared routinely with the Children's Social care referral and Assessment Team. It is possible that patients in treatment will be the parent or siblings of families in crisis (referred to as Troubled Families). All relevant data will be shared on service users whose families fall within the definition of Troubled Families (children with poor school attendance and/or exclusions, children and young people involved in anti-social behaviour/offending, parents not in full time work). This information will be shared routinely with the performance team of Swindon Borough Council

The Contractor will work to continually improve the performance and cost efficiency of the treatment system, including working with partners to expand early intervention and preventative initiatives, minimise the risk of relapse and reduce long-term treatment for chronic conditions.

The Contractor will regularly review provision with commissioners to ensure that all interventions meet the needs of service users.

The drug and alcohol arena is subject to changes in policies and good practice. The Contractor will be proactively and constructively responsive to new emergent policies, guidelines and local trends in consultation with commissioners.

What potential is there to meet the equality duties?

Development of this service will support delivery of the Public Sector Equality Duty to advance equality of opportunity.

What equality benefits does it create? (for people, organisation etc...)

For the residents of Swindon who are misusing alcohol the proposed Drug Treatment & Recovery

Services will:

- Increase access to high quality healthcare
- Increase life expectancy
- Enhance physical security
- Enhance standard of living.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

Drug Related problems affect people from all social groups. There is no single factor that accounts for the variation in individual risk of becoming drug dependant. Evidence suggests that drug dependence has a wide range of causal factors, some of which interact with each other to increase risk. However, in Swindon people living in the most deprived areas were almost four times more likely to be affected than those living in the least deprived areas.

It has been evidenced that factors associated with a worse outcome for those individuals who misuse drugs or are drug dependant include having less social stability and support for example, those without jobs, families or stable housing, lacking a social network of non-drug users, a family history of drug and/or alcohol dependence, psychiatric comorbidity, multiple previous treatment episodes and history of disengagement from treatment.

Evidence suggests it is important to follow individuals up immediately after detoxification, as they often find the post-detoxification period difficult. They often have to address problems that have occurred as a result of their drug using, and may be struggling to meet the expectations of friends and relatives.

Maintaining contact over the long term with people previously treated by specialist services for drug dependence is an important factor in maintaining abstinence. Low-intensity monitoring over 1–3 years has been shown to reduce the severity of relapses (possibly through earlier referral to specialist services when needed).

Depending on the definition used, as many as 70% of individuals receiving treatment for drug misuse or dependency will have relapsed at the 6-month follow up. At 12 months, less than 30% of people will still be in contact with a specialist service, however evidence suggests this can be increased to 80% if follow up is given by trained staff.

The proposed treatment and recovery service will have the addition of recovery workers and specialist nurses within a clinically managed setting. This means a quality service will be delivered that is congruent with the Building Recovery in Communities national agenda and the National Drug Strategy 2010. For those needing additional support, tier 4 inpatient detoxification and rehab can be spot purchased. For Swindon this means a comprehensive drug treatment system that focuses on the individual.

The proposed services will be for those 18+ years of age but transition from Young Peoples services will be closely monitored.

To overcome these barriers equalities monitoring will be included in the service specification. This will show accessibility of the service, particularly for those identified in this document.

To measure the outcomes of the service, the service specification will include:

- Adherence to National Drug Treatment Monitoring System (National Quality Standard)

- TOPS data which includes monitoring on physical health, psychological health, social functioning, alcohol use and criminal activity (if an issue).

•

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?

Current Activity Levels

- Swindon has an estimated 1, 297 Opiate and Crack Users (OCUs)*
- An estimated 470 OCU's are treatment naïve.
- Swindon is in Opiate Cluster C and Non OCU cluster B

Green Report (Quarter 4 to 30th March 2012 Drugs)

Numbers in Effective Treatment	Year to date
OCU	599
Non OCU	62
Total	661
Starting new treatment Journey	198
Retained for 12 weeks or more	164
Exits	178
Planned	94



Equality information collection on the basis of gender, sexuality, religion, disability, age and ethnicity is currently completed by the treatment agency. This is compared with local population demographics and previous years clients in treatment to monitor any large discrepancies or emerging trends through strategic needs assessments. Local demographic profiles have changed rapidly and we are awaiting the 2011 census results in order to ascertain the various ethnic groups and religions that have a representation in Swindon. In respect to this list we would look to marginalised groups (homeless, street sex workers) and seek to involve them into mainstream treatment, Rather than purely monitoring the new provider will be expected to take action e.g. Contract for street sex workers is central to provision rather than a separate stream. Furthermore research into Khat use in the Swindon Somali community has been conducted and has provided us with information around the level of use, impact on Somali and wider community; an action plan has been agreed.

3 Impact

The Contractor will be aware of and respond to the needs of service users from marginalised groups across all aspects of the treatment system.

Specifically, the Contractor will prior to the commencement of the service, develop action plans (to be reviewed annually with commissioners) on improving treatment access, appropriateness and effectiveness, so the full range of drug treatment services can be accessed by a variety of vulnerable groups such as (but not restricted to):

- . Homeless populations
 - . Sex workers
 - . Refugees and asylum seekers
 - . Recreational drug users
 - . Offenders
 - . BME and emerging populations
 - . Traveller populations
 - . Dual diagnosis service users
 - . Stimulant users
 - . Women
 - . Service users with dependent children
 - . Victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse
 - . Older populations (aged 55+ years)
 - . Treatment naive drug users
 - . Service users in employment and therefore unable to attend during normal opening times
 - . Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities
- Individual service users will have a range of needs, therefore specific and tailored service components will need to be developed to effectively engage these groups.
- The Contractor will ensure that there are adequate arrangements to ensure that these groups are aware of and able to access treatment services. Particular consideration will be given to:
- . The establishment of specific group venues
 - . The use of satellite venues, including primary care settings and home visits
 - . Opening hours that are not prohibitive to these service user groups
 - . Engagement of mainstream and non-drug / alcohol-specific services offering support for these service user groups
 - . Use of translation / interpretation services where required.
- The Contractor will outreach to those unable or unwilling to access site-based services. These interventions should be made available to facilitate access to community-based services.
- The Contractor will work in partnership with commissioned and non-commissioned Contractors of services supporting sex workers and homeless drug and alcohol users to maximise access and engagement in treatment of these specific vulnerable groups.

Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved?
(adverse impact)

In the implementation of this service:

We do not believe that there is evidence to suggest a real or potential adverse impact for young people. We do, however recognise that there may be implications for families where there are dependent children, we need to ensure that any service provider is able to successfully take into account and respond to for example, children in care/transition, children who take on caring responsibilities for their alcohol misusing parent, children in chaotic family environments.

Although the responsibility to re-commission the services will be with Swindon Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), there are reporting lines through the Community Safety Partnership, Public Health and Children's and Adult Commissioning Directorate. There is also the Children's and Young Peoples Substance Misuse Partnership Group which both adult & children's commissioner of specialist substance misuse attend. This partnership meeting focuses on treatment delivery, health, education, promotion, funding, trends, presenting issue as well as areas of transition. Presenting issues from the adult service in regards to children and young people (and vice versa)

will be raised accordingly.

The service provider will be aware of the responsibilities and protocols to proactively identify and appropriately refer vulnerable children. This will be included in the service specification.

The age profile of use and admissions indicates an identifiable age band where potential for use of the service will be most prevalent. This trend data is changing and the service needs to be responsive to a changing age profile. We do not identify any real or adverse impact on this basis.

Setting aside the medical definitions of dependence as a mental and behavioural disorder, we do not have evidence that there is an adverse impact on the basis of disability. We understand that there may be issues surrounding physical impairment, acquired disability or learning disability which could have an implication for use of and access to this service and so will need to undertake research through the provision of the service to fully understand and respond to these needs.

Local data has identified current usage and hospital admissions on the basis of gender and we do not believe there is an adverse impact on this basis. Trends and changes to this profile will be regularly reviewed by a successful provider (including links/relationship to domestic violence).

There is no reliable local data regarding alcohol misuse on the basis of ethnicity or by/within any identifiable racial community in Swindon. In preparing this DIA we acknowledge that Swindon's BME communities may be underestimated in the population profile and consequently significantly under-represented in service use. We will need to re-evaluate our understanding and its implications on release of the Census 2011 data (end of November 2012). However community understanding and on-going health interventions suggest established Somali and Nepalese communities and a growing Goan population (Community estimates are of between 12 and 20,000 Goan people, disproportionately male, many in HMOs on Low income and under the age of 60.), Along with historically acknowledged Asian and African Caribbean populations may be under-represented in current service use.

Consequently there is potential for an adverse impact on the basis of race. A successful provider will be required to demonstrate that a service is open and accessible to people from all communities and will need to undertake research through the provision of the service to fully understand and respond to these needs.

We have no local or national evidence to suggest potential adverse impact on the basis of religion. However we believe that the cultural relationship of some faith groups to and with drugs & alcohol may mean that cultural responses and assumptions may affect the use of this service. A successful provider will be required to demonstrate that a service is open and accessible to people from these communities and will need to undertake research through the provision of the service to fully understand and build responses to these needs.

Some national research and local anecdotal evidence identifies higher levels of alcohol and drug use within lesbian and gay communities than the wider population. We are not aware of any research identifying higher levels of misuse or dependence than in the wider population. A successful provider will be required to demonstrate that a service is open and accessible to people from these communities and will need to undertake research through the provision of the service to fully understand and respond to these needs.

Poor stability in the social environment is likely to result in worse outcomes as a result of drug dependence. Consequently it is likely that the service may need to respond more frequently to

issues of poverty/homelessness. The service is developed to be a recovery focussed service and so will be required to respond to such issues and involve employment, benefit maximisation and security of housing.

We have no local or national evidence to suggest either adverse or positive impact on the basis of transgender, maternity/pregnancy, marital/civil partnership status or political view. We will remain aware of this lack of information and revise the impact assessment should any research or trend indicate this may present an equality impact

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

The CSP Joint Commissioning Group (this group includes: PCT, GP's, GWH, Police, Probation, SBC, Fire Service, SWADS, YOT, and U-Turn) was consulted by way of a Power Point Presentation outlining the service redesign. This presentation was also shared with service user groups, current provider staff. On completion of the ITT it was circulated to JCG, Children's Services, Probation, YOT/Uturn, Wiltshire Police, PCT, GP's and National Treatment Agency.

4 So what?

[Link to business planning process](#)

What changes have you identified?

- A service specification has been developed to ensure a successful provider will establish equality monitoring which can be cross-tabulated and will be used to assess future service developments (by the provider and commissioner). This will be reported annually.
- To ensure the service specification delivers on what has been identified in this DIA, the Change Manager for Equality and Diversity will be invited to attend.
- The equalities monitoring will take place at the Performance Management and Monitoring of Services, which will be held in accordance with the specification.
 - Success will be measured by a variety of tools, including NDTMS and TOPS data which includes monitoring on physical health, psychological health, social functioning, alcohol use and criminal activity (if an issue).
- An implementation plan has been agreed with the tendering process due to be completed in October 2012.
- The successful provider will be expected to provide evidence of how the service has flexed/responded to ensure understanding of and accessible provision to those who require and are eligible to receive its service

For the record

Name of person leading this DIA Chris Stickler	Date completed 02/11/12
Names of people involved in consideration of impact <ul style="list-style-type: none">• John Gilbert• Jennifer Laibach• Frances Mayes	
Name of director signing DIA: John Gilbert	Date signed

Strategic Planning Framework - Diversity Impact Assessments

1 What's it about?

refer to equality duties

- What is it there for? What is it set up to deliver? What is the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?
- What potential is there to meet the equality duties?
- What equality benefits does it create?
- What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

2 Who's it for?

refer to equality groups

- Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?
- What do you know about them (evidence)?
- Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?
- Do you know why?

3 Impact

refer to dimensions and equality groups

- Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved? (adverse impact)
- Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?
- How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)
- Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?
- What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

4 So what?

- What changes have you identified?
- What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?
- When will this be reviewed?
- How will success be measured?
- Who is signing this off/taking responsibility?

Considerations

Our equality duties

1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advance equality of opportunity
3. Foster good relations

In the areas of age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation.

Extended by SBC policy to include: financial or economic status, homelessness, political view.

Dimensions of equality

How will the service affect the life chances of different groups?

Consider how the service will impact

1. **Life expectancy**
2. **Physical security:** e.g. freedom from violence and physical and sexual abuse.
3. **Health and well-being:** e.g. access to high quality healthcare.
4. **Education:** e.g. being able to be creative, to acquire skills and qualifications, and having access to training and life-long learning.
5. **Standard of living:** e.g. being able to live with independence and security; and covering nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, utilities, social services and transport.
6. **Productive and valued activities:** e.g. access to employment, a positive experience in the workplace, work/life balance, being able to care for others.
7. **Individual, family and social life:** e.g. self-development, having independence and equality in relationships and marriage.
8. **Participation, influence and voice:** e.g. participation in decision-making and democratic life.
9. **Identity, expression and self-respect:** e.g. freedom of belief and religion.
10. **Legal security:** e.g. equality and non-discrimination before the law and equal treatment within the criminal justice system.

Proposal to change the opening times of the One Stop Shop and Customer Contact Centre

Diversity Impact Assessment

1 Purpose

To ensure provision of in person and telephone customer access to the Council that is effective, efficient and value for money. This DIA sets out proposed changes to opening times, the current and future context of Council service provision and an analysis of the impacts of the proposal.

This proposal supports current Council objectives in a number of ways:

- Increasing resilience and independence of vulnerable and potentially vulnerable people
- Providing support to prevent people from becoming dependent on services, which are often more expensive
- Making best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council

The proposal is to:

Reduce the opening hours by 1.5hrs per day to 9am to 5pm

Change the Customer Services performance indicators:

From

80% of customers seen in 15 minutes and 80% of calls answered in 20 seconds

To

80% of customers seen in 30 minutes and 80% of calls answered in 60 seconds

There is no proposal to change the current operating hours or performance indicators for the Homeline service where 95% of contacts are responded to in 30 seconds, which are received via the ARC (alarm receiving centre) based at Water Side

This proposal would create an immediate cost saving of £197k

2 Current provision

The Customer Services portfolio includes provision of a face-to-face service via the One Stop Shop (OSS), Civic, and Clarence House Receptions. It also includes a telephony service via the Contact Centre and Control Room (Homeline and 24hr Emergency Number). Across these two channels of communication, it delivers over 40 distinct services ranging from Revenues, Benefits, Housing, StreetSmart, Anti-Social Behaviour, Regulatory Services, Blue Badges, Building Control, Planning, Car Parking services, and School Admissions. Many services relating to Children & Families and Adults Services are not part of the current offering.

The service deals with annual volumes of circa 400,000 calls to the Contact Centre; 320,000 visits to the One Stop Shop, Civic, and Clarence House reception and 38,300 customer emails into the Customer Services & StreetSmart inbox. The service operates under the 'Swindon Direct' brand.

The One Stop Shop (OSS) currently operates from 8.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday

The Contact Centre (CC) currently operates from 8am to 8pm Mon to Fri

The proposal to change would result in the following new operating hours:

- The One Stop Shop would open from 9am to 5pm Mon to Fri.
- The Contact Centre would operate from 9am to 5pm Mon to Fri.

This change would reduce the operating costs within Customer Services and potentially within Facilities Management (including Security and Cleaning).

Since 2007, opening hours for the service have changed; previously, late opening on a Thursday until 8pm in the OSS and Saturday mornings for both the OSS and CC was trialled. After analysis of customers over three years; the low take-up during these extended hours alongside financial pressures, forced a decision to reduce opening times to their current operational hours.

This proposed change has taken this into account and has closely analysed current patterns of customer interaction. It has also taken a forward look at the growing demand for on-line services for transactional based activity and the demand for richer, more meaningful interaction when needs are greater or more complex. All of this needs to be achieved against a backdrop of an ever decreasing financial situation and an imperative to run this service at a lower cost to operate.

Stronger Together is the Councils response to the challenges it faces in balancing demand, expectation and the financial situation. A key element of this is to get much closer to the community so that it enables and facilitates a new relationship. A relationship based on empowering the community to take ownership and control over lives and options.

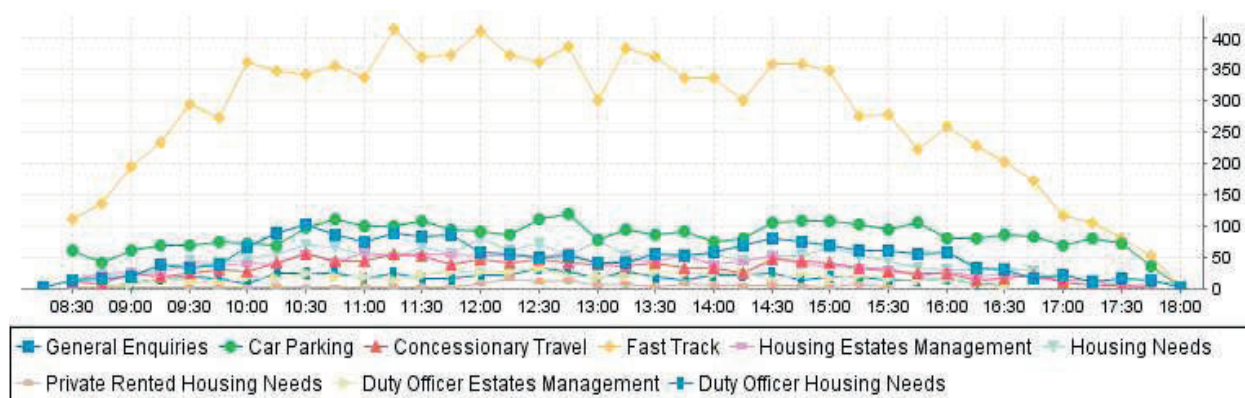
Any future service needs to respond to all these drivers; embracing technology wherever possible, but retaining a close link with the customers it supports.

3 Considerations

We have taken into account the following when forming this proposal:

Need to reduce costs – as with every other service area in the business there is a need to look for opportunities to provide the most efficient and effective service possible and at the same time reduce operating costs.

Usage numbers – using contact data from the Q-Matic contact log system in the One Stop Shop, analysis of customer usage patterns has been undertaken. Whilst there are customers who currently access the service during 8.30 – 9am and 5 – 6pm; volumes are significantly lower than during the remaining opening hours



Graph to show customer contact type in the One Stop Shop over a three month period – Jul – Sep 2012

The Contact Centre uses the Avaya system to capture contact information; the figures below are the call volumes during October 2012:

SUMMARY	Call Volumes
08:00 Total	174
08:15 Total	195
08:30 Total	371
08:45 Total	499
Grand Total	1239

SUMMARY	Call Volumes
17.00 – 18.00	650
18.00 – 19.00	112
19.00 – 20.00	22
Grand Total	784

Working patterns of customers – although the service does not have an in-depth profile of its customers, the data is telling us that the main customer contact occurs between 9am and 5pm. Most of this contact relates to dropping off documents or calling to report a fault or problem. There may be an impact on some customers who call or visit between 8.30 – 9am and 5 - 6pm, however, there is a letterbox on the external wall of Wat Tyler House; and the Control Room will still be available to take emergency calls for a range of services, such as Housing Repairs

Staff implications – the proposal has stated there will be staff implications both in the One Stop Shop and Contact Centre, these equate to 11.2 fte. A profile of the affected staff has been created and it is recognised that the greatest impact will be on female staff. (See Appendix 1 for staff make-up)

Complaints/feedback – 56 Customer Services related complaints have been received since 1st April 2012. This accounts for 4.46%% of the 1255 recorded Service Delivery complaints since April. None of these complaints were in respect of opening times and access to Customer Services. There is no equality data associated with these complaints.

Consultation – to date the proposal has been presented to the Lead member, all Tier 1 and Tier 2 Officers within the organisation with a request to assess the implications and provide feedback. To date 10 responses have been received; all in support of the proposal. Housing Services have requested that if the proposal progresses, there is engagement with Tenants groups prior to the change.

Impact of previous changes We have reviewed the impact of two previous key changes; opening hours and the closure of the cash desk, to ensure we have taken any learning from these. Although there is no specific equality data available, there is no evidence that there has been an adverse impact on any group or individual. The Closure of Cash Desk in April 2012 did have the potential to have an adverse impact on customers. To date evidence suggests the impact has

been minimal, arrears have not increased and we have successfully redirected 7000 visits to other methods and locations for making payments. Only 2 complaints have been received via the Corporate Customer Comments process.

Benefits

- The main benefit of this proposal is the financial saving of circa £197k. This is based on staff savings in the One Stop Shop and Contact Centre. There may be other savings opportunities through reduced security presence; and reduced ICT – these figures are yet to be quantified.
- There is no benefit to customers, however, the commitment to drive forward opportunities to provide more services on-line, will ultimately increase choice and accessibility for some customers.
- There is likely to be an increase in wait times during peak times. This may have an adverse effect on customers. To mitigate this, we will be exploring opportunities to extend the appointment systems to more services, so customers have allocated slots for their visits

Assumptions

- Although the amount of Equality & Diversity data for these services is almost non-existent, there is generic data to inform decision making. Using the data and staff experience, the following assumptions have been made:
 - We believe no single customer group will be impacted greater than any other as a result of this change
 - Customers will be impacted but the data tells us that reducing daily opening hours will have less impact than a full day closure of the service
 - Customers will be impacted by extended wait times in the One Stop Shop and Customer Services; these will be kept to a minimum, but will peak at times of high demand
 - Customer contact in the One Stop Shop has fallen due to the closure of the Cash desk; this is expected to continue for these services
 - The impact of the changes in Welfare Benefits needs to be well managed; there could be an increase in footfall once the new arrangements are in place. This will be closely monitored and plans will be put in place to manage any large increase in demand.
 - We have the ability to reduce customer demand by transitioning many of the transactional services on to on-line service channels
 - Staff will be impacted however; the Partner will do its utmost to find alternative employment for those staff who wish to remain. Forced redundancies will be a last option

4 Public Sector Equality Duty

The proposal will enable the council to deliver on all of its equality duties – most notably the need to advance equality of opportunity, which includes providing accessible and available services and information and targeting our services where there is greatest level of need.

5 Who are using these services and who are they for?

What is current usage by each equality group where we know it?

The data captured within the Customer Services function does not give a breakdown of usage by equality group. Since the proposal was drafted, age analysis has been conducted between 8.30 - 9 am and 5 – 6pm. **A summary of this is at Appendix 2**

There are gaps in our knowledge in respect of all other characteristics, eg gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and disability.

The only additional data available is that collected via the customer satisfaction survey, which does capture more profile information, however, the sample size is too small to give a fair and robust representation.

6 What will be included in the revised services and how have we understood the equality impact of this change?

The content of the service provided will remain the same; but the opening hours will be reduced by 1.5hrs per day. The key performance indicators for wait times in the One Stop Shop and Contact Centre will be extended

From 80% of customers seen in 15 minutes and 80% of calls answered in 20 seconds

To 80% of customers seen in 30 minutes and 80% of calls answered in 60 seconds

From an equality perspective, we have considered each characteristic alongside the limited data available and the staff experience and have concluded that no single group of customers will be impacted by the change.

There is an impact on staff; the make-up of staff is predominantly female; with an average age of 47 years in the One Stop Shop and 34 years in the contact centre. There are staff who have identified themselves as having a disability; however the recruitment process will ensure these members of staff have access to a fair process alongside all other colleagues.

6.1 One Stop Shop reduction in opening hours from 8.30am-6pm to 9am-5pm

Impact of the proposal for One Stop Shop reduction in opening hours.

The revised service will provide the same types of services as currently offered albeit during a reduced opening period. This will place a greater demand at peak times therefore the Key performance indicators have been adjusted to recognise this

We believe the proposal creates a **neutral** impact on the basis of all equality groups.

We recognise that some people, especially those with full time jobs may find this inconvenient; however we believe that the increasing availability of contact with the Council through other means (web based) provides a sufficient method to meet this concern.

Data about use of the current service does not enable us to undertake a full equality analysis. A better understanding will be developed through ongoing Customer monitoring and satisfaction surveys.

6.2 Customer Contact Centre reduction in opening hours from 8.00am-6pm to 9am-5pm

Impact of the proposal for Customer Contact Centre reduction in opening hours.

The revised service will provide the same types of services as currently offered albeit during a reduced opening period. This will place a greater demand at peak times therefore the Key performance indicators have been adjusted to recognise this

We believe the proposal creates a **neutral** impact on the basis of all equality groups.

We recognise that some people, especially those with full time jobs may find this inconvenient; however we believe that the increasing availability of contact with the Council through other means (web based) provides a sufficient method to meet this concern.

Data about use of the current service does not enable us to undertake a full equality analysis. A better understanding will be developed through ongoing Customer monitoring and satisfaction surveys.

7 Consultation

To date consultation has been limited to an internal audience for which Customer Services provides the first line of customer contact. The audience has comprised of the Lead Member for Customer Services; the Chief Executive; Board Directors and Heads of Service.

There has been a reliance on this audience to feedback based on their understanding of their customer base and to consider all the impacts this will have on their services and customers. To date 10 responses have been received, all in support of this change. The Housing and Benefits Services have both expressed the need to engage with customers early on in the change process to ensure the changes are well communicated and understood. The commitment is this will happen once there has been Cabinet approval to proceed with this change.

8 What next?

The next step is to gain Member approval to proceed with this proposal. The intention is for this to be presented to Cabinet on 12th December 2012. Affected staff will be notified prior to the cabinet papers being published on 4th December

To assess the impact of the change, the Client and Customer Services need to design and agree a pragmatic approach to capturing equality data and analysing the customer groups using the service.

Timescale/Review

It is expected that the proposed changes will be implemented in April 2013

The impact of the change will be monitored closely. The service has a robust method of data capture for contact volumes and to measure the service standards. Daily monitoring of this will quickly highlight any adverse impact on ALL customers.

How will we know its done?

The change is very specific and immediately recognisable – the service will available for a reduced amount of time.

There is work to do to capture effective equality information; until we can define a pragmatic way of doing this; it is difficult to commit to a timescale of when this will be available for analysis and future decision making. The importance of having this is recognised and the commitment is there to find a way to achieve this

Diversity Impact Assessment completed by:

Karen McMahon, Nichola Williams-Dyton, Nick Stephenson

November 2012

Appendix 1

Impacted Staff – Profile

Contact centre	One stop Shop
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<table><tr><th colspan="2">Age Range</th></tr><tr><td>Age Range</td><td>20-57</td></tr><tr><td>Average Age</td><td>34</td></tr><tr><td>Median Age</td><td>31</td></tr></table>	Age Range		Age Range	20-57	Average Age	34	Median Age	31		<table><tr><th colspan="2">OSS Age Range</th></tr><tr><td>Age Range</td><td>21-62</td></tr><tr><td>Average Age</td><td>47</td></tr><tr><td>Median Age</td><td>49</td></tr></table>	OSS Age Range		Age Range	21-62	Average Age	47	Median Age	49										
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Swindon Borough Council Diversity Impact Analysis

Community Grants reduction proposals

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality duties

What is the proposal? What outcomes/benefits are you hoping to achieve?

To reduce the community grants budget by 50% from £150,000 to £75,000

Who's it for?

Community grants support small local groups to come together and network/hold events/fund-raise and do small projects in their area. Small grants encourage volunteering, further fundraising, building skills and cohesion within the community.

How will this proposal meet the equality duties?

The proposal will not meet our equality duties. The purpose of community grants is to support and build capacity within our varied and diverse communities, to enable them to help us deliver the stronger together objectives. The grants are part of our response to the Localism agenda, helping communities to do more for themselves, build strong networks and relationships, provide support and services for each other which will eventually help public services in Swindon deliver their strategic outcomes. Community Grants forms part of the delegated decision making pilot allocated to locality Ward Members which has only just started. This pilot was intended to increase engagement with local residents and groups and enable local Members to build up their networks and links into the community. This new approach to community grants has involved more promotion in local areas, more conversations with diverse groups of local people who have ideas which could contribute to our stronger together objectives but need some initial pump-priming funding to take the first steps towards developing a project.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

At the moment we fully meet our equalities duties, changes to this process will mean that there will be a significant decrease in the way we meet these duties in respect of fostering good relations, and promoting equality of opportunity.

As this is a new scheme in its first year we are very aware that there has not been take up to the total level, though in each round of grants more interest and take up has been received. In some localities where there are more established communities and a culture of forming networks to resolve local difficulties and enhance opportunities for local people to participate, grants have been oversubscribed. This is not unexpected and indicates that communication and a developed culture of participation is required – the localities team is working with local councillors to support this development

2 Who's using it?

Refer to equality groups

What data/evidence do you have about who is or could be affected (e.g. equality monitoring, customer feedback, national/regional/local trends)?

The groups that have been supported as part of the pilot include sporting groups, a wide range of black and minority ethnic groups, Cultural and Language groups which support participation and engagement with the wider culture, Lunch clubs which help with isolation and nutrition for older people, young lesbian and gay people, young people, women (particularly from minority faith and ethnic groups), groups of and for disabled people and other groups which we find it hard to reach and support in other ways. These groups have been spread across the authority geographical area, though groups from some locality areas have submitted fewer applications. The significant nature of grant applications have been around benefit to local communities – particularly those that are experiencing significant difficulty as a consequence of the current financial climate and

employment changes in Swindon. Hardship.

Working with these groups is putting our council vision and statutory equality duties into practice, encouraging dialogue, and building relationships. There is national evidence that these small grass-roots groups struggle, particularly in their early development and small amounts of funding enable them to play a role in their local community. The investment in these groups brings a social return.

Who are your customers? How can you involve them in developing the proposal?

The community grants pilot has sought to widen the impact of grants by promoting them to groups who have not previously applied and to help them develop and expand their networks which could ultimately help with our stronger together objectives around adult demand and other key priorities.

There has been no consultation on this proposal which is being considered purely as a financial saving and a consequence of the expected mid year 1 spend.

Who is missing? Do you need to fill any gaps in your data? (pause DIA if necessary)

The pilot proposed a more robust monitoring process to ensure that the grants are spent in the best way and benefit the most people and to build community capacity. However at this early stage (the pilot has only been running for 7 months) we are unable to assess any long-term benefits

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality and equality groups
Show consideration of: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation
and if appropriate: financial economic status, homelessness, political view

Using the information in parts 1 & 2 does the proposal:

- a) Create an adverse impact which may affect some groups or individuals. Is it clear what this is? How can it be reduced?

This proposal will have an adverse impact and significantly reduce the funding for local community networks and in particular the following areas of 'hard to reach' groups which have been included in grants over the last year: Older people, young people, people experiencing mental ill health (including isolation, depression, stress) physically disabled people, young LGBT people, black and minority ethnic, faith and women's networks and groups..

If the budget is reduced to £75,000 from 2013/14 this will reduce the effectiveness of devolved decision making on community grants in localities. The grants budget is already top-sliced to support the important work of local lunch clubs and to support town-wide applications; the locality funds would then be reduced to a level too low for local decisions to be meaningful.

-
- b) Create benefit for a particular group. Is it clear what this is? Can you maximise the benefits for other groups?

The proposal creates a significantly reduced benefit for the equality groups in section a) by reducing the amount of pump-priming funds available.

What can be done to change this impact?

There appear to be two alternative options which may mitigate some of the adverse impact indicated above yet still create a significant saving within the community grant budget:

- a) Pay 2012/13 round 4 grant applications which are approved by locality ward Members

which amounts to around £40,000 and return the excess to the central budget as an in year saving and maintain budget for 2013/14 at £150,000

- b) Pay 2012/13 round 4 grant applications which are approved by locality ward Members which amounts to around £40,000 and return the excess to the central budget and then reduce 2013/14 to £100,000. This will still allow for devolved decision making in localities and we could reduce the maximum grant amounts to £750 (Grassroots Grants) and £250 (admin grants) and adjust criteria to reflect this. We will of course continue to review the programme in time for the 2014/15 budget discussions.

Does further consultation need to be done? How will assumptions made in this Analysis be tested?

No consultation has taken place on this proposal.

4 So what?

[Link to business planning process](#)

What changes have you made in the course of this DIA?

Proposals have been made as above. These will be discussed with the localities portfolio holder and discussed at cabinet. Following the decision about a way forward the DIA will be revised in order to be presented alongside the budget decision at Council.

What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

When will this be reviewed?

How will success be measured?

For the record	
Name of person leading this DIA Pam Gough	Date completed
Names of people involved in consideration of impact Alison Chamberlain, Nick Stephenson	
Name of director signing DIA	Date signed

[INSERT process diagram]

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality groups

What is it there for?

The Raising Participation Age (RPA) Strategy is designed to ensure that all young people in Swindon are able to participate in learning up to their 19th birthday and thereafter continue to access appropriate training, education, employment and development opportunities to enable them to achieve and progress as they make the important transition to adulthood. The intention is that young people will be able to participate in learning in a way that suits them, for instance in full time education at school or college, through an apprenticeship or part time learning if they are also working volunteering full time.

What is the proposed change?

The strategy builds on but replaces the NEET reduction Strategy.

The plans set out in the strategy are designed to ensure Swindon can meet the changes in legislation which outlines that young people will be required to remain in learning until 17 by 2013 and until 18 by 2015.

Jan 2013 Update

- There is a proposed reduction of £66,000 to the 'Routes to Employment' commissioning budget (financial year 2013/2014).
- The reduction will focus on the following areas;
 - £10k reduction in Project Management to develop the University Technical College
 - £10k reduction in budget allocation to support 'Waggle B', an online and smart phone facility to promote positive activities for young people
 - £46K reduction in the budget for interventions to support RPA
- For the past 4 years we have received additional money from the DfE to a sum of £75,000 per year to test new approaches to increasing participation in learning of 16 and 17 year olds as preparation for the new RPA legislation to commence in 2013. From April 2014 there it is unlikely that there will be further funds available from the DfE for this work.
- It is estimated that for the financial year 2013/14 the commissioning budget for "*intervention projects to support young people not in learning and at risk of becoming NEET*" will be £147,000
- In addition we have an SBC resource of Integrated Youth Support Teams that can carry out some or much of this work and can be commissioned to work differently, taking on board all the learning from the trial projects over the past 4 years. These teams are however being reduced due to budget constraints.
- It is also worth noting that much of the resource to address RPA lies with partners including schools, colleges, Job Centre Plus, Voluntary Sector. There is also a new national contract, the Youth Contract to support 16/17 year olds

What potential is there to meet the equality duties?

The strategy has the potential to ensure that all young people have the opportunity to access appropriate provision and support to meet their needs and career aspirations and give them access to a broad and balanced curriculum of learning. There is a focus on bringing partners together to meet the needs of the most vulnerable young people who have barriers and issues which prevent them from engaging in learning after year 11.

The statement above remains true. However to date we have supported some of the key partners

in the strategy with additional funding to allow them to focus more resource of the most vulnerable young people. These include, schools, colleges, training providers, youth workers and youth charities. Details of the funding amounts and the risk if this is reduced are set out in section 3.

What equality benefits does it create?

Longevity: through promoting life chances and skills for employability leading to economic success.

Health: Participating in education, employment and training contributes to young people's physical and mental wellbeing.

Education: The strategy focuses on being able to acquire skills and qualifications and having access to training and lifelong learning.

Standard of Living: The strategy aims to enable young people to compete for jobs, to make a successful transition to adulthood and to live independently.

Productive and valued activities: The strategy aim is to enable young people to achieve their potential and to compete for jobs.

Participation, influence and voice: The strategy highlights the importance of young people influencing the approaches and actions to achieve full participation and

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

The Raising Participation Strategy Group has identified a number of changes that need to be made in order to work towards full participation. Some of the potential barriers to achieving these are identified below:

- Identifying the needs of young people and barriers to learning where there is little data
- Ensuring there is provision in place for the most vulnerable including work based options
- Effective preparation for post 16 learning in terms of making choices and preparing for a more adult environment
- Identifying young people who are at risk of not participating and putting in place effective interventions so that fewer young people drop out.

Projects commissioned in 2012/13 have enabled the raising Participation Strategy Group to address some of the barriers above. Details of the positive impact of this work are set out in section 3.

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?

The Strategy is specifically designed to benefit young people aged 16 to 19 (year 12, 13 and 14 school cohort age) to ensure that there is appropriate support and provision available for them to participate in learning.

The majority of 16 to 18 year olds already participate in learning and therefore, within the Strategy there is a focus on supporting and creating opportunities for the small cohort of young people (15% of Swindon's 16 to 18 year old residents) that are currently not participating in learning and are NEET (not in education employment or training and 14 to 16 year olds that have been identified as 'at risk' of not participating in education, employment or training after year 11. Evidence listed below shows how certain equality groups are over represented here.

An external benefit will be on Swindon's economy. The Strategy aims to create more opportunities for young Swindon resident in Swindon to enter the labour market in with the appropriate training, skills and abilities they need to become valuable assets to local employers and businesses.

What do you know about them (evidence)?

Detailed Statistical analysis was undertaken on young people in Swindon aged 16 to 19 that covered participation, attainment, retention and progression in learning.

The analysis uses a whole range of data sources each of which have different strengths and weaknesses but together have built a robust picture of participation in the Borough. This has been used to provide the systematic evidence needed for the Strategic Action Plan.

Key findings that have informed the Strategy are set out below.

- Official Data from the Department for Education shows that 87% of 16 to 18 year olds in Swindon were engaged in learning in 2008. This figure has not changed much over the past few years and reflects the current situation.

The 16 to 18 Cohort

Data obtained by Swindon's Information & Performance team shows that overall there are an estimated 4,920 young people in Swindon aged 16 to 18. Key characteristics of the cohort are:

- 52% are Male
- 48% are Female
- 7% have a disability
- As many as 4 out of 10 young people in Swindon have identified support needs the most common of which is 'low attainment' that affects 500 young people.

Attainment Data in Swindon shows

- Males, deprived pupils, those with special educational needs and mobile pupils all progress at lower rates than their peers from Key Stage 2 to 4.
- Females and those with English as an additional language progress at a higher rate than their peers from Key Stage 2 to 4.
- White boys on Free School Meals (FSM) make the least progress of any combination of ethnicity, gender and deprivation. Unlike the White group, Black pupils do not have a large difference between the attainment of FSM and non-FSM pupils.

Transition to post 16 Learning - (*Annual activity survey 2010 data*)

- Overall 94.5% of year 11 leavers remained in learning
- 96% of girls
- 93% of boys
- 90% of young people with learning difficulties / disabilities & 95% of young people without

16 to 18 year olds not participating in learning – (*CCIS Data December 2011*)

- 3.7% (355) 16-18 year olds are in jobs without training in Swindon
- On average in Swindon there are consistently between 300 -500 16 to 18 year olds identified as NEET at any one time.

NEET –(Not in Education, Employment or Training)

Around 5% of 16 to 18 year olds in Swindon are currently NEET. CCIS data shows that certain vulnerable groups of young people are over represented in the 16 to 18 NEET cohort. These are:

- 9.7% of young people with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities are NEET
- 11.1% of Looked After Children are NEET & 20.8% of Care Leavers are NEET
- 16.3% of young carers are NEET
- More than half of the teenage parents in the borough are NEET
- 15% of the NEET group were on FSM

Risk of NEET data

A set of common characteristics have been produced which predict certain groups of young people that are likely to become NEET. The indicators show that young people on FSM, those not statemented but have learning difficulties or special educational needs, and children in need are most likely to become NEET.

Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?

Current data does not enable us to compare learning outcomes for the following equality groups:

- By Religious Group
- By Sexual Orientation
- Transgender individuals

Information about the specific needs and barriers presented by these groups to enable them to access learning opportunities are currently not known as they have not been identified via our data analysis. These groups may need specific support or have other barriers to progression in learning that may not have been considered within the strategy.

Some information on the issues faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups is included in the Equality and Human Rights Commission publication, How Fair is Britain (2010). It suggests that there is little data available but that there are signs that these groups are being penalised by unfair treatment and bullying in the education system, at school and beyond. Students who are bullied at school are less likely to stay in full time education after 16.

Other groups where we have limited data are:

- Young people with learning difficulties and disabilities age 19-25

Do you know why?

The current data that is collected for reporting and analysis regarding participating in learning does not require these groups to be identified specifically.

Our work with voluntary sector and community based organisations and groups that may support young people from these groups is currently being developed. The Strategic action plan sets out plans to develop this work further

Work will need to be undertaken with integrated Locality Teams and Locality Leads to identify specific support needed to access learning for these groups as well as specific types of provision.

The Strategy has been developed to focus on a specific age group cohort and this has been dictated by the new legislation and the duty that accompanies it for local authorities to provide access to opportunities for young people in that specific age range. Therefore 16, 17 and 18 year olds will get the most benefit from the Strategy. Adults over 25 and young children are not included in the Strategy.

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality

How will these services be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)

All the dimensions of equality will contribute to a clearly focused vision and rationale to support young people to remain in learning in Swindon. At the centre of the ethos and throughout the organisation there will be a commitment to skills development, participation, and promotion of lifelong learning in order to promote employability. The key findings and dimensions of the Wolf Report, in terms of equipping young people with adequate qualifications for progression to employment are central to the ethos and aims of the Strategy.

Impact of budget reductions

- Project Management to develop the University Technical College. SBC has committed supporting the project management until September 2013. After this period, the sponsors will take on this responsibility. There will be no impact on the project.
- Development of Waggle B. Development funding has been used for the last 2 years and we anticipate that the £10K allocated for maintenance of the facility will be sufficient to ensure a produce is in place which effectively promotes positive activities.
- Intervention projects. Even though there are budget reductions scheduled, the work we have done to test new approaches and enhance the capacity of partners for the most part will mean that they are better equipped informed and prepared to focus resources on the key vulnerable groups and those identified at risk of not participating in learning. Focussing on these young people should ensure improved equality of opportunity for anyone at risk of social exclusion.

Details of how partners have supported the trials work to adapt their approaches are set out below:

1. Through the work on Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI), Schools have improved their early identification of the most vulnerable young people and their understanding of barriers to learning which has enabled them to improve their transition support to better meet the needs of those at risk. The September Guarantee data (98% of young people leaving year 11 had a learning offer) and the annual activity survey data (95% of year 11 school leavers entered a new learning destination in the autumn term) provide evidence of this improvement. (trials funding of £32,000 has enabled schools to set up new systems and processes that are self-sustaining)
2. We have commissioned a range of new provision over the last year and the impact of this on the NEET cohort is yet to be established. Further provision development is planned and needed to ensure there is an offer that meets the needs of all NEET.
3. Schools and colleges have been funded and supported to build their Information, Advice and Guidance offer.
4. Colleges have robust and tested systems in place to identify learners at risk of dropping out and align appropriate support. Some of this support has been funded through the commissioning budget but this has been identified as a priority focus for 2013/14. Retention rates of learners at the two main FE colleges have improved.

Data sharing has also improved and has enabled colleges to identify young people at risk of dropping out at an earlier stage.

Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?

Within the Strategy there are plans for more collaborative working and better data sharing to identify the most at risk groups and to use this to commission provision to best meet their needs.

- Improved data sharing to ensure *all* young people not participating in learning or who have specific barriers to learning have the offer of support in place.
- RONI method of early identification and using this data to align services to target the most vulnerable
- Using social media and smart phones to track young people is being explored.

Is there anything about the way you deliver your service which may stop people getting involved? (negative impact)

Services will need to be aligned and resourced differently from 2013/14. The following changes could have a negative impact on some of the equality groups:

- Colleges – funding was provided to the 2 main FE colleges over the last 2 years to enhance their available resources deployed to support young people at risk of dropping out of college and keep more of them engaged in learning them engaged in learning. Many of these young people are from disadvantaged groups and need the extra support to help them

participate and compete in the local economy.

This sum will be reduced but we will ensure that colleges continue to work with us to deploy appropriate resources to support these young people. Evidence has been obtained from the RPA trial projects and as a result effective early identification systems have been put in place with sustainable resources. These include:

- Improved data sharing systems
 - Post 16 RONI
 - Development of new short courses for early leavers and qualifications to allow more young people to progress or remain in learning
 - Enhanced student support and IAG for the most vulnerable
- Schools – funding was provided to schools over the last 2 years that enabled them to prepare for their new responsibilities around RPA. We have worked with schools to create an infrastructure with better systems and processes for early identification targeted supported and careers guidance. This has enabled them to significantly improve systems and processes to support transitions at year 11. No further funding will be available to schools in 2013/14
- Other intervention projects were funded to test out new approaches to support the NEET group into learning. The learning from this work will be used by us to help providers and charities work differently within their own funding constraints (including using EFA weekly aims funding) to enhance the offer for NEET young people in Swindon. Several projects including volunteering provision and some flexible work based learning provision will continue to have an impact thought 2013/14 but others may not be able to continue.
- The Learning Gateway – Intervention project for young people dropping out of college. This project will be set as a high priority for further funding as without it there is no resource available to support young people that have chosen to leave their post 16 learning placement.

Is that reasonable? How can it be justified? How can it be resolved?

Colleges

- Reasonable expectations will be placed on colleges to self-sustain the additional support for those at risk of leaving.
- Some additional funding may be available to colleges but we will expect them to continue to provide an appropriate level of resource to this work

Schools

- Although further funding will not be available to schools in the coming year we will continue to support them with staff resources and RONI toolkits. The impact of withdrawing the funding should be minimal as the approaches tested can now be embedded into mainstream work. Schools are aware that they will be measured on the destinations outcomes of their students from 2013 onwards and will therefore need to keep this work going.
- We are currently reviewing the impact of other commissioned projects and are reviewing our commissioning plan to focus on the areas of high risk and continuing projects that have the greatest impact

Other nationally funded projects such as the Youth Contract and ESF projects available in Swindon will add capacity to provide targeted support to help the most vulnerable groups access support and learning opportunities.

- A key action for the local authority will be to ensure that, through our data analysis and tracking activity, we identify all disadvantaged groups and ensure that they are all matched to the most appropriate support service.
- A second action will be to streamline our internal targeted youth support services to enable

a stronger focus on supporting the most vulnerable to access learning and more efficient referral systems to other available intervention projects.

The Learning Gateway project

- Intervention and support for this client group will be a priority for the 2013/14 commissioning budget.

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

RPA Strategy Group

Young Researchers

4 So what?

Link to business planning process

What changes have you identified?

Ensure specific opportunities are provided to support young people from all the equality groups to access learning provision in Swindon.

What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

Include the changes needed In the action plan.

- Undertake a full risk assessment and update as a working document
- Ensure that 'In Learning, 'Not Known' and 'NEET' data produced is closely monitored every month to enable us to understand and react quickly to positive and negative progress.
- Make better use of nationally funded projects ESF and Youth Contract and work programme to enhance the intervention support we commission
- Prioritise commissioning for 13/14 on those areas of risk and projects that have demonstrated an impact on reducing those not participating in learning and reducing 'not knowns'
- Work with EFA funded providers to enable them to shape grow and change their provision to meet unmet need of vulnerable and equality groups.

When will this be reviewed?

On an annual basis by the Raising Participation Strategy Group

How will success be measured?

Participation in learning of the groups that have been identified.

For the record

Name of person leading this DIA Paddy Bradley, Director of Schools and Learning, Children Services

Names of people involved in consideration of impact

Sally Burnett, Strategy & Development Manager, Integrated Youth Support
Children's Services
Victoria Lukins, Raising Participation Strategy Manager

Date Completed 08 02 12

Name of director signing DIA Paddy Bradley

Date DIA signed

Date approved by corporate group.

1 What's it about?

- What is it there for? What is it set up to deliver? What is the proposed change?
- What potential is there to meet the equality duties?
- What equality benefits does it create?
- What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

2 Who's it for?

- Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?
- What do you know about them (evidence)?
- Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?
- Do you know why?

3 Impact

- How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)
- Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?
- Is there anything about the way you deliver your service which may stop people getting involved? (negative impact)
- Is that reasonable or justified? How can it be resolved?
- What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

4 So what?

- What changes have you identified?
- What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?
- When will this be reviewed?
- How will success be measured?
- Who is signing this off/taking responsibility?

Considerations

Our equality duties

1. Eliminate Discrimination
2. Promote Equal Opportunities
3. Promote Good Relations
4. Prevent Harassment
5. Encourage Participation in Public Life

In the areas of: age, disability, gender (including transgender), race, religion/belief and sexual orientation (socio-economic status).

Dimensions of equality How will the service affect the life chances of different groups? Consider how the service will **impact**

1. **Longevity:** e.g. premature mortality.
2. **Physical security:** e.g. freedom from violence and physical and sexual abuse.
3. **Health:** e.g. well-being and access to high quality healthcare.
4. **Education:** e.g. being able to be creative, to acquire skills and qualifications, and having access to training and life-long learning.
5. **Standard of living:** e.g. being able to live with independence and security; and covering nutrition, clothing, housing, warmth, utilities, social services and transport.
6. **Productive and valued activities:** e.g. access to employment, a positive experience in the workplace, work/life balance, being able to care for others.
7. **Individual, family and social life:** e.g. self-development, having independence and equality in relationships and marriage.
8. **Participation, influence and voice:** e.g. participation in decision-making and democratic life.
9. **Identity, expression and self-respect:** e.g. freedom of belief and religion.
10. **Legal security:** e.g. equality and non-discrimination before the law and equal treatment within the criminal justice system.

For up to date information and advice
contact equality@swindon.gov.uk
or check swindon.gov.uk/dia



FOI3647/10 Sept10.1

Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon

Diversity Impact Assessment for Supported Housing Savings Proposals January 2013

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality groups

What is it there for? What is it meant to deliver?

The Supporting People programme delivers housing related support to over 5000 households in Swindon. People supported through the programme include:

- Domestic violence victims
- High-risk offenders
- Frail elderly people
- Homeless families
- Older people
- People with learning disabilities
- People with physical disabilities
- People with sensory impairments and head injuries
- People with severe and enduring mental health problems
- Rough sleepers
- People with substance misuse problems
- Teenage parents
- Young people at risk & care-leavers

The Supporting People programme is delivered in partnership with 3rd sector agencies and aims to maintain or enable independent living. In so doing the Supporting People Programme reduces costs in other higher cost services particularly by providing low threshold early intervention support, and as an alternative to residential care.

The programme aims to promote independence and positive outcomes for service recipients, so promoting equality is a fundamental objective of the programme. The programme cuts across many of the equality groups, so any decision to remove services will negatively impact groups of people encompassed by the equality legislation.

The proposals are to reduce the commitment to contracts in order to assist the Council in balancing its overall budget.

Recommendations are to:

- Issue notice to Bridge Services
- Reduce funding for Bromford Teenage Parents
- Re-design Learning Disability Support Services
- Re-design Mental Health Support Services
- Consult on different models of support for older people
- Issue notice to Knightstone Tenancy Sustainment, no re-tender
- Cease Rethink contract, no re-tender
- Reduce funding available to assist households moving out of supported housing

What potential is there to help meet the equality duties?

The housing support function carried out under the banner of Supporting People is not a statutory function. However, the expenditure is designed to save money within statutory services.

Bridge Services

This is accommodation for 8 high-risk offenders. Offenders are not a prescribed group in terms of the equalities legislation. The profile of residents' ethnicity varies considerably due to the low population sample, with a total of 25-30 residents in any given year. The percentage of residents identifying themselves as BME was as follows:

2010/11	16.2%
2009/10	0.0%
2008/9	5.0%

The long-run average number of residents from BME backgrounds is therefore about 7%, which is not largely different from the expected demographic for Swindon contained within the ONS data release 2009.

The intention is to withdraw funding, but work with the Wiltshire Probation Trust to identify alternative accommodation options.

Teenage Parent Accommodation

Bromford Support provides accommodation for Teenage Parents in 2 accommodation schemes. The recommendation is to reduce funding by £30,000. This is because there is alternative support available from Children Centres.

Tenancy Sustainment

Knightstone Housing Association provides floating support for vulnerable households. They have issued us with notice to switch the contract to an alternative provider, which we have refused so they will be terminating the contract.

Rethink

Rethink have advised us that they would like to move to a more residential model. Since we cannot support that they have issued us with notice and we will not re-tender the service.

Demand Enquiry

Learning Disability Services consists of 2 accommodation-based schemes, a floating support service and Shared Lives (a form of foster care for vulnerable adults). The aim is to work with Vulnerable Adult Commissioners in order to deliver a more effective service. The alternative is to close a scheme with no alternative provision being put in place. There is evidence that the services currently offered do not offer the best value for money due to an overlap between historic funding by Adult Social Care and Supporting People, as well as the use of a high-cost provider.

Mental Health Services consists of short and long-term accommodation based schemes, and a number of floating support services. Like Learning Disabilities they need to be re-designed in order to offer the best value for money. The alternative to this option is to close some of the longer-term schemes with no alternative provision being offered in its place.

Older People's Support takes up a large part of the Supporting People budget, accounting for £760,000 of the overall budget of £4.0m. Providing Sheltered Accommodation, Extra-Care Accommodation, and floating support in the shape of a Handyman Service and Hospital Discharge Scheme. Since it is the largest cost area it is appropriate that we ensure that we are getting value for money from the services.

Funding available to assist households moving out of supported housing

We have a small amount of money in a Credit Union which assists households to access privately rented accommodation. This was established in line with recommendations from a value for money review of Supported Housing. A local charity Threshold Housing Link was recently awarded £40,000 to do this work so we have an opportunity to withdraw the funds for a one-off saving of £20,000.

What equality benefits does it create?

There are no easy options when reducing expenditure in this area, because recipients receive the support because they are vulnerable. The advantage of the proposals set against the alternatives is that they offer the greatest benefit to the greatest number of vulnerable people.

Reducing funding for Bridge Services protects funding for prescribed groups within the equalities legislation.

Re-designing services for Learning Disabilities and Mental Health Services allows us to reduce costs by improving efficiency rather than simply closing schemes.

Stopping funding Tenancy Sustainment allows us to protect funding for higher need people with mental health problems.

Stopping funding Rethink protects the funding for services committed to promoting the independence of their clients.

A Sheltered Housing Consultation allows us to understand what service users actually want, and helps us to hear everyone rather than just those who more vocal.

Reducing funding for Teenage Parents means that other services are protected, while alternative provision is available.

Stopping funding for households moving out of supported housing minimises the impact on other service areas, where other alternatives are available.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

- There is a significant resource need to redesign services in line with the Demand Enquiries and Corporate objectives.
- Short-term savings targets can put pressure on achieving this in a planned way.

Who is expected to benefit? What do we know about them?

The majority of service users whose services are protected will benefit. All of the services provide data on the ethnicity of households and individuals supported, services are also required to have their own equality policies in place. Some of the samples are too small to avoid substantial variations in the breakdown, but at a programme level the demographic breakdown is broadly in line with that expected from the Swindon population.

Who is missing or may find it difficult to benefit?

It has always been the position that the provision of support via accommodation gives rise to weakness in this area.

Do we know why?

Some people are excluded from accommodation schemes, and some people exclude themselves. Partially because accommodation is for single people, not families, also because some people avoid going to accommodation schemes due to a fear of being targeted.

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality

How will these services be delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)

Services will carry on being delivered as they have been. Where services are re-designed a DIA will be carried out on those changes.

Is there any innovative thinking, working, technology or equipment that could improve delivery?

- The new organisation structure has made it easier to bring together the provision for Mental Health and Learning Disability Services because they are one budget and answer to a single manager. The intention is to redesign Mental Health and Learning Disability Services in line with best practice.

Is there anything about the way we deliver which may stop people getting involved? (Negative impact)

Overreliance on accommodation based provision as noted above. This would potentially have an adverse impact on groups who are at risk of discrimination on the basis of sexuality, gender, disability, age, and race.

Is that reasonable? Can it be justified? Is it something that can be resolved?

There is a fundamental need for accommodation-based provision to provide the intensive support necessary to support people at risk from social exclusion.

What consultation has taken place?

The recommendations have been discussed at the Supporting People Partnership Board, which is a quorum of Swindon Borough Council, the PCT and the Probation Trust.

4 So what?	Link to business planning process
How can we bring about any necessary change?	
<p>The proposal is to issue notice to Bridge Services and Bromford Support.</p> <p>The other recommendations will necessitate the establishment of project boards for consulting on Older People's support options, redesigning Mental Health and Learning Disability services.</p>	
What can be done now and what will be included in future planning?	
A decision is required in order to start the process.	
When will this be reviewed?	
The projects will be reviewed at key milestones identified in the project planning process.	
How will we measure success?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the quality of support is not adversely impacted in the remaining supported housing services. 	

For the record
Name of person leading this DIA James Graham
Names of people involved in consideration of impact Joy Kennard
Date Completed: 22/1/13
Name of director signing DIA
Date DIA signed
Date approved by corporate group.

Reshaping Demand Enquiry Programme

Diversity Impact Assessment Final updated 22nd January 2013

1 Purpose

We know that our current position of increasing demand and decreasing resources means both the way in which we provide services and the level of service provision is unsustainable. There is a need to transform the service. Our response to this challenge will require a shift in the internal and external culture, from a place “where the Council assumes a greater burden of responsibility, to one where people understand that they can and more importantly should do more for themselves in order to lead lives that fulfil their needs.

We will achieve this by pursuing **three priorities**, which ensure that we focus on prevention; targeted intervention and specialist support for the most vulnerable so that:

- People lead more fulfilling lives by enabling personal choice and independence whilst taking personal responsibility for using their own resources where possible (prevention and personalisation for all)
- We build the capabilities and skills of communities, service users, carers and our workforce so that people are able to live as independently as possible and we make the most out of our shared resources (targeted support/reablement/recovery)
- We ensure we continue to protect the most vulnerable people in Swindon (treatment/specialist support)

The detailed information about the people affected by the Adult demand work programme, is included in the Adult Demand Programme Mandate, which has been published on the Swindon Borough Council Website as part of the papers to Joint Commissioning Board Children and Adult September 2012 agenda pack. Further data is also in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, which is published on NHS Swindon website and will be published on the website for the forthcoming Health & Wellbeing Board.

2 Current provision

2.1 Current spent on services for adults

Spend on Adult Social Care comes from the General Fund Revenue Account. The total spent in 2011/12 was £43.583m. This has risen to £51.083m for 2012/13. It is important to note that this is the new figure that reflects both adults and children’s commissioning in the new stronger together structure that brought together services such as adults and children’s safeguarding, adults and children’s voluntary organisation budgets etc. The equivalent figure for adult social care only is £44.9m which is a rise of £1.3m over 2011/12. The majority of spend is on contract payments, staff and care packages. £8m per annum is spent on our contract with our key strategic partner SEQOL and £38.7m on care packages for individuals. Overall 31% of our Council Tax Bill is spent on Adult Social Care. The actual number of people supported by Adult social care were 5,991 in 2010/11

and 5817 in 2011/12 so there was a slight drop. However although there are fewer people being supported, the actual level of support and services they are receiving has increased by 9%. This is likely due to older people having more complex needs and therefore needing the support of more than one service.

Of the £38.7m that is spent on packages of care £5.7m is spent on mental health, £21.6m on learning disabilities (including previous NHS clients) and £11.4m on older people and people with physical disabilities. Within the spend on learning disabilities £13.3m is spent on providing residential placements.

In addition to Council funding, the PCT contributes towards community health care. In 2011/12 the PCT contributed £17m for mental health, £16m for services for older people and those with physical disabilities and £261k for services supporting people with learning disabilities.

There are a wide range of providers supporting vulnerable adults and children:

- Voluntary , community and third sector organisations of whom 25 organisations are contracted to provide services
- Social Enterprise Quality of Life providing integrated services across health and social care
- Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Trust providing specialist mental health services
- Great Western Hospital providing acute health services
- Swindon Borough Council delivery of services for children ,families, leisure and culture

2.2 Our Population: Getting older, living longer, with more complex conditions

2.2.1 Older People

Whilst our resources are constrained and will constrict further, we also anticipate rising levels in demand for services in Adult Social Care and health due to demographic changes. Over the next three years to 2015, the population of over 65s in Swindon is projected to rise by 14.3% from 28,857 in 2008 to 32,944 in 2015. The number of over 85s is forecast to rise by 21.1% or 816 people. This group tends to have more complex and multiple needs; for example a combination of health conditions such as dementia, stroke and heart disease. By 2015 there are projected to be 4,133 suffering from diabetes, representing a rise of 513 people. The number of people with dementia is expected to rise by 285 per year to 2,289 by 2015. There will be 96 more people each year (total 767 people) with a heart condition following a stroke by 2015. This increase in long term conditions and older age is often reflected in increased emergency hospital admissions and planned admissions for people with long term conditions. In 2011/12 emergency admissions reduced by 10% but in April and May 2012 these have already increased compared to April and May 2011.

With our current model of service delivery this will lead to an increase in need and care packages which over time will be unaffordable.

There is little we can do to affect the population changes. A positive change in health screening or promoting healthy lifestyle could reduce the complexity of conditions which turn would positively affect quality of life and the financial impact.

2.2.2 Learning Disabilities and Mental Health

In terms of other categories such as Learning Disability and Mental Health, we have a less clear picture of anticipated demand over the next few years. In May 2012 we were supporting 377 service users with a learning disability of which 141 are receiving domiciliary care, 76 in supported living, 151 in residential and 9 in nursing care. This represents increase of 36 people compared to March 2011 when 341 service users were supported. Within mental health services we are supporting 92 service users in domiciliary care, 151 in residential, 18 in supported living and 72 nursing making a total of 333 currently in receipt of care. This represents an increase of 3 users of services since March 2011. This data related to the cost of packages of care.

We anticipate that we will have more people with learning disabilities reaching adulthood and older age and we want more people to live locally within communities and find supported employment. This means our current model of service delivery will come under increasing funding pressure in the next few years and needs to be addressed for future sustainability. People with learning disabilities are still not getting the opportunities they need to lead full lives and realise their potential, and within social care there is an over-reliance on traditional services such as day centres and care homes. This has led to a culture of dependency and expectation that these services will automatically be provided to all. There is a lack of person centred long-term planning to help people and their families to think creatively about their solutions and take more control over their lives. Driving the personalisation agenda will only enhance this longer term planning for individuals to take greater control.

2.2.3 People from diverse communities

Swindon has a changing population with increasing numbers from minority ethnic communities and diverse back grounds. Using school based information, we know that over 100 languages are spoken in Swindon and the population of children from diverse backgrounds has been increasing year on year. People who are vulnerable and accessing social;l care services live disproportionately in areas of disadvantage. Areas of disadvantage also have a higher number of people with poor health and higher admission to hospitals. We have limited information about people on the basis of religion, sexual orientation and gender identity. Public health will be undertaking a detailed analysis of data from the forthcoming release of census data and this will include an analysis of the needs of people frm diverse background. The information from this will then be fed into each of the work streams to ensure the needs of people are identified and addressed as part of the work undertaken.

2.3 The Need for Good Health and Well-being

The general health of people in Swindon is good, by national standards, and life expectancy for both men and women has been improving steadily. However, this masks the inequalities in health that exist within our population. In the most deprived areas of Swindon (the 10% most deprived), life expectancy is 8.6 years lower for men and 7.9 years lower for women, than the respective life expectancies for men and women in the 10% least deprived areas. Moreover, the most deprived areas of Swindon have the highest prevalence of chronic conditions (such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer) in the local population, the highest rate of emergency hospital admissions (after allowing for age), and the highest rate of death before 75 years of age.

People in more deprived areas tend to follow less healthy lifestyles than their more affluent peers, for example, being more likely to smoke, to consume more alcohol and to have an unhealthy weight. People living in deprived areas probably need more help in pursuing a healthy way of life and in using health services, but may be less likely to gain access to available support. We will also need to bear in mind the needs of other vulnerable groups. If we do not address these issues, we may be faced with increasing numbers of people who are living longer, but who need more assistance in coping with ill-health and disability, which might have been prevented.

2.4 How we treat people and what they expect

Our current model of service provision and associated culture is based on a traditional model of care with low numbers of personal budgets. For example, Learning Disability provision relies predominantly on day centres and residential placements. Reviews, where they take place, tend to focus on whether an individual is happy in their current provision rather than looking at whether their needs could be met in different ways and also people's capabilities potential, so reinforcing the status quo. It is argued that this traditional model of care contributes to a dependency culture where people expect the Council to provide them with services rather than promoting personal responsibility so that people think about what they and the community can do for themselves and each other. This devalues people and communities' personal strengths and underestimates what they can achieve, reinforcing dependency on a traditional and in the long-term an unaffordable model of provision rather than empowering people to take responsibility for their lives, with appropriate support as necessary

If this issue is not addressed it will combine with the issue of population growth speeding the rate at which our model becomes unaffordable.

The positive impact of dealing with this issue can be a better quality of life through people being independent for longer as well as reaping organisational financial benefits.

2.5 Information quality preventing people from making choices

Currently, people enter the system via multiple pathways which can cause confusion and prevent people accessing services early on before a crisis point is reached. There is no single point of advice and information, the website of Swindon Borough Council needs to be improved and there are multiple service directories which are not widely available. One particular issue is transitions between Children and Adult services which still need to be improved, including improving the expectation management with people and their families. For older people, there is a lack of good information to help people plan for their long-term care needs, particularly in the case of those

who self-fund where their expectations of what costs the Local Authority can meet when their income runs out may not be realistic.

As an authority we have little knowledge of the services/provision that may be available or have any measure of their quality apart from the services provided by voluntary and third sector agencies whom we fund. Information provision can be out of date and is inconsistent throughout our service and that of our partners. It is questionable whether the tone of some information given promotes independence.

If this issue is not addressed we will struggle to shift perception or enable people to make the right choices for themselves or loved ones.

Better information provision will reduce demand on our services and will promote independence. It will also reduce the stress that uncertainty can create.

2.6 Vision for Adult Social Care and Developing the Market

Analysis of the context suggests much of our current provision and processes have developed in a piecemeal fashion rather than in response to a specific vision for Adult Social Care. This can be seen for instance in our relatively under-developed market for provision from alternative providers in the voluntary and community sector. The contracts we currently have are not outcome based or robustly monitored; however there is an opportunity to re-focus these contracts as they are re-commissioned over the next 12 months. There may be opportunities to help VCS organisations to reduce costs and improve efficiency through improved infrastructure and joint working.

2.7 Information Gaps

There are also gaps in our knowledge and provision for specific groups such as those with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder and detailed knowledge about the needs of people with a learning disability. We need to have more information about how to join up with other service areas such as housing, for example the role of housing development in managing population changes.

2.8 Legal Context

The legal context within which Adult Services operates has been described as confused and not fit for purpose, consisting of a patchwork of legislation and guidance from central government. A key message is that whilst it is legally possible to make changes to provision, there are a number of caveats we must be aware of, such as the need to adequately consult and ensure planned changes are assessed on an individual basis

3 Considerations

The consultation exercise to date has identified a number of concerns for us to consider establishing the scope of the Reshaping Demand Enquiry

Overlap of commissioned provision – we can no longer commission services in isolation and we need to make the most of our resources whilst demand for services is increasing and resources are reducing

3.1 Gaps in services

Gaps – the work shops and consultation with the voluntary and community sector identified a number of gaps in services

Service gaps which were identified included:

- Advice and information for people before they become eligible for Council Services (adult care) is necessary as the current provision is fragmented. People don't know how to find out about the services on offer because there is no single point of information and advice about services. Information which is provided can be out of date.
- People are unable to plan for their future in old age because they don't know what support is available and there is little information about financial planning.
- There is currently a culture of dependency that is creating an unrealistic expectation with regards to care. Our workforce across all providers needs to be trained to stimulate a culture of enablement, re-enablement and independence with the right support in place
- The families of young disabled people making the transition from children's to adult services report that they feel they do not have sufficient information or support to plan for their adult life in any meaningful way. This coupled with a lack of preparation for the differences between children and adult services makes long term planning difficult and creates anxiety particularly around employment/finding things to do during the day and independent living.
- Collaboratively develop our key messages with professionals, service users, carers and communities in order to develop and create capacity and capability during the process
- Availability of premises for use on a semi-permanent basis
- Direct Payments/personal budgets processes are too complicated and on-going support is needed. Even when people choose a direct payment, they do not have information about services, so their choice is limited
- The provision of community based support during the day and supported living is not able to cater for all people with mental health, learning disability and older age. This has led to more people with a learning disability being placed in residential care than in other comparable local authority areas.
- Support for people with mental ill health is available through a range of organisations including multiple supported employment schemes. There is no single process for providing assessment and care planning in the voluntary and third sector for people recovering from mental ill health
- Our aging population who will require services will increasingly be made up of people from minority faith groups and out lesbians, gay men, bisexual & transgender people. Their expectation will be of accessing support and services which understand and respond to the specific needs which their culture generates. This may then create different levels of demand and developmental needs for staff providing preventative or ongoing services.
- additional work in the development and implementation of the workstreams should flag areas for further research/understanding/inclusion for diverse groups within our population

How do we know what we don't know?

We gathered substantial quantitative data and used feedback from service users and carers in the work shop to develop our ideas and priorities. There is a need to continue to involve the users of services and those not always in touch with services to identify their needs.

We need to proactively engage with diverse communities to ensure services address their needs.

3.2 Benefits

Benefits for reshaping the demand would include:

- People making their own choices are more likely to achieve their outcomes rather than choosing from a menu of services
- Our starting point needs to be 'what can people do for themselves, what do they need help with and who do they want to receive help from'
- Valuing the contribution that carers make to keeping people independent and living within their own community
- Enabling people to access the services they need when they need them and at the first attempt
- Ensuring that all parts of the community access advice, information and services. Increasing the data we collect so we can be sure that vulnerable people access advice and support earlier
- Issues are resolved and individuals do not return with the same issue and are not 'escalated' to statutory services
- An opportunity to promote education tolerance and understanding is available
- The number of people supported by specialist social work, community health and mental health services has reduced
- People are planning for their care earlier and the number of residential placements made through Crisis Services reduces
- People say that they know how to access advice and information through surveys and the advice is in an appropriate format
- People say, through surveys, that they know what the state is able to provide and how they can help themselves
- The number of people with chronic conditions such as diabetes, dementia or heart disease who need emergency hospital admissions has reduced
- In the long term the life expectancy of people living in areas of disadvantage has increased and the health and social inequalities have reduced through advice and support received

- The number of people with learning/physical disabilities living in their community has increased and residential care has reduced
- The number of people recovering from mental illness and living in their community has increased and residential care has reduced
- Parent of young people with a disability/learning disability say that they have been able to plan a seamless transition to adult services

3.3 Assumptions

- Although some of the current provision has been well scoped, it is likely that the demand Enquiry Programme will mean changes for all service providers in the way services are developed and delivered, so that capabilities and capacity is increased
- Swindon has an increasing number of people from minority ethnic communities and backgrounds. 17% of school age children are from BME backgrounds. Citizens Advice Bureau reports that 42% of its customers and service users are from BME backgrounds. There are over 100 languages spoken in our schools. People who are vulnerable are disproportionately from areas of deprivation. This means that our advice and information needs to be in simple language and staff need to be well trained to provide a service to diverse communities. Given the number of languages spoken, we may need to consider access to services such as a language line to offer a wide range of translation services
- Our population is getting older and has more complex health needs, we need to ensure that advice and information about services takes account of the cultural and diverse needs of our population and targets people to this, for example older lesbian and gay men will need to have their needs assessed within services offered. We also link to health advice such as NHS 111 and NHS information
- As the nature of our population changes, day time support and accommodation needs to be based on the needs of the person and be flexible and adaptable to accommodate changing needs and personal choice
- Commissioning from the VCS will benefit from alignment to council/partnership priorities and the sector has the potential to provide flexible and innovative services
- The voluntary and community sector has much to contribute to the work stream programme based on the close work with service users and a reputation for providing good quality services and being able to address issues facing people in a holistic way
- The involvement of service users is the business of all organisations and needs to be part of all contracts

4 Public Sector Equality Duty

The purpose of this programme will enable the council to deliver on all of its equality duties – most notably the need to advance equality of opportunity, which includes providing services to communities and groups most in need, particularly where their receipt of services is disproportionately low.

5 Who is this Reshaping Demand Enquiry for?

The local authority and the NHS collect a large amount of data on people who are supported through statutory services.

We know the increase in the number of older people and those with a disability who are requesting services. We also know that the increase in older people is likely to mean that those over 85 years of age are likely to suffer from complex and multiple health problems

- The most deprived areas of Swindon have the highest prevalence of chronic conditions (such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer) in the local population, the highest rate of emergency hospital admissions (after allowing for age), and the highest rate of death before 75 years of age
- By 2015 there are projected to be 4,133 (suffering from diabetes, representing a rise of 513 people. The number of people with dementia is expected to rise by 285 per year to 2,289 by 2015. There will be 96 more people each year (total 767 people) with a heart conditions following a stroke by 2015
- Over 100 languages are spoken in schools in Swindon and an increasing number of children are arriving from minority ethnic communities who will have parents and grandparents with increasing needs for health and social care
- Geographical mapping has shown that more older people who are financially supported by the local authority live in areas of deprivation
- An annual survey of service users gives us data about the satisfaction with local services. In most areas Swindon score's within the national average. Those areas where we are below the national average will be considered by each of the proposed work streams.

A report card exercise was undertaken with existing voluntary and third sector providers asking them for key information about their funding, service usage and users. This has provided some useful information which will be used to evidence items in the service specification.

Summary of responses is as follows:

- More women than men are taking up services
- SN1, SN2 & SN3 (where reported) had greatest take up of services
- With a few exceptions, BME, Disability, Sexual Orientation and Religion were not well recorded.

However, the service user monitoring feedback was not consistent and means it will be difficult to establish information which is of use in guiding this DIA. In terms of other categories such as Learning Disability and Mental Health, we have a less clear picture of anticipated demand over the next few years. A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment into people with a Learning disability has been commissioned and is due to report in September 2012 as one of the eight work streams. Further data analysis will need to be undertaken to establish how older people and those accessing mental health services who are from diverse backgrounds have their needs assessed.

6 What will be included in the Reshaping Demand Programme and how have we understood the equality impact?

The proposed strategy falls into three priorities

1. People lead more fulfilling lives by enabling personal choice and independence whilst taking personal responsibility for using their own resources where possible (prevention and personalisation for all)
 - a) Maintain independence and prevent crisis by enabling people to make choices and do things for themselves by having good advice, information and advocacy early to plan for the future and by creating the right environment to promote and enable healthy lifestyle choices. We need to demonstrate that the impact of the information and advice provided improves the health and well-being of people and achieves reduced expenditure for specialist services
2. We build the capabilities and skills of communities, service users, carers and our workforce so that people are able to live as independently as possible and we make the most out of our shared resources (targeted support/reablement/recovery)
 - a) Enable people to be independent by making the most of their skills and capabilities and support those who have lost skills to regain them and adapt to a potentially new situation
 - b) Supporting carers so people are able to live independently
3. We ensure we continue to protect the most vulnerable people in Swindon (treatment/specialist support)
 - a. We will continue to protect the most vulnerable people in Swindon in order to ensure people are valued and lead fulfilling lives. We will work in a way that is fair and equitable and responds to individual needs and gives people choice. We will ensure that evidenced based services provide good value for money

Eight work streams have been developed in order to address the three priorities. One of the work streams is

6.2 Advice and Information

Provide accessible and relevant information, advice and advocacy regarding services and support for adults in order to help people in maintaining independence and preventing crisis. The provision of Information, advice and advocacy is across all services and support and not just Swindon Borough Council. Information and advice from across all groups and sectors will be focussed on promoting a healthy lifestyle, good mental health

and enabling people to make appropriate personal choices for their circumstances and to plan for their future needs including financial planning.

We are proposing to bring all information from across all sectors together through one website so that people can access information more easily and as a result they will be far more likely to engage all the areas of support they need and engage that support much earlier, leading to reduced likelihood of crisis, faster recovery and reduced dependency.

To achieve this we will need better delivery solutions for the information we want to provide. We will also need to assess and improve the effectiveness of how we capture, use and share both our existing and new information and develop the ways people with a variety of needs and abilities access information and advice.

The provision of advice and information by trained staff and volunteers in person and by phone is part of this work stream. The advice needs to be accessible to people in a central location but also in public places such as libraries. Many people want to access advice and information by telephone and staff and volunteers providing this needs to be well trained and supported. It is proposed that the advice and information function is funded from reshaping the voluntary sector contracts and Careline listed below in 6.3.

6.2.1 Impact of changes to the provision of advice through web based information, telephone and in person

Voluntary and third sector report that they give advice and information about services but the lack of a single, accurate and up to date information source means, that this is very difficult for our partners. Existing advice and information services are not always able to resolve queries and there is potential failure demand in the system. For example, Careline received 6,742 calls in 2010 of which 2,374 (36%) were passed onto the SEQOL Contact and Assessment Team. SEQOL Contact and Assessments team subsequently provided advice and information and in 32% of cases, no further assessment was required. Based on 2011/12 data for new contacts 42% of contacts are being signposted away (2988 of 7040 July 2011 to June 2012). SEQOL Community Teams also received approximately 100,000 calls in 2010, some of whom are from service users and professionals asking for advice and information about services.

We are aware that there are risks in providing advice and information through a web based system only because many vulnerable and older people do not have access to technology. We are therefore proposing the following mitigating actions

- We based information needs to be simple to take account of the needs of vulnerable people and those from minority ethnic communities and diverse back grounds
- A web based system needs to be easy to navigate, information in plain English with automatic translation and a check back to ensure the translated information is accurate

- Web based information and advice needs to be accurate and up to date. Community groups not used to electronic systems will need to be supported in entering and updating their information
- Advice and information provided through a telephone helpline needs to be staffed by well trained and able staff who are able to resolve 85% of queries first time.
- Advice and information needs to be provided in person because many older people and carers prefer face to face support. This is also important for parent carers and those with a learning disability. In order to meet the needs of people from minority ethnic communities, access to a wide range of languages through for example language line, needs to be available as well as information in plain English that is accessible.
- Advice and information needs to be located centrally to link with Housing, Job centre and Citizens Advice Bureau
- A single assessment process needs to link closely with assessments completed by specialist workers so that people only have to tell their story once. This needs to be electronically available so that all providers in the third and voluntary sector are able to use it. The requirement to undertake assessments and a lead professional/key contact role will be part of all voluntary and third sector contracts
- Staff in libraries and community centres need to be trained in the use of a web based information and advice system as people are likely to continue to ask them for information
- Advice and information services need to be well publicised and all old information such as out of date literature needs to be recycled.
- **Good advice and information and additional support to carers will enable us to make efficiency savings in care packages for older people of £50k in addition to the planned reduction in demand of (950k for 2013/14)**

Statement

We have limited data on religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. However we have identified that there is potential for an adverse impact on the basis of age, learning disability, disability, language. These issues have been identified and mitigating actions will be included in all service specifications and work stream plans. Plans will be tested with people from diverse backgrounds.

6.3 Voluntary sector and supported employment reshaping

We are continuing to work with voluntary sector and third sector organisations about the best possible shape of services to meet the needs of people from diverse backgrounds. Each proposal to tender a service or a group of services will be done in consultation with the existing provider, stakeholders and service users. Each invitation to tender will have a separate Diversity Impact Assessment completed, therefore the detail is not included in

this Diversity Impact Assessment. Any change to the commissioning of services will include formal consultation. The first service to be commissioned will be Health Watch in November 2012.

Statement

We have limited data on religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. However we have identified that there is potential for an adverse impact on the basis of age, learning disability, disability, language. These issues have been identified and mitigating actions will be included in all service specifications and work stream plans. Plans will be tested with people from diverse backgrounds.

6.4 Reablement and supported accommodation reshaping

The reablement and supported accommodation workstream is focusing on the development of the reablement specification to incorporate local and national key performance indicators and to ensure an outcome focus on episodes of support. This includes the use of the reablement toolkit and benchmarking to ensure a cost effective and efficient service. The reablement specification focuses on either learning and re-learning daily living skills for all adults in Swindon who meet the eligibility criteria for this service.

The reshaping of supported accommodation has a focus on the existing services, how these can be further developed and the additional community skills required by providers, both current and new, to enable more adults to remain in a community setting. This will include a review of floating support and how this can be better utilised as well as taking a longer term approach to reviewing accommodation needs for our adults who may require both accommodation and support services.

6.4.1 The impact of changes to the reshaping of reablement and supported accommodation

Within the reablement specification and toolkit, the main focus is outcome based and a target that 52% of people receiving the service do not require an ongoing service. This involves clearly identified goals and outcomes prior to service commencement which could result in those adults with limited goals and outcomes being deemed not suitable for the service to ensure the performance targets are met. This risk is mitigated through the verifications function and screening of all requests for funding from the community care budget.

The reshaping of supported accommodation will require a thorough analysis of all current supported accommodation, with and without on site support or access to floating support, as well as a review of all current supported living/community based support providers. Any changes to support providers will be dealt with both sensitively and with due regard for

current users of services. Service Users with a Personal Budget will have the have their direct payment, in part or full, as a direct payment to enable greater choice not only about how their support is provided, but also who provides that support. For those with 24 hours on site support or warden services, an element of the Personal Budget will be retained to offset these costs and ensure that no tenant is subsidising another (i.e. those who opt for a direct service and those who opt for a direct payment).

All service user consultation will include accessible advocacy, support and information based on identified needs of the population.

Statement

We have limited data on religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. However we have identified that there is potential for an adverse impact on the basis of age, learning disability, disability, language, race and culture. These issues have been identified and mitigating actions will be included in all service specifications and work stream plans. Plans will be tested with people from diverse backgrounds.

6.5 Work force development

The workforce development workstream is focusing on the development of our collective workforce (SBC and all partners including the independent, voluntary and private care sector) which will in turn support one of the overall programme aims; “creating the ability to maintain independence and prevent crisis by enabling people to make choices and do things for themselves to plan for the future and by creating the right environment to promote and enable healthy lifestyle choices”.

This workstream will also support our equality duty of the “advance equality of opportunity”. The objectives of this workstream are twofold:

- The first being to increase the capability and therefore the capacity of our workforce and
- the second is to reduce dependency on services by enabling people to remain independent for longer.

By increasing the capability of the workforce, they will be better enabled to prepare communities for changes in services and in turn will achieve a changed nature of demand.

This workstream will need to consider the best solution for developing a workforce that is spread across a number of sectors, as well as ensuring that the development includes processes to help reduce dependency.

6.5.1 Impact of changes to the development of the Workforce

- 1. “Rebalance the mix of our interventions to prevent or reduce vulnerability and health inequalities”**

The proposal sets out to meet the identified success measures of:

- Reduced demand for high cost services

To achieve this we said we would:

- Work with partners to support individuals and communities to improve their own well-being.
- Review and reshape services working with vulnerable adults that they all provide help early and prevent crises occurring

2. “Maximise the effectiveness of Swindon’s untapped resources whilst better prioritising the Council’s available finances”

The proposal sets out to meet the identified success measures of:

- Local people become more self-sufficient
- Increased residents’ satisfaction
- Cash savings- contribute to the overall savings target of £750k across the whole of Adults Social Care

Service Users

Service users in particular and citizens of Swindon in general are able to say that they know what the state is able to provide and how they can help themselves to live independently

This project will build the capabilities and skills of service users and carers as well as all our workforce so that people are able to live as independently as possible and we make the most of shared resources

People lead more fulfilling lives by enabling personal choice and independence whilst taking personal responsibility for using their own resources where possible

Workforce (All involved)

Reducing cost of services

Opportunities to strengthen partnership working, sharing best practice and opening the door to working more collaboratively in the future

All staff will be trained across all agencies to build skills and expertise in building their capabilities

All staff across all agencies will also be trained to build skills and expertise in building the capabilities of our service users whilst taking into account Swindon’s minority ethnic communities and diverse back grounds. We will also be supporting our workforce on addressing the needs of older people taking account of sex, gender identity, religion and sexual orientation as well as cultural diversity

The project will build on existing teams and develop a better informed workforce

Better alignment to the Recovery Model agenda

There will be a methodology to achieve well briefed managers to include staff drop in sessions, workshops, 121 sessions and clear measures to test effectiveness

Outcomes

The number of service users will decrease

The amount of money spent on services will decrease

People being trained feel more capable and are able to work differently

People who receive services then on feel more confident to do things for themselves

Statement

We have limited data on religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. However we have identified that there is potential for an adverse impact on the basis of age, learning disability, disability, language. These issues have been identified and mitigating actions will be included in the work force development plan. Plans will be tested with people from diverse backgrounds.

6.6 Transitions

The Transitions Workstream will focus on improving the experience and outcomes for young disabled people making the transition from children's to adult services. It is also seeking to identify and achieve savings through changes to the way we work with disabled children and young people across the 0-25 age range. This includes maximising, where possible, young disabled people's ability to find paid work on leaving school or college and make plans for independent living rather than move in to adult services such as day centres.

One of the main drivers is the green paper 'Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability' which recommends the introduction of a single assessment and plan across education, health and social care for disabled children and those with SEN from 0-25. The Transitions Workstream will seek to develop and implement a **single assessment and planning process** in Swindon. There will be an options appraisal to look at the best way to put this in to practice which includes the possibility of creating a new 0-25 assessment team bringing a number of key professionals together.

Another change will be the development of a '**local offer**' which aims to improve the information available to young people and their families about the services they can access across the 0-25 age range. The Transitions Workstream will also be looking at how the **personalisation agenda** can be implemented in Children's Services as it is in Adult Social Care. This includes the introduction of **Personal Budgets** to give young people and their families more control over the support they get.

6.6.1 The impact of changes to the Transitions process and assessment and planning for disabled children and young people across the 0-25 age range

The main potential with the Transitions Workstream is to '**advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it'.

The first phase of the Transitions Workstream will be to analyse available data to get a picture of current demand, cost and outcomes for individuals. This will include an analysis of available **equality data** to identify actions services need to address.

The **Single Assessment and Plan** will draw on the principles of Person Centred Planning. The aim of this approach is to identify what matters to the individual and their family and build supports around this rather than fitting people in to existing services. This will benefit people with protected characteristics as their specific requirements should be considered as part of the process.

The implementation of **Personal Budgets** will assist with the individualising of support as it will give people more control over deciding how the money available to meet their needs is spent. This includes the option of people having some or all of the money as a Direct Payment to organise and pay for their own support. Again this will benefit people with protected characteristics as they will have more choice about who provides support and how it is provided.

There should be a focus during the transitions process on getting **paid employment and living independently** in adult life. These are two areas of life that people with disabilities can find more difficult to achieve. Targeted support at transitions could help young people to access more opportunities.

Realising this potential is highly dependent on the way in which assessments and plans are conducted. In order to achieve the equality benefits staff will need to be confident in talking to service users and their families about issues such as culture, ethnicity, religion, sexuality etc. to identify any areas that need special consideration e.g. in the way that any support is sourced or arranged or the way services are provided.

Statement

We have limited data on religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity. However we have identified that there is potential for an adverse impact on the basis of sexual orientation and race. These issues have been identified and mitigating actions will be included in all service plans. Plans will be tested with people from diverse backgrounds.

6.7 Community networks and volunteering

The promotion of volunteering activity is one response to promoting independence especially for people who are in danger of becoming dependent on Council services. The benefits include

- The expansion of preventative services using volunteers allows more flexible responses and better value for money
- Supporting individuals into volunteering can provide a pathway for to more independence
- The overall promotion of volunteering is part of a cultural change to foster stronger sense of shared responsibility

All contractors will be required to provide data covering race, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability for service users and volunteers. The data will be reported quarterly and any evidence that one or more of the groups is being excluded (e.g. men not using the friendship service) will be addressed by if necessary changing the way the service is marketed or delivered.

Experience of providing support for volunteering has identified the following issues

- The take up of opportunities is spread throughout age ranges but overall the take up of services is disproportionately high among white british. We have prioritised work with BME groups and referral agencies to address this and will then widen this to all equality groups
- The use of volunteering as a way of helping people towards independence is lower among target groups e.g. people with substance abuse problems, people with Learning Difficulties and we will address this by exploring a range of opportunities which match the needs e.g. more bespoke opportunities ensuring that there is adequate support, this may be more expensive in the short term

Community Networks

Building stronger community networks to engage people locally in supporting each other and help to reduce the isolation of older and vulnerable people is an essential part of the strategy to reduce demand.

Under the Stronger Together restructure it was considered that building community networks as a Swindon-wide issue – embracing the fact that individuals from all backgrounds and ethnicities can experience isolation, health inequalities, educational and economic disadvantage and poverty. It also takes into account that all residents live somewhere in the Borough regardless of which community of interest they may identify with. With this in mind, Stronger Together brings about a refocus on individuals across the Borough of Swindon through the creation of a Localities Team. It is the role of the Localities Team to connect with individuals and known community groups to ensure that services are being delivered effectively in ways that meet local needs, and, that individuals and communities are encouraged and supported to grow resilience and independence. Within the Localities Team there are seven new Locality Leads posts and seven full-time equivalent posts as Locality Facilitators. This new resource takes a broader perspective on capacity building and community development.

The Localities Team and its related activities around building community networks particularly support our equality duty to *advance equality of opportunity, elimination of discrimination and fostering good relations*. It recognises that some local people are less likely to be heard than others, some may never choose to participate in organised or formal community groups or activity and as a result, new approaches need to offer varied routes to influence and participate in local action. The potential for the equality duties to be met are extended through the Stronger Together restructure as the Localities Team is reaching wider (through networks and development internally and externally) than the previous targeted community development posts.

This is further enhanced by the collaboration between the Localities Team and elected Members to develop much closer relationships at a local level. The Localities Team will also continue a dialogue with key agencies such as Swindon Citizens Advice Bureau, The Harbour Project and other voluntary organisations to ensure that there is an opportunity for sharing learning so we better involve people from diverse communities.

Statement

We have limited data on religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity at a community level and from people who volunteer. We have identified that given the size of our BME community, that there is a need to proactively increase the number of volunteers from those communities. Over time we will then work with all equality groups to ensure community networks and volunteering opportunities are available to them. This may create an adverse impact in the short term, however, we feel this is justifiable given the increasing size of our BME community. These issues have been identified and mitigating actions will be included in all service specifications and work stream plans. Plans will be tested with people from diverse backgrounds.

6.8 Dementia Action Plan

This plan has now been completed and will be incorporated into each of the work streams and impact on people from diverse communities will be included in each of the other seven work streams

7 Consultation

We have arranged a series of four focus groups in July and August covering the contract areas for the £100,000+ areas (in 6.1) that need to be re-commissioned this year. We will discuss the key areas of the specifications i.e. outcomes, objectives and deliverables. We included representative from equality groups such as learning disability, older people, community representatives and carers.

We have invited all potential local providers as well as service user representatives. We will then begin the tendering process in September with the aim of being in a position to award contracts by the end of the calendar year.

We will need to run regular discussion and briefings with voluntary, service user and third sector partners to develop the programme. Each work stream needs to establish a group of service users and people from communities to test proposals and business cases.

The detailed comments from consultation on the reshaping Demand Enquiry is attached as **Appendix 1**

8 What next?

To apply the findings from section 3 all business cases and contracts will

- Be outcome focused and will require evidence of user involvement and feedback to the commissioning cycle. Demonstration of how user feedback is being used to design and bring about positive outcomes
- Stipulate participation in information gathering and gap analysis for specific service areas including equalities information about people who access services and outcomes achieved for them
- Require demonstrable understanding and knowledge to work with the diversity of Swindon's population
- Include requirement to undertake equality monitoring and use this to develop services and business cases.
- Include flexibility enable ability to reflect future demand
- Identify specialist advice and information relevant to their own area – anything else will referred to the generic advice and information service. (People getting the right support at the right time)
- Bring forward plans to ensure the accessibility of services and information to Swindon's population
- Work with partners (statutory, voluntary and community) to establish solutions to identified need
- Work with the commissioner to ensure that work undertaken is reflected in the contract.
- Work streams may identify additional need for research and give evidence of support targeted at different groups within our population
- Ensure all specifications and service change proposals are tested with relevant service users and equality groups

9. Timescale/Review

The reshaping demand programme will run from July 2012 for a period of up to three years pending agreement of full Project Initiation Documents

10. How do we measure success

The combined work streams achieve year on year savings by reducing the demand for adult social care and contribute to health service savings plans. Current planning assumptions for adult social care are at an additional £2m pressure year on year and this should be reduced to nil within three years. We want to understand how all the success measures benefit our diverse community. **The initial savings target for 2013/14 is £950k with an additional £50k in reduction of care packages for older people by increasing support to carers**

10.1 Prevention and personalisation

- The number of people supported by specialist social work, community health and mental health services has reduced
- People are planning for their care earlier and the number of residential placements made through Crisis Services reduces
- People say that they know how to access advice and information through surveys and the advice is in an appropriate format
- People say, through surveys, that they know what the state is able to provide and how they can help themselves
- The number of people with chronic conditions such as diabetes, dementia or heart disease who need emergency hospital admissions has reduced
- In the long term the life expectancy of people living in areas of disadvantage has increased and the health and social inequalities have reduced through advice and support received

10.2 Targeted support/Reablement/Recovery

- We will have established a development and training programme for staff across all agencies to build skills and expertise in building capabilities
- People who are being supported by services say that they have regained/learned new skills
- The number of people who receive reablement services has increased, whilst the percentage of those who don't need on-going care has increased. Overall reablement services have achieved savings from health and social care
- The number of people discharged from hospital to residential and nursing care has reduced
- Community based networks have increased and are supporting people locally and thereby the number of people supported by specialist services reduces
- Carers say that they feel supported and are healthy and are able to care for longer
- All services including the voluntary and third sector are able to demonstrate the increase in the quality of life for people, show the difference they have made to enable people to live independently for longer and how the health, mental health and well-being of people has improved
- Councillors feel better engaged in their communities

10.3 Specialist support

- The number of people with learning/physical disabilities living in their community has increased and residential care has reduced
- The number of people recovering from mental illness and living in their community has increased and residential care has reduced
- Parent of young people with a disability/learning disability say that they have been able to plan a seamless transition to adult services
- The number of people with a personal budget/direct payment buying a range of services has increased
- More providers are offering choice to vulnerable people and it enables people to stay independent for longer

Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon

Diversity Impact Assessment for Highways and Transport Capital Budget Savings 2013/14

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality duties

What's it there for? What's it set up to deliver? What's the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?

The Council's transport policies are set out in the Local Transport Plan (2011-2026). This strategy was subject to a DIA during its preparation. The delivery of the approved policies is supported by an annual allocation of capital funding. This funds a range of capital schemes including maintenance of roads, pavements, car parks and bridges, road safety schemes, congestion reduction schemes, cycle tracks and new footpaths, bus priority measures and other public transport facilities.

In view of the budget pressures facing the Council the existing budget for Highways and Transport Capital schemes is being reviewed and it is proposed to reduce the overall budget by £3 million. The 13/14 Approved Budget for Highways and Transport works is £8,400,000 (year 3 of the existing capital programme agreed February 2011). The allocation by activity is shown below:

("Integrated Schemes" – means walking, cycling, public transport road safety and congestion reduction schemes).

Activity	Current Budget
Highways maintenance	£3,430k
Integrated schemes, plus traffic signals and rights of way	£1,820k
Structural repairs including car parks	£1,400k
Footways	£1,050k
Street lighting	£ 700k
TOTAL	£8,400,000

The overall highways and transport capital budget is made up from a number of discrete budgets as shown below:

Budget Heading	Current Budget
LTP – integrated schemes	£ 1,570k
LTP – maintenance schemes	£ 2,830k
SBC funded programme	£ 3,100k
Car parks major maintenance	£ 500k
Street Lighting column replacement programme	£ 400k
TOTAL	£8,400,000

The proposal is to reduce the overall budget by £3m (30%). How the reduced allocation will be allocated according to activity and budget heading will be determined at a later stage. This will be the subject of a Cabinet report seeking approval for these allocations. This will be subject to a further DIA.

This proposal does not include S106 funded schemes, or schemes funded by other external grants

What potential is there to meet the equality duties?

Every member of the community uses the highway and transport network on a daily basis – either for personal journeys, or for the transport of goods and services to their homes. It can therefore have a significant impact on meeting the equality duties.

In choosing which capital funded highways and transport schemes to deliver regard should be given to the equality groups. There needs to be recognition that certain types of scheme will deliver the equality duties more than others.

Unlike revenue funded budgets a reduction in capital budgets means that priority schemes are more likely to be delayed but still delivered at a later date rather than seeing a provision reduced or removed entirely. Schemes removed from the 13/14 programme as a result of a budget reduction may still be delivered, but at a later date. Potential benefits are therefore deferred rather than foregone.

What equality benefits does it create? (for people, organisation etc...)

The biggest equality issue in highways and transport relates to the ability to easily access goods and services for those who do not have private car transport. The DIA for the Local Transport Plan strategy document identified that older people, younger people, disabled people, women, minority ethnic groups and those with financial disadvantage were less likely to have access to a private car and be more reliant on walking, cycling and public transport for day to day travel than the general population. Schemes that support walking, cycling and public transport will tend to deliver greater equality benefits than other types of projects.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

Demand for capital funding of highways and transport schemes far exceeds the funding available – even in the long term when budgets have been less restricted. There is a significant maintenance backlog on the highway network which can result in increased insurance claims against the Council as a result of vehicle and pedestrian incidents so this will tend to be a priority for funding. Physical measures to address known road casualty hot spots also tend to be a priority for funding because of the impact on victims and the costs to the community of such incidents. Other types of project have therefore tended to have a lower priority.

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?

Every member of the community uses the highway and transport network on a daily basis – either for personal journeys, or for the transport of goods and services to their homes. It is therefore used by all the equality groups.

What do you know about them (evidence)?

The users of the service are the entire population of Swindon together with those that visit or pass through the area. The DIA for the Local Transport Plan Strategy (October 2010) provided extensive details on the local community and the equality groups. This will be updated when 2011 Census data is available.

Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?

Every member of the community uses the highway and transport network. Some groups have difficulty with, or concerns about, using the service. Older people and disabled people are more likely to be concerned about maintenance standards of footways and footpaths because of fear of trips and falls. This links to the ability of these people to live independent lives in their own homes rather than being a burden on adult social care services. Older and disabled people are also likely to be interested in step free access and dropped kerbs as well as safe road crossing points. Pedestrian road safety is an issue for all groups that have higher than average levels of walking trips. Children from areas high on the index of multiple deprivation are over represented in child pedestrian casualty

figures so road safety initiatives are important to this equality group. For groups that are more reliant on public transport, walking and cycling, safety (particularly at night) is an important concern. Minority/ethnic groups and older people may feel discouraged from going out if they have crime/disorder concerns over lack of street lighting or about the design of the built environment, bus stops, bus stations and footways.

Do you know why?

Much of the highway and transport network dates from earlier times when different standards applied. The highway layout in Swindon evolved from Victorian times through various pre, and post war concepts of urban design. Even in areas developed in the 1960's and 1970's the needs of what are now called "equality groups" were not significant considerations in highway and transport network design. It is not practical or affordable to upgrade all of the historic infrastructure so investment needs to be concentrated where impact is greatest. It does however mean that existing arrangements may not always be optimum for all equality groups.

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality and equality groups

Show consideration of: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation and if appropriate: financial economic status, homelessness, political view

Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved? (adverse impact)

There are different areas for which funding may be reduced or withdrawn. Each would have different impacts on service users and the equality groups.

- **Maintenance**

In the short term – more potholes will appear and more minor highway improvement and maintenance works will not be done. In the medium & longer term there will be more pressure on the revenue programme as the network deteriorates further, leading to an increase in the backlog of repairs required to carriageways and footways. In 2009, it was estimated that this capital budget backlog was £32m and £12million required to maintain the then condition of the asset. The public will notice a lower standard of condition in the roads and footways and there will be an increased negative public perception of this. In the medium term the monies required to repair failing assets will increase significantly – it can cost over 500K to repair a failed footbridge. Closure of some sections of the network may be necessary.

Less footway maintenance will impact on older and disabled people who may suffer trips and falls and may become reluctant to go out.

- **Integrated Schemes**

There have been 68 people killed or seriously injured on our roads in the last 12 months (3 fatalities). Any reduction in road safety expenditure has a potential to increase the number of road traffic incidents in the short term. In the medium term then the public's perception of road safety concerns is likely to increase. In addition on-going high profile programmes like the introduction of school safety zones and new controlled pedestrian crossings will not be delivered.

No cycleway, bus or traffic management improvement schemes will be delivered given the need to concentrate, in the short to medium term, resources on maintaining the condition of our roads and footways.

If no school safety zone schemes, (SSZ), are delivered then this will eliminate the consequential benefit of them in improving the health and well-being of pupils and their families; reducing/preventing accidental injury to vulnerable road users; encouraging independent and low-cost travel for older children and young people (which will also give them skills and experience necessary for future journeys to training and employment), and reducing congestion and parking issues around schools and associated community concerns.

Eliminating expenditure on schemes to improve traffic flows will mean no network improvement works to help develop a commercial bus network. This is likely to result in a negative reaction from bus users.

This will impact on those equality groups who are more reliant on public transport, walking and cycling – or are over represented in road casualty data.

• Car Park Maintenance

In the short term more defects will appear and more minor improvement and maintenance works will not be done. In the medium & longer term there will be more pressure on revenue programme as infrastructure deteriorates further, leading to an increase in the backlog of repairs required. Users will notice a lower standard of condition in the car parks and there will be an increased negative public perception of this.

This will impact on car users who are disabled (perhaps "Blue Badge" holders) and use town centre car parks.

Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?

Depending upon how the budget reduction is allocated across the scheme types there will be a different level of impact on diversity groups. In some areas there may be the opportunity to mitigate the impact by redirecting other funding sources (eg S106 or other grants). However, schemes will tend to be deferred until future years rather than abandoned entirely. The benefits of the schemes to the equality groups will therefore be delayed rather than foregone.

In addition many objectives are delivered by a mix of capital and revenue funded schemes. For example road safety can be improved through awareness education and training (revenue funded) and has been found to be equally as effective in reducing casualties as highway engineering measures (capital funded).

How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)

In deciding a future, reduced list of schemes that can be funded the opportunity can be taken to consider those schemes which will have the widest impact across the diversity groups.

Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?

Further assessment of value for money and impact when selecting capital schemes for funding should ensure the best outcomes are delivered with the funding available. Increased efficiency in scheme delivery could also assist in delivering maximum benefits with reduced levels of funding.

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

Consultation has not taken place at this stage in the budget setting process. Consultation on this proposed budget change will take place if approved by Cabinet (along with the rest of the proposed Council budget for 2013/14)..

4 So what?

[Link to business planning process](#)

What changes have you identified?

Details of how the reduced funding will be allocated to different scheme types will be the subject of a report to Cabinet in April 2013. A further DIA will be undertaken at that stage. Impact of Diversity Groups will be a consideration for officers when making recommendations for the allocation of funding by scheme type.

What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

Assessment of which schemes to progress will be made when the result of the overall budget setting process is known.

When will this be reviewed?

This will be subject to the views of Cabinet when they approve the revised funding allocations.

How will success be measured?

This will be assessed in the DIA of the future Cabinet report.

For the record

Name of person leading this DIA: Philip Martlew	Date completed
Names of people involved in consideration of impact - Gwillam Lloyd	
Name of director signing DIA: Gwillam Lloyd	Date signed

Author: Cabinet Member for Finance and Board Director Resources

Budget 2013-14 and Beyond

The Council received the Final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013-14 on 4th February 2013 and this showed a £1k reduction in General Government Grant compared with the provisional settlement. This reduces the proposed Net Budget of the Council for 2013-14 to £148.040m from the figure of £148.041m set out in the report.

Over and above this sum, the Government has released the unused part of the national clawback for New Homes Bonus back to local authorities through a new specific grant. At this stage, limited information is available in relation to this grant but the additional sum for Swindon is £239k.

Recognising the uncertainty within the Budget around income levels and the fact that the information released to Councils as part of the Finance settlement is still incomplete, it is recommended that the new grant of £239k less the £1k reduction in core funding is used to reduce the Council's reliance on New Homes Bonus from £2.344m, assumed in the report, to £2.106m. This brings it more in line with the estimated value of funding that has been top-sliced from the base to fund the New Homes Bonus in Swindon in 2013-14.

The revised recommendations are set out below with the changes from the report shown in bold.

Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to note:-

- 2.1 That the Council does not expect to need to replenish General Reserves as part of the 2013-14 Budget Setting process;
- 2.2 The feedback received to the Borough-wide consultation process on the Draft Budget, set out in Appendix 5;
- 2.3 The level of uncertainty relating to the level of funding available to support the 2013-14 Budget due to the lateness of the Local Government Finance Settlement and that, subject to materiality, the Board Director Resources recommends that any change in the forecast settlement position will be accommodated by amending the level of New Homes Bonus funding included in the 2013-14 budget proposals;
- 2.4 That a Consultation Meeting with business representatives from Swindon, on behalf of non-domestic rate payers took place on 4th February 2013 and the minutes will be provided to Council on 21st February 2013;
- 2.5 That in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Board Director, Resources, in his Section 151 capacity, confirms the

Author: Cabinet Member for Finance and Board Director Resources

robustness of the estimates underlying the recommended Budget and having reviewed the financial risks being faced by the Council concludes that the proposed level of General Reserves (£6m) is adequate in the context of the earmarked reserves held, specific contingencies and the proposed general contingency of £1.2m;

Cabinet is requested to agree:

- 2.6 The proposed changes in fees and charges set out in Appendix 1, that fall outside of the assumed Council-wide 3% blanket increase;
- 2.7 That there be no change in the level of Special Expenses charged per household for 2013-14 with the total level of Special Expenses for 2013-14 being £1,001,388;
- 2.8 The Specific Reserves held in support of the 2013-14 Revenue Budget set out in Appendix 7;
- 2.9 That no funding will be passed from the Borough Council to parish councils to mitigate the impact of changes to the tax base linked to the Council Tax Support scheme; and
- 2.10 To recommend to Council that:-**
 - 2.10.1 The 2013-14 Budget be set at £148.040m as detailed in Appendices 2 – 4, save that the redirection of New Homes Bonus to fund base budget expenditure be reduced from £2.344m to £2.106m and New Homes Bonus Adjustment Grant of £0.239m be used instead to support the base budget;**
 - 2.10.2 There be no increase in Council Tax for 2013-14, and
 - 2.10.3 It be determined that the proposed increase in the basic amount of Council Tax for 2013-14 is not excessive in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011.

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Date: 6th February 2013

Author:	Cabinet Member for Finance Board Director, Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To report new capital programme requirements for 2013/14, the Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14, including Prudential Indicators up to 2015/16, the Annual Investment Strategy, and the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the new schemes identified at Appendix 2
- 2.2 Note that Cabinet has previously agreed in October 2012 that officers bring a recommendation to Cabinet on whether the Council should participate in the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme, and agree that this issue is reported further in March 2013 as part of a wider report presenting a range of housing market support measures for Members to consider.
- 2.3 Recommend the Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy and Prudential Indicators for approval by Full Council on 25th February 2013.

3. Detail

Capital Programme

- 3.1 Cabinet approved a full 3 year capital programme in February 2011 covering the 3 year period from 2011/12 through to 2013/14. This programme included the main 3 year funding settlements for schools and highways.
- 3.2 Any necessary updates to the 3 year programme have been brought to Cabinet each year, and this report updates Cabinet on required scheme approvals and reasons for additions needed for 2013/14.
- 3.3 Appendix 2 contains the detail around the new approval requirements for 2013/14 starts, together with the funding available. A number of these schemes are subject to on-going work to firm up the scope and costs. The budget approval

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No.463976, or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk.

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will therefore be subject to receipt of full feasibility results and any required increase in budgets will be brought back to Cabinet before work commences.

- 3.4 There are also a number of schemes are being investigated and feasibility work is progressing. Further information will be brought to Cabinet at a later date.
- 3.5 New Homes Bonus in 2013/14 is potentially available to fund some capital schemes, but officers are currently reviewing the amounts that may be available.
- 3.6 Cabinet has previously agreed in October 2012 that officers bring a recommendation to Cabinet on whether the Council should participate in the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme, and if so at what level as this would need to be included within the Capital programme. Cabinet is asked to agree that this issue is reported further in March 2013 as part of a wider report presenting a range of housing market support measures for Members to consider.

Treasury Strategy

- 3.7 Treasury management is defined by the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management as the “management of the local authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks”.
- 3.8 The Council is required to operate a balanced budget, which broadly means that cash raised during the year will meet cash expenditure. Part of the treasury management operation is to ensure that this cash flow is adequately planned, with cash being available when it is needed. Available cash (resulting from the Council’s day to day cash management processes) is invested in low risk counterparties or instruments commensurate with the Council’s low risk appetite, providing adequate liquidity initially before considering investment return.
- 3.9 The second main function of the treasury management service is the funding of the Council’s capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing needs of the Council, essentially the longer term cash flow planning to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations. This management of longer term cash may involve arranging long or short term loans, or using longer term cash flow surpluses (e.g. related to reserves held for future purposes). On occasion any debt previously drawn may be restructured to meet Council risk or cost objectives, subject to the cost of so doing.
- 3.10 The Council is required to receive and approve, as a minimum, three main reports each year, which incorporate a variety of policies, estimates and actuals. These reports are required to be adequately scrutinised before being recommended to the Council. Under the Council’s constitution, the Audit Committee scrutinises the treasury management activities undertaken by the Director of Finance and his team, including compliance with agreed policies.

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- **A Treasury Management Strategy Statement** (This report) - The first, and most important report covers:
 - the capital spending plans (including prudential indicators) based on Cabinet and Council decisions;
 - a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy (which details how capital expenditure funded by borrowing is charged to the revenue budget over time);
 - the Treasury Management Strategy, which details how the investments and borrowings are managed overall, including treasury indicators; and
 - an Investment Strategy, which sets the parameters around how investments are to be managed on a day to day basis.
 - **A Mid-Year Treasury Management Report – This updates Members on Treasury Management performance for the first half of the financial year.**
 - **An Annual Treasury Management Report – This details the full year Treasury activity and performance.**

3.11 The Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14 covers two main areas:

- **Capital Issues:**
 - the capital plans and the prudential indicators;
 - the MRP strategy.
- **Treasury Management Issues:**
 - the current treasury position;
 - the treasury indicators which will limit the treasury risk and activities of the Council;
 - the prospect for interest rates;
 - the borrowing strategy;
 - the policy on borrowing in advance of need;
 - debt rescheduling;
 - the investment strategy;
 - the creditworthiness policy; and
 - the policy on use of external service providers.

3.12 These elements cover the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the CIPFA Prudential Code, the CLG MRP Guidance, the CIPFA Treasury Management Code and the CLG Investment Guidance.

3 Alternative Options

4.1 Any alternative options for specific areas are set out within the report.

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5 Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

5.1 These have been reflected in the body of the report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

5.2 All legal and human rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with Convention rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

5.3 There are no such direct implications.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

5.4 The effective management of financial resources through robust financial management processes underpins the Council's ability to achieve its plans and priorities.

Diversity Impact Assessment

5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) around the School Place Planning Strategy was taken to Cabinet on 13th July 2011 and is applicable to the Primary Place proposal contained in this report. DIA's will be carried out for each of the other proposals contained within this report to assess the impact should Cabinet Approval be forthcoming.

6 Consultees

6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7 Background Papers and Appendices

7.1 Appendix 1 – Treasury Management Strategy

7.2 Appendix 2 – New Capital Scheme proposals

8 Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

This is not a key decision for the Cabinet (as the approval of the full Council is required) and is included in the Cabinet Forward Plan.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No.463976, or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk.

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TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

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- 1. Current Portfolio Position**
 - 2. Prospect for Interest Rates and Economic Outlook**
 - 3. Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement**
 - 4. Borrowing Strategy**
 - 5. Investment Policy, Creditworthiness Policy and Investment Strategy**
-
- Annex 1 – Prudential Indicators**
 - Annex 2 - Credit and Counterparty Risk Management, Specified and Non- Specified Investments**

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1 Current Portfolio Position

- 1.1 The capital expenditure plans set in Annex 1 to Appendix 1 summarises the Councils current and future plans. The treasury management function ensures that the Council's cash is organised in accordance with the relevant professional codes, so that sufficient cash is available to meet this service activity. This will involve both the organisation of the cash flow and, where capital plans require, the organisation of appropriate borrowing facilities.
- 1.2 The Council's actual treasury portfolio position at 31 March 2012, with forward projections are summarised below. The table shows the actual external borrowing, against the capital borrowing need (shown through the Capital Financing Requirement or "CFR"), highlighting any over or under borrowing.

Table 1 – Portfolio position forecasts.

£'000	2012/13 Estimate	2013/14 Estimate	2014/15 Estimate	2015/16 Estimate
Borrowing 01/04		215,276	235,276	255,276
Borrowing at 31/03	235,276	255,276	275,276	295,276
Change in Borrowing		40,000	40,000	40,000
Total net investments at 31 March	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)
Net External Borrowing	215,276	235,276	255,276	275,276
CFR – the borrowing need	434,648	442,557	434,583	423,121
Less PFI Liability	(47,003)	(46,294)	(45,632)	(44,810)
Underlying Borrowing Requirement	387,645	396,263	388,951	378,311
Under / (over) borrowing	172,369	160,987	133,675	103,035

2 Prospects for Interest Rates and Economic Outlook

- 2.1 The Council has appointed Sector as its treasury advisor and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. The following table gives the Sector central view.

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Table 2 – Prospects for Interest Rates

Annual Average %	Bank Rate	PWLB Borrowing Rates (including certainty rate adjustment)		
		5 year	25 year	50 year
Dec 2012	0.50	1.50	3.70	3.90
March 2013	0.50	1.50	3.80	4.00
June 2013	0.50	1.50	3.80	4.00
Sept 2013	0.50	1.60	3.80	4.00
Dec 2013	0.50	1.60	3.80	4.00
March 2014	0.50	1.70	3.90	4.10
June 2014	0.50	1.70	3.90	4.10
Sept 2014	0.50	1.80	4.00	4.20
Dec 2014	0.50	2.00	4.10	4.30
March 2015	0.75	2.20	4.30	4.50
June 2015	1.00	2.30	4.40	4.60
Sept 2015	1.25	2.50	4.60	4.80
Dec 2015	1.50	2.70	4.80	5.00
March 2016	1.75	2.90	5.00	5.20

2.2 The economic recovery in the UK since 2008 has been the worst and slowest recovery in recent history, although the economy returned to positive growth in the third quarter of 2012. Growth prospects are weak and consumer spending, the usual driving force of recovery, is likely to remain under pressure due to consumers focusing on repayment of personal debt, inflation eroding disposable income, general malaise about the economy and employment fears.

2.3 The primary drivers of the UK economy are likely to remain external. 40% of UK exports go to the Eurozone so the difficulties in this area are likely to continue to hinder UK growth. The US, the main world economy, faces similar debt problems to the UK and US fiscal tightening and continuing Eurozone problems will depress UK growth and is likely to see the UK deficit reduction plans slip. This challenging and uncertain economic outlook has several key treasury management implications:

- The Eurozone sovereign debt difficulties provide a clear indication of high counterparty risk. This continues to suggest the use of higher quality counterparties for shorter time periods;
- Investment returns are likely to remain relatively low during 2013/14 and beyond;
- Borrowing interest rates continue to be attractive and may remain relatively low for some time. The timing of any borrowing will need to be monitored carefully;

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- There will remain a cost of carry – any borrowing undertaken that results in an increase in investments will incur a revenue loss between borrowing costs and investment returns.

3 Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement

3.1 The Council is required to charge an element of the accumulated General Fund capital spend each year (measured through the CFR) to revenue (the minimum revenue provision or "MRP"), although it is also allowed to undertake additional voluntary payments if required.

3.2 CLG Regulations have been issued which require the full Council to approve an MRP Statement in advance of each year. A variety of options are provided to Councils, as long as there is a prudent provision. The Council is recommended to approve the following MRP Statement:

"For capital expenditure incurred before 1 April 2008 or which in the future will be Supported Capital Expenditure, the MRP will be based on the CFR. This option provides for an approximate 4% reduction in the borrowing need (CFR) each year. From 1 April 2008 for all unsupported borrowing the MRP will be based on the estimated life of the assets, in accordance with the regulations. MRP in relation to capital expenditure funded through borrowing incurred on the Wichelstowe project, will be deferred and the liability repaid through future capital receipts from the site. Should there be a shortfall between the debt and eventual receipts, the balance will incur an annual MRP charge"

3.3 No revenue charge is currently required for the HRA. However under HRA reform the HRA will be required to charge depreciation on its assets, which will have a revenue effect. In order to address any possible adverse impact on the HRA revenue budget, regulations will allow the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) to be used as a proxy for depreciation for the first five years, which will neutralise any revenue impact. MRA will continue be applied as a proxy for depreciation in 2013/14.

4 Borrowing Strategy

4.1 The Council is currently maintaining an under-borrowed position. This means that the need to fund schemes from borrowing (represented through the Capital Financing Requirement or "CFR"), has not been fully funded with external loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow has been used as a temporary measure due to it currently being a cheaper option.

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- 4.2 While the council will maintain an under borrowed position on the General Fund(the HRA is fully borrowed up to the CFR), the Council will at some point need borrow to fund its current Capital Programme as the level of available cash balances reduces. Whilst taking long-term external borrowing will obviously increase the Councils debt charges, the benefit is in the medium to longer time as rates are currently at an historic low.
- 4.3 Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution will once again be adopted with 2013/14 treasury operations. The Director of Finance will monitor interest rates in financial markets and adopt a pragmatic approach to changing circumstances:
- if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a sharp FALL in long and short term rates, e.g. due to a marked increase of risks around relapse into recession or of risks of deflation, then long term borrowings will be postponed, and potential rescheduling from fixed rate funding into short term borrowing will be considered.
 - if it was felt that there was a significant risk of a much sharper RISE in long and short term rates than that currently forecast, perhaps arising from a greater than expected increase in world economic activity or a sudden increase in inflation risks, then the portfolio position will be re-appraised with the likely action that fixed rate funding will be drawn whilst interest rates were still relatively cheap.
- 4.4 The Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs, purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.
- 4.5 As short term borrowing rates will be considerably cheaper than longer term fixed interest rates, there may be potential opportunities to generate savings by switching from long term debt to short term debt. However, these savings will need to be considered in the light of the current treasury position and the size of the cost of debt repayment (through premiums incurred).

5 Investment Policy, Creditworthiness Policy and Investment Strategy

Investment Policy

- 5.1 The Council's investment policy has regard to the CLG's Guidance on Local Government Investments ("the Guidance") and the 2011 revised CIPFA Treasury Management in Public Services Code of Practice and Cross Sectoral Guidance Notes ("the CIPFA TM Code"). The Council's

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investment priorities will be security first, liquidity second, followed by return on investment.

- 5.2 In accordance with the above, and in order to minimise the risk to investments, the Council has below clearly stipulated the minimum acceptable credit quality of counterparties for inclusion on the lending list. The creditworthiness methodology used to create the counterparty list fully accounts for the ratings and watches published by all three ratings agencies with a full understanding of what the ratings reflect in the eyes of each agency. Using the Sector ratings service, banks' ratings are monitored on a real time basis with knowledge of any changes notified electronically as the agencies notify modifications.
- 5.3 Further, the Council's officers recognise that ratings should not be the sole determinant of the quality of an institution and that it is important to continually assess and monitor the financial sector and in relation to the economic and political environments in which institutions operate. The assessment will also take account of information that reflects the opinion of the markets. To this end the Council will engage with its advisors to maintain a monitor on market pricing such as "Credit Default Swaps" (similar to insurance policies around debt default) and overlay that information on top of the credit ratings. This is encapsulated within the credit methodology provided by the advisors, Sector.
- 5.4 Other information sources used will include the financial press, share price and other such information pertaining to the banking sector in order to establish the most robust scrutiny process on the suitability of potential investment counterparties. The aim of the strategy is to generate a list of highly creditworthy counterparties which will also enable diversification and thus avoidance of concentration risk. The intention of the strategy is to provide security of investment and minimisation of risk. Investment instruments identified for use in the financial year are listed in Annex 2 under the 'Specified' and 'Non-Specified' Investments categories. Counterparty limits will be as set through the Council's Treasury Management Practices & Schedules.

Creditworthiness Policy

- 5.5 This Council applies the creditworthiness service provided by Sector. This service employs sophisticated modelling approach utilising credit ratings from the three main credit rating agencies - Fitch, Moodys and Standard and Poors. The credit ratings of counterparties are supplemented with additional data to provide a weighted scoring system for which the end product is a series of colour coded bands which indicate the relative creditworthiness of counterparties. These colour codes are used by the Council to determine the duration for investments

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- 5.6 This methodology does not apply the approach suggested by CIPFA of using the lowest rating from all three rating agencies to determine creditworthy counterparties. The Sector creditworthiness service uses a wider array of information than just primary ratings and by using a risk weighted scoring system, does not give undue preponderance to just one agency's ratings.
- 5.7 The criteria for providing a pool of high quality investment counterparties (both Specified and Non-specified investments) is:
- Banks - good credit quality - the Council will only use banks within the parameters of the creditworthiness service provided by Sector
 - The Council's own banker for transactional purposes if the bank falls below the above criteria.
 - Building societies - The Council will use all societies which meet the ratings for banks outlined above;
 - Money Market Funds - The council will use AAA rated Money Markey Funds
 - UK Government
 - Local authorities, parish councils etc.
 - Supranational institutions (See Annex 2 for Details)

Investment Strategy

- 5.8 **In-house funds.** Investments will be made with reference to the core balance and cash flow requirements and the outlook for short-term interest rates (i.e. rates for investments up to 12 months).
- 5.9 **Investment returns expectations.** Bank Rate is forecast to remain unchanged at 0.5% before starting to rise from quarter 4 of 2014. Bank Rate forecasts for financial year ends (March) are:
- 2013/ 2014 0.50%
 - 2014/ 2015 0.60%
 - 2015/ 2016 1.50%

6 Policy on the use of external service providers

- 6.1 The Council uses Sector as its external treasury management advisors. The Council recognises that responsibility for treasury management decisions remains with the Council at all times and will ensure that undue reliance is not placed upon our external service providers. It also recognises that there is value in employing external providers of treasury management services in order to acquire access

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to specialist skills and resources. The Council will ensure that the terms of their appointment and the methods by which their value will be assessed are properly agreed and documented, and subjected to regular review.

Annexes

- Annex 1 - Prudential Indicators.
- Annex 2 - Credit and Counterparty Risk Management, Specified and Non- Specified Investments

Key Decision / Decision in Forward Plan

This is not a key decision for the Cabinet (as the approval of the full Council is required) and is included in the Cabinet Forward Plan

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Annex 1 – Prudential Indicators

1 Capital Indicators

- 1.1 The Council's capital expenditure plans are a key driver of treasury management activity. The outputs from capital expenditure plans are reflected in prudential indicators, which are designed to assist the Members overview and confirm capital expenditure plans.

Table 1 - Capital Expenditure Projections

Capital Expenditure	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000
General Fund Approved	61,865	26,513	8,911	-
General Fund Estimated New	-	13,595	-	-
HRA Approved	10,542	2,635	-	-
HRA Estimated New		16,512	16,512	16,512
Total	72,407	59,255	25,423	16,512

- 1.2 The second prudential indicator is the **Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)**. The CFR is simply the total historic outstanding capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for from either revenue or capital resources (such as grant, S106 etc) and is therefore funded from either external loans or internal borrowing
- 1.3 It is essentially a measure of the Council's underlying need to borrow to fund capital expenditure. Any capital expenditure above, which is not immediately funded from existing resources, will increase the CFR. Details of the Council's projections for actual external debt compared to the CFR are contained in table 1 of the main Strategy. Note the figures are estimates, not commitments.

Treasury Management Strategy 2013/14 - Appendix 1 Annex 1

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Table 2 – Capital Financing Requirement

General Fund	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Opening CFR	226,526	245,090	258,708	256,396
Estimated Spend funded from borrowing	23,464	18,988	3,380	-
Less MRP	(4,900)	(5,370)	(5,692)	(5,641)
Sub-total	245,090	258,708	256,396	250,756
Add PFI Liability	47,003	46,294	45,632	44,810
Closing CFR	292,093	305,002	302,028	295,566
HRA				
Opening CFR	150,532	142,555	137,555	132,555
Estimated Spend funded from borrowing	-			
Less MRP	(7,977)	(5,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)
Closing CFR	142,555	137,555	132,555	127,555
Total CFR	434,648	442,557	434,583	423,121

2 Affordability Indicators

2.1 Prudential indicators are required to assess the affordability of the capital investment plans. These provide an indication of the impact of the capital investment plans and subsequent finance costs on the Council's overall finances.

Table 3 - The ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream.

	2013/14 Estimate %	2014/15 Estimate %	2015/16 Estimate %
General Fund	6.31	6.72	6.93
HRA	33.49	32.41	32.52

Table 4 - Incremental impact of capital investment decisions on the band D Council Tax

	2013/14 Estimate £	2014/15 Estimate £	2015/16 Estimate £
Current Approved Programme	9.14	24.82	30.41
New Proposals	3.89	7.71	7.71

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No. 463976 or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk

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3 Borrowing Indicators

3.1 **The Operational Boundary.** This is the limit beyond which external borrowing is not normally expected to exceed. This limit reflects the Councils current estimated debt position, with the assumption that maturing borrowing will be replaced, and a further £20m per annum will be taken out to reduce the current under-borrowed position.

Table 5 – Operational Boundary

Operational boundary £'000	2013/14 Estimate	2014/15 Estimate	2015/16 Estimate
Borrowing	267,806	287,806	307,806
Other long term liabilities	46,294	45,632	44,810
Total	314,100	333,438	352,616

3.2 **The Authorised Limit for external borrowing.** A further key prudential indicator, this represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a limit beyond which external borrowing is prohibited. This has been set to reflect the Council's estimate of the Capital Financing Requirement for borrowing, and for other long term liabilities (PFI and other leases) at £5m above the Operational Boundary (i.e. the expected level)

Table 6 - Authorised Limit

Authorised Limit £'000	2013/14 Estimate	2014/15 Estimate	2015/16 Estimate
Borrowing	396,263	388,951	378,311
Other long term liabilities	51,294	50,632	49,810
Total	447,557	439,583	428,121

4 Activity Limit Indicators

4.1 There are three debt related treasury activity limits. The purpose of these are to restrain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby managing risk and reducing the impact of any adverse movement in interest rates. However, if these are set to be too restrictive they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs / improve performance. The indicators are:

- Upper limits on variable interest rate exposure. This identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rate loans (based upon the debt position net of investments)

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No. 463976 or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk

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- Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure. This is similar to the previous indicator and covers a maximum limit on fixed interest rates loans;
- Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing in a single period;

Table 7-Treasury Management Activity Limits

£m	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Interest rate Exposures			
	Upper	Upper	Upper
Limits on fixed interest rates based on net debt	100%	100%	100%
Limits on variable interest rates based on net debt	30%	30%	30%
Maturity Structure of fixed interest rate borrowing 2013/14			
	Lower	Upper	
Under 12 months	0%	15%	
12 months to 2 years	0%	30%	
2 years to 5 years	0%	50%	
5 years to 10 years	0%	50%	
10 years and above	0%	60%	

4.2 The maximum amount the council will invest for more than 1 year is set out in the table below/;

Maximum principal sums invested > 364 days			
£m	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Principal sums invested > 364 days	Nil	Nil	Nil

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No. 463976 or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk

Annex 2 – Credit and Counterparty Risk Management, Specified and Non- Specified Investments

1 Treasury Management Practices

- 1.1 The CLG issued Investment Guidance in 2010, and this forms the structure of the Council's policy.
- 1.2 The key intention of the Guidance is to maintain the current requirement for councils to invest prudently, and that priority is given to security and liquidity before yield. In order to facilitate this objective the guidance requires this Council to have regard to the CIPFA publication Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes. This Council adopted the Code on the 1st April 2008 and will apply its principles to all investment activity. In accordance with the Code, the Director of Finance has produced its Treasury Management Practices (TMPs). This part covering investment counterparty policy requires approval each year.
- 1.3 The key requirements of both the Code and the investment guidance are to set an annual investment strategy, as part of its annual treasury strategy for the following year, covering the identification and approval of following:
 - The strategy guidelines for choosing and placing investments, particularly non-specified investments.
 - The principles to be used to determine the maximum periods for which funds can be committed.
 - Specified investments that the Council will use. These are high security (i.e. high credit rating, although this is defined by the Council, and no guidelines are given), and high liquidity investments in sterling and with a maturity of no more than a year.
 - Non-specified investments, clarifying the greater risk implications, identifying the general types of investment that may be used and a limit to the overall amount of various categories that can be held at any time.

2 Specified/Non-Specified Investments

- 2.1 The main Investment guidelines are contained in the body of the Treasury Strategy statement. The paragraphs below detail the Council's use of Specified and Non Specified Investments

2.2 Specified Investments – These investments are sterling investments of not more than one-year maturity, or those which could be for a longer period but where the Council has the right to be repaid within 12 months if it wishes. These are considered low risk assets where the possibility of loss of principal or investment income is small. These would include sterling investments which would not be defined as capital expenditure with:

- The UK Government (such as the Debt Management Account deposit facility, UK Treasury Bills or Gilt with less than one year to maturity).
- Supranational bonds of less than one year's duration.
- A local authority, parish council or community council.
- Pooled investment vehicles (such as money market funds) that have been awarded a high credit rating by a credit rating agency. This covers pooled investment vehicles, such as money market funds, rated AAA by Standard and Poor's, Moody's or Fitch rating agencies.
- A body that is considered of a high credit quality (such as a bank or building society) in accordance with the Councils creditworthiness Policy.

2.3 Non-Specified Investments – Non-specified investments are any other type of investment (i.e. not defined as Specified above). The Council does not currently hold any non-specified investments excepting those with its own bankers. Non specified investments that the Council may make would include any investments with:

Non Specified Investment Category
<p>Supranational Bonds greater than 1 year to maturity</p> <p>(a) Multilateral development bank bonds - These are bonds defined as an international financial institution having as one of its objects economic development, either generally or in any region of the world (e.g. European Investment Bank etc.).</p> <p>(b) A financial institution that is guaranteed by the United Kingdom Government (e.g. The Guaranteed Export Finance Company {GEFCO})</p> <p>The security of interest and principal on maturity is on a par with the Government and so very secure. These bonds usually provide returns above equivalent gilt edged securities. However the value of the bond may rise or fall before maturity and losses may accrue if the bond is sold before maturity.</p>

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Gilt edged securities with a maturity of greater than one year. These are Government bonds and so provide the highest security of interest and the repayment of principal on maturity. Similar to category (a) above, the value of the bond may rise or fall before maturity and losses may accrue if the bond is sold before maturity.

The Council's own banker if it fails to meet the basic credit criteria.
In this instance any balances will be maintained on an instant access basis

Any **bank or building society** that complies with the Council's creditworthiness policy for deposits with a maturity of greater than one year (including forward deals in excess of one year from inception to repayment).

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Proposal	Provision Required	Est Cost £	Available Funding		New Borrowing	Comments
			Amount	Type		
Town Centre Primary School - St Josephs Catholic College 2 FE	Sep-14	3,500,000	1,200,000	Contribution from Existing Budget - Town Centre Place Planning	2,300,000	The School is a voluntary aided Academy and not LA maintained and therefore the proposal is for the school to project manage this scheme proposal and the costs are based on a detailed school proposal document.
North Swindon Primary School 2FE - New build	Sep-14	5,250,000	1,817,411	Childrens contingencies (£1.21m) + S106 sums (£616k)	3,432,589	Consultation is ongoing around the specific site and with planning around S106 contributions. There is also a likely requirement for Early Years places as well as a possible requirement for Special Resource Provision places which are not included in these cost estimate, and therefore a further approval will be sought when proposals are firmed up and options identified.
North Swindon Primary School 1FE - Orchid Vale PFI expansion	Sep-14	3,200,000			3,200,000	The cost estimate covers the construction cost, loose furniture, fittings & equipment and PFI project company fees. In addition to the capital costs, there will be an increase in the unitary charge of £110k to cover on-going hard and soft FM services as well as a further increase in the Unitary Charge of £1.4m over the remaining life of the PFI contract, estimated at c£70k p.a. , to cover lifecycle maintenance which must be delivered through the PFI contract.
Early Years places - Tick Tock Nursery - mobile replacement	Sep-14	100,000	100,000	Disadvantaged 2 Yr Old Grant	-	The estimate is based on the replacement of a single mobile - the current provision is life expired.
Early Years provision - Grow 2gether dis-advantaged 2 year olds	Apr-14	125,000	125,000	Disadvantaged 2 Yr Old Grant	-	New Government requirement for 2 year old places from September 2013. This sum would be available to support places at existing establishments, subject to a bid process from existing establishments.
Physical Disabilities SRP Expansion at Commonweal	Sep-13	420,000	420,000	TCF Grant	-	Estimate based on previous single unit expansion, current proposal is a double unit plus some internal refurbishment, budget estimate will be firmed up as part of the feasibility process
Crowdy's refurbishment	Apr-14	1,000,000	1,000,000	TCF Grant	-	Requirement to address suitability issues to ensure the provision is suitable for high end need at the school. Feasibility work will be required to identify need & assess costs, but likely to be in the region of £1m.
TOTAL		13,595,000	4,662,411	-	8,932,589	
Debt Charges resulting from new borrowing					669,944	Full year costs based on 3.5% Debt Interest & repayment over 25 years.

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CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2013

MINUTE TO NOTE

93. Special Expenses 2013/14

The Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources submitted a joint report concerning the amounts to be charged as Special Expenses within the non-parished areas of the Borough for the Financial Year 2013/14.

Councillor Mark Edwards, Cabinet Member for Finance, commented on Special Expenses and referred to the work undertaken by a “cross-party” Advisory Group to review and revise the methodology used for calculating Special Expenses. He believed this now more accurately reflected the costs associated with providing parish-type services in the non-parished area of the Borough. He explained that following the review and adoption of the new methodology there were no significant changes in levels for 2013/14.

Resolved – (1) That it be noted that a Cabinet Member Advisory Group had reviewed the methodology for calculating the level of Special Expenses being incurred within the Borough, and had advised that the new methodology represented a more accurate reflection of the costs associated with providing parish-type services in the non-parished area of the Borough.

(2) That the level of Special Expenses for the Financial Year 2013/14 be £1,001,388, as set out in Table 1 of the joint report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources.

(3) That it be noted that the charge per household is unchanged from that for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

(4) That it be noted that the list of sites to be charged as Special Expenses in 2013/14 will be as set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources.

(5) That it be noted that the expenses listed in Appendix 2 to the joint report of the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources shall be charged to all households of the Borough and shall not be Special Expenses.

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

MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION

94. Budget 2013/14 and Beyond (Minute for Confirmation)

The Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources submitted a joint report setting out (a) the medium term position for the Council's finances, (b) the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2013/14, (c) the forecast outturn for the Council's Budget 2012/13, (d) Structural Changes Budget Realignment, (e) Council Tax 2013/14, (f) amounts to be charged as Special Expenses within the non-parished areas of the Borough for the Financial Year 2013/14, (g) the Tax Base and Collection Fund position, (h) the Council Tax Support Scheme Changes and the impact on parish and town councils, and (h) the proposed Budget for the Council for 2013/14 and contingencies, risks, fees and

charges, equalities and diversity, one-off resource commitments and Reserves.

Councillor Mark Edwards, Cabinet Member for Finance, referred to the Budget proposals for 2013/14 and how these differed from those submitted to the Council in December 2012. A supplementary report had been circulated at the meeting highlighting further changes that were necessary as more information regarding the Local Government Finance Statement had become available. He referred to the difficulties associated with the Budget Planning process for the current year despite the fact that work had begun with the agreement of the current year's Budget. He praised the hard work and commitment shown by all those involved. He believed that this had been the most difficult Budget process the Council had faced to date and that it was likely that the challenges would continue for the foreseeable future.

Councillor Edwards referred to the consultation that had taken place on the Budget, and advised that Appendix 6, setting out the minutes of a meeting held with Non-Domestic ratepayers on 4th February 2013, had been circulated at the meeting for consideration.

The Chair referred to the receipt of a letter from Haydon Wick Parish Council regarding the Council Tax Support Grant. This had been circulated to all Cabinet Members and he would ensure a written response was sent to the Parish Council.

Councillor Edwards reiterated the significant financial challenges facing the Council in terms of continuing pressures on services and changes in Government funding and made reference to the proposed level of Council Tax for 2013/14. He advised that he would be proposing, at this time, no increase in Swindon's Council Tax. He referred to the continuing efforts taken to transform how the Council operated, to reduce costs and deliver value for money services, particularly to the most vulnerable. He commented on the Council's commitment to encouraging economic growth in Swindon and how this was reflected in the proposed Budget. He emphasised the difficult times in which the Council found itself and the difficult decisions that had to be made. However, he believed the Budget as proposed was robust and would enable the Council to continue to deliver its objectives and the outcomes residents wanted. It would protect the most vulnerable and promote economic growth to ensure the resilience of Swindon and its residents.

Councillor Stan Pajak, Leader of the Minority Group on the Council, referred to the difficult financial challenges facing all local authorities and the difficult choices that faced the Administration and other Councillors across the country. He noted the proposal not to increase Council Tax and he was sure this would be welcomed by those on fixed-incomes or who had recently been affected by unemployment or Benefit changes. However, he believed there were choices to be made in setting the Budget and he asked that the Cabinet look again at the proposals for significant reductions in the budget for localities, that he believed were just beginning to become established and the benefits recognised by ward councillors. He asked for the Cabinet to re-visit its proposals for reducing services and support for the homeless and for the services provided by Dial-A-Ride. He highlighted the impact of reductions in library opening times and support for bus routes and how these could negatively impact on those members of the community that it wished to support. He hoped these issues could be considered further in the run up to the Council's Budget meeting on 21st February.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition, recognised the significant challenges facing the Council and the difficult choices that had to be made in achieving a balanced Budget. He commented on the budget proposals which his Group would comment on in more detail at the Council meeting. He referred to the proposal for green waste collections appearing in Appendix 4 of the report and whether this was to be additional new funding. He noted the somewhat disappointing public response to the budget consultation and wondered whether this was an indication that the significant investment in the “Big Conversation” was not delivering good value for money.

Councillor Edwards and Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services, referred to the spending on green waste collections and confirmed that this was additional funding and explained the reasons why it was proposed. The Chair commented that the Big Conversation was not established for the purpose of undertaking Budget Consultation, which was a separate, if linked, exercise, and commented on its successes to date. He believed its real benefits would only be seen in the future. He acknowledged that he too had been disappointed at the public response to this year’s Budget consultation. He would provide Councillor Grant with a more detailed written response on the consultation that had taken place and on the responses received.

Councillor Bob (Robert) Wright referred to the proposals impacting on funding to Threshold Housing Link and the important role that the organisation played with regard to “rough sleepers” and the homeless. He believed that support for the organisation was crucial at this time given the rise in local unemployment and the welfare changes that could result in more people becoming homeless or rough sleepers. The work undertaken by the organisation saved the Council and other public sector bodies money through preventing situations arising where costly public sector interventions had to be made. The Chair advised that he had recently met with representatives of the organisation and that the proposal remained under review.

The Chair reiterated the difficulty the Council faced in reaching a Budget for 2013/14 and the difficult decisions that had to be made. He referred to the continuing challenges the Council would face going forward and the increasing pressures on services. He highlighted the difficulties in arriving at certainties on the sustainability of services, particularly, for an ageing population in the future and in the planning for those services. He thanked all those who had been involved in the Budget process both from within the Council and outside.

Resolved – (1) That it be noted that –

- (i) The Council does not expect to need to replenish General Reserves as part of the 2013/14 Budget Setting process;
- (ii) The feedback received to the Borough-wide consultation process on the Draft Budget, as set out in Appendix 5 to the joint report, has been taken into account in the Budget Setting process;
- (iii) The level of uncertainty relating to the level of funding available to support the 2013/14 Budget due to the lateness of the Local Government Finance Settlement has been recognised and that, subject to materiality, the Board Director, Resources recommends that any change in the forecast settlement position will be accommodated by amending the level of New Homes Bonus funding included in the 2013/14 Budget proposals;

- (iv) The outcome of the consultation meeting with business representatives from Swindon, on behalf of non-domestic rate payers that took place on 4th February 2013 has been taken into account in the Budget Setting process;
- (v) In line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2003, the Board Director, Resources, in his Section 151 capacity, confirms the robustness of the estimates underlying the recommended Budget and having reviewed the financial risks being faced by the Council concludes that the proposed level of General Reserves (£6m) is adequate in the context of the earmarked reserves held, specific contingencies and the proposed general contingency of £1.2m.

(2) That the proposed changes in fees and charges, as set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report, that fall outside of the assumed Council-wide 3% blanket increase be approved.

(3) That there be no change in the level of Special Expenses charged per household for 2013/14 with the total level of Special Expenses for 2013/14 being £1,001,388.

(4) That the Specific Reserves held in support of the 2013/14 Revenue Budget, as set out in Appendix 7 to the joint report, be approved.

(5) That no funding be passed from the Borough Council to parish and town councils to mitigate the impact of changes to the tax base linked to the Council Tax Support Scheme.

(6) That, subject to any changes resulting from the Government's announcement of the final Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013/14 the Council be recommended that:-

- the 2013/14 Budget be set at £148.040m as detailed in Appendices 2 to 4 of the joint report, save that the redirection of New Homes Bonus to fund Base Budget expenditure be reduced from £2.344m to £2.106m and New Homes Bonus Adjustment Grant of £0.239m be used instead to support the Base Budget;
- there be no increase in Council Tax for 2013/14, and
- it be determined that the proposed increase in the basic amount of Council Tax for 2013/14 is not excessive in accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011.

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

95. Capital Programme and Treasury Strategy Statement 2013/14 (Minute for Confirmation)

The Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources submitted a joint report concerning (a) new Capital Programme requirements for 2013/14, and (b) the Council's proposed Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14 including the (i) Annual Investment Strategy, (ii) Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement, and (iii) Prudential Indicators for the Financial Years up to 2015/16.

Councillor Mark Edwards, Cabinet Member for Finance, referred to the contents and purpose of the report and in particular to the proposed changes to the Capital Programme and the Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14. He commented on the sustainability of the Council's capital spending and explained

how the Capital Programme remained focussed on the support for the essential infrastructure Swindon needed. He advised that further consideration on the use of the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme would form part of a wider report on housing market support to be submitted to a future meeting.

Resolved – (1) That the new Capital Programme schemes, as identified in Appendix 2 to the joint report, be approved.

(2) That it be noted that the Cabinet had previously agreed in October 2012 that officers would bring forward a recommendation on whether the Council should participate in the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme, and that it now be agreed that the Board Director, Resources report further on this issue to the Cabinet meeting on 20th March 2013, as part of a wider report presenting a range of housing market support measures for consideration.

(3) That, subject to the confirmation of the Council:

- **the Prudential Indicators for the Financial Years up to 2015/16 be noted and approved;**
- **the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement for 2013/14 be approved;**
- **the Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/14 as set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report, be approved.**

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

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COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

Council

Date: 21st February 2013

Author: Cabinet Member, Finance and Board Director Resources
Wards: All Wards
Locality Affected: All Locality Areas
Parishes Affected: All Parishes

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To enable Members to formally resolve the Borough's Council Tax for 2013-14 recognising that Billing Authorities have a statutory requirement to set the annual Council Tax bills by 11th March.

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve that there will be no increase in the Council Tax levels for the Borough Council element of the 2013/14 bills in accordance with the budget proposed by Cabinet on 6th February 2013;
- 2.2 Determine that the Basic Amount of Council Tax for the Financial Year 2013-14 is not excessive within the statutory definitions set out within part I of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and that therefore no referendum is required;
- 2.3 Pass the Resolution set out as Annex 2 to this report covering all aspects of the bills.

3. Detail

Council Tax Calculations

- 3.1 A number of changes have been made to the Council Tax calculations in recent years with further changes for 2013-14.
- The Localism Act 2011 made significant changes to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and now requires the billing authority to calculate a council tax requirement for the year, rather than the previously required budget requirement, and determine whether the proposed level of Council Tax increase is excessive when compared to the previous year.
 - The Local Government Finance Act 2012 recognises the partial localisation of Business Rate income from 1st April 2013 introduced as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2013-14, whereby Councils now have a base-line level of Business Rate income and are required to estimate the likely surplus or deficit at the end of the year against that base-line. For 2013-14, Swindon has estimated a Business

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

Council

Date: 21st February 2013

Rates Retention Scheme Collection Fund Surplus of £0.45m for Swindon Borough Council and this is added to the surplus or deficit assumed on the Council Tax Collection Fund (a £2m surplus for 2013-14) as part of the Council Tax calculations.

- Changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme introduced from 1st April 2013 have had the impact of reducing the Tax Base of the Borough which is partly compensated by an increase in formula grant from the Government paid to the Borough Council, Police and Fire Authorities.
- 3.2 The calculations include precept figures from the Wiltshire Police Authority, the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority and the Town and Parish Councils within the Borough as well as the Council's own budget.
- 3.3 The provisional 2013/14 Council Tax calculations and the formal Council Tax Resolution are set out as Appendix 1 and Annex 2 respectively. These proposals are based on the budget proposals agreed by Cabinet on 6th February 2013 resulting in a net budget for 2013/14 of £140,039,600 and a zero increase for the Swindon Borough Council (SBC) element of the Council Tax. Should the Council's Budget for 2013-14 be amended at the Council meeting or any proposed changes be made to the level of Council Tax for 2013-14, a revised Resolution and set of Council Tax calculations will be made available at the meeting.
- 3.4 The legal position is set out by the Director of Law and Democratic Services in Annex 1.
- 3.5 Table One sets out the provisional precept and budget figures for each element of the Council Tax bill with a comparison with the previous year. The increase in the amount of the Borough Council, Police and Fire Budgets is funded from an increase in the level of Government Grant paid to Councils in lieu of the reduction in Council Tax income generated as a result of the changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme and a rise in the number of households in the Borough when compared with the figures for 2012-13. The total bill including parish precepts shows a modest increase (0.1%) in the overall Band D bill due to the average reductions in parish precepts being higher than the reduction in the level of tax base reflecting changes to the Council Tax Support scheme.
- 3.6 In accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011, the Council has a duty to determine whether its Council Tax increase is considered to be excessive in which case it would be required to hold a referendum. For 2013/14, the Government has set the threshold at 2% for Swindon and, as the Council is proposing no change to the level of Council Tax in 2013/14, no referendum is necessary.
-

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

Council

Date: 21st February 2013

Table One – Increase in Budgets and Precepts 2013-14

Element of Council Tax Bill	2013/14 £'000	2012/13 £'000	% Change
Amount of SBC Budget met from Council Tax	79,978	83,837	-10.6%
Wiltshire Police Authority Precept	10,321	11,541	-10.6%
Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority Precept	4,081	4,563	-10.6%
Total Town and Parish Precepts	1,857	1,946	-4.6%
Total	91,238	101,887	-10.5%
Tax Base	65,420.8	73,149.0	
Band D Average Council Tax	1,394.63	1,392.87	0.1%

3.7 The resulting Council Tax levels and percentage increases for a Band D property are summarised in Table Two.

Table Two – Headline Band D Council Tax Increases 2013/14

	Band D Council Tax 2013-14	% Increase
#Swindon Borough Council	£1,146.09	0.0%
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	£62.38	0.0%
Wiltshire Police Authority	£157.77	0.0%
*Average charge for Parish / Town Councils	£28.39	1.7%
Total Bill	£1,394.63	0.0%

*These figures will differ per parish as set out in Appendices Two and Three
 # The figure of £1,146.11 represents the average Council Tax levied by Swindon Borough Council, which differs between parished and non-parished areas (the Special Expense area). The Borough Council's element of the Council Tax bill will appear as two separate lines on the bill as follows:-

Table Three – Swindon Borough Council Elements of the Council Tax Bill

	Band D Council Tax 2013/14	% Increase
Swindon Borough Council (Basic Charge)	1,130.79	0.0%
~ Non-Parished Area (Special	27.81	0.0%

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

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Expenses Charge)		
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~ The Special Expenses element is only chargeable to households within the non-parished area.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 Not applicable.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

5.1 The starting position for the Council Tax calculations is the Council's budget for 2013/14. The Council Tax figures have been calculated based on the precepts agreed by the precepting bodies and the budget proposed by Cabinet on 6th February 2013. Should any change be made to the final budget agreed by Council on the night, the figures will be recalculated and an amended version of Appendices 1 and 2 and the formal Council Tax Resolution in Annex 2 will be circulated at the meeting.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

5.2 The implications of the Council's 2013/14 Budget are covered by the Revenue Budget report elsewhere on the agenda.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

5.3 This report recommends no changes to services and no changes to Council Tax levels so no other implications are envisaged as a result of the recommendations.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

5.4 A corporate priority is to have affordable Council Tax.

Diversity Impact Assessment

5.5 No diversity impact assessment has been undertaken for this report as a Council Tax has to be set by each Billing Authority and no increase is proposed for 2013-14.

Risk Management

5.6 This report recommends no changes to services and no changes to Council Tax levels so no new risks are envisaged as a result of the recommendations.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

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6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

Revenue Budget Report to Cabinet – 6th February 2013

8. Appendices

- Annex 1 - Legal Position
- Annex 2 - Council Tax Resolution
- Appendix 1 - Council Tax Levels 2013/14
- Appendix 2 - Parish Precepts 2012/13 and 2013/14
- Appendix 3 – Council Tax Base 2012/13 and 2013/14

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

Council

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Annex 1

COUNCIL TAX 2013/2014 - LEGAL POSITION

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Member is not regarded as having a personal and prejudicial interest in a matter unless it affects the member "to a greater extent than other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants" of Swindon, and is so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgment of the public interest. However any Member who is in arrears with their Council Tax payments needs to give careful consideration to the provisions of Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. This states that if any arrears remain unpaid for at least 2 months, then the Member must disclose this at the beginning of any meeting which is to consider any Council Tax calculation or any matter which might affect the Council Tax calculation, and shall not vote on any such matter. If any Member is likely to be in such a position, or is concerned as to whether any interest should be declared, then advice should be sought as quickly as possible from the Director of Law and Democratic Services.

2 Statutory Position

- 2.1 The Borough Council is required to maintain a Collection Fund for both Council Tax and National Non-Domestic (Business) Rates. Any sums paid into an authority's Collection Fund shall be used in the making of payments which are to be met from that fund or transfers from it.
- 2.2 The Borough as "billing authority" for the Borough is required to set an amount of Council Tax for each financial year and for each category of buildings. The amounts of Council Tax must be set by billing authorities before 11 March in any financial year, but such amounts are not invalid merely because they are set on or after that date. No amount may be set before the earlier of the following:-
- (a) 1 March
 - (b) The date of issue to the Council of a precept for the relevant financial year from a "major precepting authority" (e.g. the Police Authority).
- 2.3 No amount may be set unless the Council has made the calculations required by the 1992 Act (as amended by Section 74 of the Localism Act 2011). Members will recall that one of the required steps was to determine the respective Council Tax Base for the Borough and for each parished and non-parished area. The Local Government Act 2003 (section 84) replaces section 67 Local Government Finance Act 1992 which required full Council to formally approve the Council Tax base for the whole of its area. Under the new regulations, it is now for each Local Authority to make its own arrangements for adopting the Council Tax base. The tax base for 2013/14 has been calculated in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 as amended (the 1992 Regulations). The figures within Appendix 3 show the Tax Base for both 2012/13 and 2013/14 as a consequence of following these rules.
- 2.4 The 1992 Act provides that billing and precepting authorities may make substitute calculations of their budget requirements and amounts of Council Tax. Except in certain

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special cases (e.g. where the previous calculations have been quashed), the substitute budget requirement cannot be greater than the previous requirement. In the case of billing and major precepting authorities (e.g. the Police Authority), any substitute amount of tax calculation as applicable to any dwelling cannot exceed the previously calculated amount.

- 2.5 If the amount of Council Tax set as a result of substitute calculations is less than the original amount set, persons who have overpaid may require repayment or may allow the billing authority to choose whether to repay or credit the overpayment.
- 2.6 Differential charging is provided for within a billing authority's area. These provisions require the Council to set differential amounts of Council Tax for different parts of the Borough in response to precepts issued for parts from Parishes and for its own special expenses. The Borough's Special Expenses for 2013-14, under the 1992 Act, were agreed by Cabinet on 6th February 2013.
- 2.7 A "major precepting authority" under the 1992 Act includes a Police Authority and a Fire Authority whilst a "local precepting authority" includes a parish council and the chair of a parish meeting. In the case of a local precepting authority (e.g. a parish council) the billing authority has no power to set substitute amounts of Council Tax if the precept is issued late, but in this event regulations allow billing authorities to anticipate such precepts.
- 2.8 A billing authority, which has set amounts of Council Tax, is required to publish notice of the amounts within 21 days of setting them in at least one newspaper circulating in the area. Failure to do this does not make the amounts invalid.
- 2.9 In accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011, as a billing authority the Borough has a duty to determine whether its relevant basic amount of council tax for a financial year is excessive. If, according to the principles approved in Section 52ZB of the Local Government Act 1992 the Boroughs council tax for the year is deemed to be excessive the Borough will be required to hold a referendum. The Secretary of State has proposed the Council Tax principles he is minded to set for 2013-14. These are that authorities will be required to seek the approval of their local electorate if, compared with 2012-13, they set an increase in the basic amount of Council Tax that exceeds 2% for a billing authority like Swindon.

3 General Advice

- 3.1 In considering whether to approve any given level of expenditure, Members must be satisfied that there is evidence which establishes that such a level of expenditure is necessary to meet the needs of the Borough and to comply with the statutory duty to set amounts of Council Tax. Members should have particular regard to the effect on Council Tax payers of various expenditure levels.
- 3.2 Members should consider whether income can reasonably be increased commensurate with the responsibility to meet what Members perceive are the needs of the community.
- 3.3 Members are advised that the legislation enabling the Business Rates Retention Scheme and the Council Tax Support Scheme are as yet to be implemented although

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

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the Government expects to do this before the end of this financial year. The estimated provision in the budget for the retention is subject to the scheme being implemented in the form indicated by Government

Director, Law and Democratic Services

10th February 2013

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

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Annex 2

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION 2013/14

1 Legal Advice

That it be recorded that the Director of Law and Democratic Services' advice has been taken into account in the setting of the level of Council Tax for 2013/14.

2 Revenue Budget

That it be noted that the Council's revenue budget is £148,039,600, as recommended by the Cabinet to this Council on 6th February 2013.

3 Council Tax Base

That it be noted that in accordance with Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) the Council's Tax Base for 2012/13 is **65,420.8** in total with the breakdown by Parish set out in Appendix 3.

4 Borough / Parish Council Tax Rates

That the following amounts be calculated by the Council in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended by the Localism Act 2011:-

- (a) **Borough / Parish Gross Expenditure** £449,896, being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the 1992 Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils.
- (b) **Borough Gross Income plus Collection Fund Balance** £375,512,719 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act.
- (c) **Borough/Parish Net Expenditure** £74,383,661 being the amount by which the aggregate at 4(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 4(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its COUNCIL TAX REQUIREMENT for the year.
- (d) **Basic Amount of Tax (including average parish precepts)** £1174.47 being the amount at 4(c) above divided by the amount at 3 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. In accordance with Schedule 5 of the Localism Act 2011, this sum is not considered to be excessive.
- (e) **Special Items** £2,858,168 being the aggregate of Special Expenses and Parish Precepts and collectively known as special items and referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act.
- (f) **Basic Amount of Tax (Unparished Area)** £1,130.79 being the amount at 4(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 4(e) above by the amount at 3, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTION

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basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special item relates.

- (g) **Basic Amount of Tax (Special and Parished Areas)** the amounts shown in Appendix 2, being the amounts given by adding to the amount at 4(f) above, the amounts of the special items relating to dwellings in the appropriate part of the Council's area - divided by the appropriate amount at 3 above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a special item relates.
- (h) **Borough/Parish Council Tax Rates** the amounts shown in Appendix 1, being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at 4(g) by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands.

- 5 Wiltshire Joint Police Authority** That it be noted that for the year 2012/13 the Wiltshire Joint Police Authority has stated the following amounts in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
£105.18	£122.71	£140.24	£157.77	£192.83	£227.89	£262.95	£315.54

- 6 Swindon and Wiltshire Fire Authority** That it be noted that for the year 2012/13 the Swindon and Wiltshire Joint Fire Authority has stated the following amounts in precept issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:

Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
£41.59	£48.52	£55.45	£62.38	£76.24	£90.10	£103.97	£124.76

SUMMARY OF COUNCIL TAX BILLS BY VALUATION BAND

AREA OF THE BOROUGH	VALUATION BAND							
	A £ - p	B £ - p	C £ - p	D £ - p	E £ - p	F £ - p	G £ - p	H £ - p
Bishopstone	927.79	1,082.42	1,237.05	1,391.68	1,700.94	2,010.20	2,319.47	2,783.36
Blunsdon	912.99	1,065.15	1,217.32	1,369.48	1,673.81	1,978.13	2,282.47	2,738.96
Castle Eaton	925.06	1,079.23	1,233.41	1,387.58	1,695.93	2,004.28	2,312.64	2,775.16
Chiseldon	922.63	1,076.40	1,230.17	1,383.94	1,691.48	1,999.02	2,306.57	2,767.88
Covingham	920.54	1,073.96	1,227.38	1,380.80	1,687.64	1,994.48	2,301.34	2,761.60
Hannington	919.08	1,072.25	1,225.43	1,378.61	1,684.97	1,991.32	2,297.69	2,757.22
Haydon Wick	921.53	1,075.12	1,228.70	1,382.29	1,689.46	1,996.64	2,303.82	2,764.58
Highworth	976.56	1,139.31	1,302.07	1,464.83	1,790.35	2,115.86	2,441.39	2,929.66
Inglesham	900.63	1,050.73	1,200.84	1,350.94	1,651.15	1,951.35	2,251.57	2,701.88
Liddington	924.97	1,079.13	1,233.29	1,387.45	1,695.77	2,004.09	2,312.42	2,774.90
South Marston	937.14	1,093.33	1,249.52	1,405.71	1,718.09	2,030.47	2,342.85	2,811.42
Stanton Fitzwarren	950.84	1,109.32	1,267.79	1,426.26	1,743.20	2,060.15	2,377.10	2,852.52
Stratton St Margaret	970.98	1,132.80	1,294.63	1,456.46	1,780.12	2,103.77	2,427.44	2,912.92
Wanborough	943.57	1,100.83	1,258.09	1,415.35	1,729.87	2,044.39	2,358.92	2,830.70
Wroughton	967.70	1,128.99	1,290.27	1,451.55	1,774.11	2,096.68	2,419.25	2,903.10
Swindon Non-Parished Area	919.17	1,072.36	1,225.56	1,378.75	1,685.14	1,991.52	2,297.92	2,757.50

BREAKDOWN OF COUNCIL TAX BILLS BY VALUATION BAND

Valuation Band

Parishes	A £ - p	B £ - p	C £ - p	D £ - p	E £ - p	F £ - p	G £ - p	H £ - p
<u>Bishopstone</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Bishopstone	27.16	31.69	36.21	40.74	49.79	58.85	67.90	81.48
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	927.79	1,082.42	1,237.05	1,391.68	1,700.94	2,010.20	2,319.47	2,783.36
<u>Blunsdon</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Blunsdon	12.36	14.42	16.48	18.54	22.66	26.78	30.90	37.08
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	912.99	1,065.15	1,217.32	1,369.48	1,673.81	1,978.13	2,282.47	2,738.96
<u>Castle Eaton</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Castle Eaton	24.43	28.50	32.57	36.64	44.78	52.93	61.07	73.28
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	925.06	1,079.23	1,233.41	1,387.58	1,695.93	2,004.28	2,312.64	2,775.16
<u>Chiseldon</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Chiseldon	22.00	25.67	29.33	33.00	40.33	47.67	55.00	66.00
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	922.63	1,076.40	1,230.17	1,383.94	1,691.48	1,999.02	2,306.57	2,767.88
<u>Covingham</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Covingham	19.91	23.23	26.54	29.86	36.49	43.13	49.77	59.72
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54

Valuation Band

Parishes	A £ - p	B £ - p	C £ - p	D £ - p	E £ - p	F £ - p	G £ - p	H £ - p
BILL AMOUNT	920.54	1,073.96	1,227.38	1,380.80	1,687.64	1,994.48	2,301.34	2,761.60
<u>Hannington</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Hannington	18.45	21.52	24.59	27.67	33.82	39.97	46.12	55.34
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	919.08	1,072.25	1,225.43	1,378.61	1,684.97	1,991.32	2,297.69	2,757.22
<u>Haydon Wick</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Haydon Wick	20.90	24.39	27.86	31.35	38.31	45.29	52.25	62.70
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	921.53	1,075.12	1,228.70	1,382.29	1,689.46	1,996.64	2,303.82	2,764.58
<u>Highworth</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Highworth	75.93	88.58	101.23	113.89	139.20	164.51	189.82	227.78
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	976.56	1,139.31	1,302.07	1,464.83	1,790.35	2,115.86	2,441.39	2,929.66
<u>Inglesham</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Inglesham	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	900.63	1,050.73	1,200.84	1,350.94	1,651.15	1,951.35	2,251.57	2,701.88
<u>Liddington</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Liddington	24.34	28.40	32.45	36.51	44.62	52.74	60.85	73.02
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	924.97	1,079.13	1,233.29	1,387.45	1,695.77	2,004.09	2,312.42	2,774.90

Valuation Band

<u>Parishes</u>	A £ - p	B £ - p	C £ - p	D £ - p	E £ - p	F £ - p	G £ - p	H £ - p
<u>South Marston</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
South Marston	36.51	42.60	48.68	54.77	66.94	79.12	91.28	109.54
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	937.14	1,093.33	1,249.52	1,405.71	1,718.09	2,030.47	2,342.85	2,811.42
<u>Stanton Fitzwarren</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Stanton Fitzwarren	50.21	58.59	66.95	75.32	92.05	108.80	125.53	150.64
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	950.84	1,109.32	1,267.79	1,426.26	1,743.20	2,060.15	2,377.10	2,852.52
<u>Stratton St Margaret</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Stratton St Margaret	70.35	82.07	93.79	105.52	128.97	152.42	175.87	211.04
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	970.98	1,132.80	1,294.63	1,456.46	1,780.12	2,103.77	2,427.44	2,912.92
<u>Wanborough</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Wanborough	42.94	50.10	57.25	64.41	78.72	93.04	107.35	128.82
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	943.57	1,100.83	1,258.09	1,415.35	1,729.87	2,044.39	2,358.92	2,830.70
<u>Wroughton</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Wroughton	67.07	78.26	89.43	100.61	122.96	145.33	167.68	201.22
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	967.70	1,128.99	1,290.27	1,451.55	1,774.11	2,096.68	2,419.25	2,903.10

Valuation Band

<u>Parishes</u>	A £ - p	B £ - p	C £ - p	D £ - p	E £ - p	F £ - p	G £ - p	H £ - p
<u>Special Expense Area</u>								
<u>Swindon Non-Parished Area</u>								
Swindon 'General Expenses'	753.86	879.50	1,005.15	1,130.79	1,382.08	1,633.36	1,884.65	2,261.58
Special Expenses	18.54	21.63	24.72	27.81	33.99	40.17	46.35	55.62
Wilts & Swindon Fire Authority	41.59	48.52	55.45	62.38	76.24	90.10	103.97	124.76
Wiltshire Police Authority	105.18	122.71	140.24	157.77	192.83	227.89	262.95	315.54
BILL AMOUNT	919.17	1,072.36	1,225.56	1,378.75	1,685.14	1,991.52	2,297.92	2,757.50

TOWN / PARISH PRECEPTS 2012/13 to 2013/14

	Band D Charge	Tax Base	Annual Precept		Change	
	2013-14	2013-14	2013-14	2012-13		
			£	£	£	%
Bishopstone	40.74	311.0	12,670	12,805	-135	-1.1%
Blunsdon	18.55	4,922.1	91,285	94,130	-2,845	-3.0%
Castle Eaton	36.65	105.6	3,870	3,870	0	0.0%
Chiseldon	33.01	970.2	32,022	34,656	-2,634	-7.6%
Covingham	29.86	1,215.5	36,300	38,800	-2,500	-6.4%
Hannington	27.67	113.9	3,152	3,152	0	0.0%
Haydon Wick	31.35	7,579.4	237,615	247,789	-10,174	-4.1%
Highworth	113.90	2,809.5	320,000	320,000	0	0.0%
Inglesham	0.00	45.8	0	0	0	-
Liddington	36.52	164.3	6,000	6,000	0	0.0%
South Marston	54.77	333.5	18,266	19,312	-1,046	-5.4%
Stanton Fitzwarren	75.33	94.4	7,111	7,111	0	0.0%
Stratton St Margaret	105.52	7,274.5	767,627	823,905	-56,278	-6.8%
Wanborough	64.42	837.1	53,924	55,189	-1,265	-2.3%
Wroughton	100.61	2,635.8	265,188	279,827	-14,639	-5.2%
Total		29,412.6	1,855,030	1,946,546	-91,516	-4.7%
Non-Parished Area (Special Expenses)	27.81	36,008.2	1,001,388	1,162,238	-160,850	-13.8%
TAX BASE		65,420.8				

Council Tax Base 2012/13 and 2013/14

	2013-14 Tax Base	2012/13 Tax Base
Bishopstone	311.0	320.7
Blunsdon	4,922.1	5,008.2
Castle Eaton	105.6	108.8
Chiseldon	970.2	1,050.6
Covingham	1,215.5	1,298.0
Hannington	113.9	116.5
Haydon Wick	7,579.4	7,903.1
Highworth	2,809.5	3,084.6
Inglesham	45.8	49.4
Liddington	164.3	173.7
South Marston	333.5	352.6
Stanton Fitzwarren	94.4	101.0
Stratton St Margaret	7,274.5	8,004.0
Wanborough	837.1	865.3
Wroughton	2,635.8	2,920.4
Total	29,412.6	31,356.9
Non-Parished Area	36,008.2	41,792.1
TAX BASE	65,420.8	73,149.0

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**Housing Revenue Account (HRA)
– Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14**

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Author:	Cabinet Member for One Swindon, Localities and Housing Board Director, Service Delivery
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To present the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets for 2013/14, including proposals for rents, service charges and support charges and the debt for 2013/14.
- 1.2 This report recommends a budget that has a priority of investment.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council that:

- 2.1 Rents for 2013/14 are increased in line with convergence targets of RPI plus 0.5% plus maximum of £2.00, which would increase average rents for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings to £77.82 per week (52 week basis), an increase of 4.8%. This will be an average increase of £3.59 per week.
- 2.2 Housing related support charges for 2013/14 and service charges for 2013/14 be approved as outlined in Appendix 2.
- 2.3 Leaseholder service charges for 2013/14 be approved as shown in Appendix 3.
- 2.4 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) proposed budget for 2013/14, shown in Appendix 4, be approved and that the HRA Capital Investment Budget and Funding be approved as shown in Appendix 5.
- 2.5 The provision for debt repayment in 2013/14 of £5m as detailed at Appendix 1 be approved.
- 2.6 The Council include within its Constitution's Scheme of Delegations an authority enabling the Board Director, Service Delivery in consultation with Board Director, Resources, Head of Housing Services and the Cabinet Member with portfolio responsibility for Housing to use the Regeneration and Acquisition fund, as proposed in this report of up to £1m, to purchase 1 and 2 Bedroom accommodation to enable these properties to be included with the Council's housing stock.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No.463976, or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14

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- 2.7 Rents charged on General Fund properties be on the same basis as HRA properties, which would show an average increase of 4.4%, and the service charges as shown in Appendix 6 be approved.
- 2.8 Rents charged for plots at the Hay Lane Residential Gypsy Site are increased by £2.00 per week to £47.00 per week (52 week basis) and the rents for work pens (small lock-ups), as shown in Appendix 6 be approved.
- 2.9 The homelessness contribution outlined in Appendix 6 be approved.
- 2.10 The budgeted 12/13 debt repayment of £7,977,300 is reduced/removed and the additional funding be transferred to HRA reserves at year end, subsequently to be allocated towards increasing the capital programme for 13/14 as detailed at paragraph 3.45

3. Detail

- 3.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a statutory account set up in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The account is ring fenced and cannot be subsidised by the General Fund or vice versa.
- 3.2 The HRA contains all expenditure relating to the Council's landlord function of over 10,500 dwellings, supported housing schemes, sheltered schemes, commercial premises and garages. Income is generated through rents, charges and interest received on balances. There are currently 13,000 tenants. There is a waiting list of 14,000. Swindon has a disproportionately large number of sheltered housing schemes and non-traditional houses which make up 42% of the total stock. At the time of preparing the report 59% of our tenants are on some form of Housing Benefit. In the vast majority of these cases, whether they are in receipt of partial or full Housing Benefit the rent increase proposed will be covered by an increase in benefit received for these tenants
- 3.3 Council rents are approximately 50% of market rents as shown in the table below:

Swindon	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	Period
	£ week	£ week	£ week	
Housing Association Rent	67.90	80.40	92.80	Jan 11 - Dec 11
Assumed Increases for 2012 - 2013 (5.6%)	71.70	84.90	98.00	12-13
Assumed Increases for 2013 - 2014 (2.6%)	73.57	87.11	100.54	13-14
Private - Median	107.00	132.00	161.00	Nov 11 - Oct 12
Private - Upper Quartile	114.00	137.00	178.00	Nov 11 - Oct 12

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Affordable – 80% of Private	85.60	105.60	128.80	80% of median
HRA Current Average	66.34	74.45	80.74	Apr 12 - Mar 13
HRA Proposed Average	69.87	77.79	84.59	Apr 13 - Mar 14

- 3.4 The rent figures in the above table are sourced from Hometrack (with reference to Regulatory Statistical Survey Return for the Housing Association data). The assumed percentage uplifts applied to Housing Association Rents equate to RPI increase applied to HRA rents for the same years in order to arrive at an estimate for 13/14.
- 3.5 In December 2012 tenants had the opportunity to vote on whether they wished to keep the Council as their landlord. This arose out of the change in Government policy from the “subsidy” system to the “self financing” system. The significance of this vote was that by remaining under Council control, Swindon Borough Council was allocated a debt of £138.6million to be paid from the Housing Revenue Account. This debt has been paid to the Government and therefore money used for debt repayment is not available for investment in the stock. It is important to emphasise that the debt repayment is solely from the Housing Revenue Account and therefore has no impact on Council Tax.
- 3.6 Self financing brings challenges and opportunities. While the Council now gets to keep all of the rents that it receives, it needs to invest in the stock and pay off the debt. The Council therefore needs to balance keeping rents affordable, investing in the stock and paying off the debt. This has to be done taking into account the needs of both current and future tenants.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Rents and Charges

- 3.7 Swindon’s Housing Revenue Account (HRA) receives the majority of its income for the services it provides to tenants. Tenants can pay up to 3 elements for their homes:
- 3.7.1 Rent - a charge for the occupation of a dwelling. Rents pay for the management and maintenance of the properties.
- 3.7.2 Service charge - additional services which may not be provided to every tenant, or which may be connected with communal facilities e.g. a caretaker service.
- 3.7.3 Support charge - additional services to help tenants maintain their tenancies i.e. the warden service in sheltered accommodation and the Homeline alarm system.

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Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14

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Dwelling Rents and Capital Investment / Debt Repayment

- 3.8 The HRA Self Financing regime came into force on the 1st April 2012; this brought with it a number of freedoms for local authorities with council housing. The biggest of these was the requirement to enable the HRA to retain all revenue generated locally instead of having to pay a levy (subsidy of £10.4m in 2011/12) to the Government. This freedom however came at a cost as the HRA was required to take on a loan of £138.6m to finance the settlement payment due to the Government, in addition to the £11.9m of debt that already existed.
- 3.9 The debt settlement figure was based on a 30 year model that projected rents and other costs, discounted to present day values. The debt calculation assumed that HRA rents would continue to follow the rent convergence guidelines that have been in force since 2000 and the debt figure was therefore higher than it would have been had the assumption around rent increases been lower.
- 3.10 The rent convergence rules work as follows:
- 3.10.1 Every property has a target rent set based on a national formula that takes into account the value of the property as at 1st January 1999 and the number of bedrooms. This rent is increased by RPI +0.5% each year.
- 3.10.2 The actual rent being charged for the property is then compared with the target and the gap between the two determined. The date for convergence was published by Government each year and is currently set at 2015/16 i.e. 3 year's time.
- 3.10.3 The convergence rules expected the actual rent to increase by RPI +0.5% plus a share of the gap (up to a maximum of £2 per week). Thus if the gap between target and actual was £4.50 the rent would increase by RPI +0.5% + £1.50 (£4.50/3 years). However if the gap was £7.00 then the cap would come into play and the increase would be RPI + 0.5% + £2.00 (the maximum rather than £2.33)
- 3.11 The expectation within the self-financing settlement was that Swindon would continue to apply the convergence guidelines to its rent. Applying this to Swindon rents would result in a 4.8% average increase for tenants from £74.23 per week to £77.82 per week. This would increase the rental income by £2.0m to £42.4m. It is still open to the Council to set the rent at less than this level but this will have other impacts detailed below.
- 3.12 The Housing Vote document stated (Fact 1, page 6) "If the proposed new housing landlord, Swindon Housing Association, is set up following a ballot of tenants, rent increases would still be subject to the same Government formula as if the Council remains the landlord. The Government formula is currently the rate of inflation plus 0.5% plus up to £2.00 per week".
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Housing Revenue Account (HRA) **– Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14**

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- 3.13 There are currently around 10,500 properties, of which approximately 1,000 are already at the target rent and would therefore not get the additional £2.00 increase on top of RPI plus 0.5%. Of the remaining 9,500 tenants, around 2,500 would receive the full £2.00 increase and the balance of 7,000 would receive an increase somewhere in between depending on the individual property.
- 3.14 The decision on rent policy has a direct impact on the amount of funding that is available for capital investment and debt repayment. There are a number of options on how and when the debt is repaid. The average interest rate on the £150m of loans is 3.3%, so £1m of repayment reduces interest costs in the following years by £33k per annum. The original self-finance business plan made provision to repay debt as quickly as possible whilst maintaining the capital investment programme at the current level of £11m per year, and proposed that a repayment of £8m would be made in 2013/14.
- 3.15 All loans taken out as a result of self-financing are in the name of Swindon Borough Council, rather than the Councils Housing Revenue Account as the Council is the legal entity and has the power to borrow rather than the HRA. As such, they need to be viewed as part of the overall Council borrowing, although administratively the loan interest is ring-fenced and re-charged directly to the HRA. This enables a great degree of flexibility to the debt repayment strategy and the HRA therefore has a choice around how much of the debt it decides to repay and when as it forms part of a larger debt portfolio.
- 3.16 While delaying debt repayment would make additional monies available for capital investment, the inevitable consequence is that a greater proportion of income will be spent on interest because the debt will be held for longer. This would also reduce the scope for additional investment for future tenants.
- 3.17 On the basis that the debt settlement was calculated on the assumption that the HRA could afford to repay it over 30 years based on rents would move towards convergence, it is therefore prudent that the business plan makes provision towards repaying the debt. Although the original business plan made provision for repaying the majority of debt within the first 20 years, it is important to ensure that tenants receive the benefit of early capital investment and therefore it is proposed to repay the debt evenly over 30 years at £5m per annum
- 3.18 Rent increases being set at the convergence rate, and repaying debt of £5m in 2013/14 would result in an overall capital programme for 2013/14 of £16.8m. If the rents are set at the lower level of RPI + 0.5% this would be reduced by £708k and the amount available for capital investment would reduce by the same figure.
- 3.19 As an indication of what this would mean in terms of capital investment, a new bathroom costs around £3,100 and a new kitchen £4,500 and therefore a reduction of £708k in the funding available for capital investment would result in
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228 less bathrooms or 157 less kitchens being replaced in 2013/14. The reduced level of income however would impact on future years as future rent increases would be from a lower base, and reduced investment of £708k pa for 10 years broadly equates to 2,380 bathrooms or 1,570 kitchens. All of these options assume that the current uncommitted HRA capital reserves of £5.7m are maintained.

- 3.20 The following table summarises the effect of the rent levels on the balance available over the next 5 years to support capital investment or repay debt. The expenditure figures include all other costs such as day to day management, repairs and maintenance, interest on debt.

	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	Total
RPI + 0.5% + £2							
Income	46.3	48.6	49.2	51.2	52.7	54.2	255.9
Expenditure	-27.2	-26.7	-27.3	-27.8	-28.0	-28.7	-138.5
Balance	19.1	21.9	21.9	23.4	24.7	25.5	117.4
RPI + 0.5%							
Income	46.3	47.9	47.8	49.0	50.4	51.8	246.9
Expenditure	-27.2	-26.7	-27.2	-27.3	-28.0	-28.7	-138.0
Balance	19.1	21.2	20.5	21.7	22.4	23.1	108.9
RPI							
Income	46.3	47.7	47.4	48.4	49.6	50.7	243.8
Expenditure	-27.2	-26.7	-27.2	-27.3	-28.0	-28.7	-138.0
Balance	19.1	21.0	20.1	21.1	21.6	22.1	105.8
Rent Freeze							
Income	46.3	46.6	45.3	45.4	45.5	45.6	228.5
Expenditure	-27.2	-26.7	-27.2	-27.3	-28.0	-28.7	-138.0
Balance	19.1	19.9	18.1	18.1	17.5	16.9	90.5

Support and Service Charges

- 3.21 As part of rent setting last year all service charges were re-calculated to ensure that costs were fully recovered and this policy has continued this year. The main cost pressures this year have come from increases in the cost of utilities which are continuing to rise well above the rate of inflation (Gas is predicted to rise by 7% and electricity by 13%). These increases will be passed on via increases in the service charges and full details of all service charges can be found in Appendix 2. There is no proposed increase to neighbourhood warden charges.

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Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14

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Leaseholder Service Charges

- 3.22 Leaseholders are recharged the full cost of providing services. The charges proposed for leaseholder are shown in Appendix 3.

Garage Rents and Parking Charges

- 3.23 Garage and parking space rents have been held this year due to the current economic situation, although cross over charges have been increased in line with inflation. Details are shown in Appendix 2.

Consultation

- 3.24 Presentation at various consultations explained the options available when setting the budget this year. 4 different rent options were presented which included increases based on the following rent options

- continuing with rent convergence (RPI+0.5%+£2)
- Increase by RPI +0.5%
- RPI
- Rent freeze.

The impact of each of these options on the amounts available for capital investment programme and debt repayment was explained.

- 3.25 Two rent setting consultation meetings were held on 6th January 2013, in total 9 tenants and 1 leaseholders attended. The main debate was around:-

- The level of rent increases and the affordability for tenants.
- The appropriate balance between debt repayment and capital investment
- The impact of welfare reform

- 3.26 The presentation was also provided to Swindon Tenants Voice (STV) on the 10th January, Tenants Association for Sheltered Housing on the 21st January, Leaseholder Link on the 29th January, and a YouTube video has also been made available for tenants. The preference from the majority of attendees at STV was for a rent freeze. The preference for TASH members was either a rent increase of RPI + 0.5% or RPI + 0.5% + maximum of £2. The outcome of the consultation meeting with Leaseholder Link on the 29th January 2013 will be reported at the Cabinet meeting.

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Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

3.27 The Housing Advisory Forum on 23rd January 2013 discussed the HRA rents and charges, the recommendations which are outlined below:-

- (1) That the Cabinet be advised that this Forum notes:
 - (a) The rent policy options for the Financial Year 2013/14, as set out in the report.
 - (b) The investment programme and debt repayment options for the Financial Year, 2013/14 for the £150m debt held by the Housing Revenue Account.
 - (c) The proposals set out in the report in relation to Housing related support charges and service charges for the Financial Year, 2013/14.
 - (d) The proposals relating to Leaseholder service charges for the Financial Year, 2013/14.
- (2) That the Cabinet and Council be advised that this Forum requests that it reconsider the current proposed level of debt repayment of £8m and requests that the annual debt repayment be set at no more £5m during the current Financial Year and the Financial Year 2013/14, in order that additional monies currently earmarked for debt repayment may be used for the improvement of the current housing stock.
- (3) That the Cabinet and Council be advised that some of the members of this Forum supports the increase of Housing Rents and Leaseholder charges in line with the RPI Option, as set out in the report of the Cabinet Member for One Swindon, Localities and Housing..
- (4) That the Head of Housing Services be requested to establish a Finance Sub-Group of this Forum, comprising the Chairs of this Forum, Swindon Tenants Voice, TASH, Swindon Tenants Campaign Groups together with a Leaseholder representative, to consider issues relating to the management of Housing Revenue Debt.
- (5) That, further to (4) above, the Head of Housing Services be requested to advise this Forum with regard to the likely level of officer support available to any Finance Sub-Group.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2013/14

3.28 Appendix 4 shows the proposed HRA budget for 2013/14 assuming Members agree to the recommendations on rents and charges set out in this report. The following paragraphs outline the major movements (key variances) from the 2012/13 base budget to the proposed 2013/14 budget. This section also brings to Members' attention the short term and medium financial implications and challenges facing Swindon's HRA.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No.463976, or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) **– Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14**

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- 3.29 The HRA Self Financing Determinations meant that the authority needed to borrow £138.6 million on the 28 March 2012. The average interest rate for this borrowing was 3.3%, lower than the 4.1% that had been budgeted for and the interest on this borrowing is c£4.9m per year, including interest on the £11.8m of HRA debt that was already in place. The budgeted cost of revenue repairs (item 3&4, Appendix 4) has been increased by £530k to £8,100k in 2013/14, as well as an additional £354k which has been provided to increase the capacity of the repairs team to undertake gas enforcement, non-traditional stock surveys, stock condition surveys and feasibility studies. This will ensure that essential repairs and maintenance, vacant property repairs and specialist services are carried out to provide an effective repairs service.
- 3.30 There are likely to be a considerable impact on the HRA and tenants as a result of Welfare Reform. At present the full impacts of the Welfare Reform Act are not known, and although increased provision for bad debts has been made within the budget, it is proposed to maintain the HRA revenue balances around their current level until the full impact of the reforms can be assessed, in order to help fund any impact beyond the budget.
- 3.31 The HRA Capital Improvement Programme covers 3 major areas
- Capital Projects and planned maintenance programme,
 - Regeneration & Acquisition / New Build programme within the HRA estate areas and
 - A Non-core works programme.
- 3.32 The improvement and refurbishment programme has been increased by £3.8m to £14.8m (item 1, Appendix 5) which reflects additional funding to address some of the items identified in the latest stock condition survey. The precise details of the work within the overall Capital Programme will be discussed with Housing Property Forum and presented to the Housing Advisory Forum for approval in March.
- 3.33 It is proposed to provide a Regeneration & Acquisition fund of up to £1m to enable the purchase of 1 & 2 bedroom properties. This will provide options for those tenants who need to downsize due to benefit being reduced where tenants under-occupy their home (the “bedroom” tax).
- 3.34 New Right to buy legislation has resulted in an increase in the number of properties being sold. As of 2 April 2012 the Right to Buy discount has been increased from a cap of £30,000 to a maximum of £75,000 or 60% of the house value (70% for a flat) depending on which is lower. However due to current economic conditions and the changes in the discounts, the capital receipts for

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these properties has reduced. To the end of December 2012, 28 sales have been recorded generating receipts of £1.2m. However, once the allowance for loan repayment and the anticipated receipts for both SBC and the Government are taken into account (which were part of the original self-financing business plan), it is anticipated that there will be a surplus of c£100k of retained funding available to support this programme.

- 3.35 It is proposed to provide a budget of £1m for non-core works. This budget is for works to provide mobility scooter stores and environmental improvements at sheltered schemes, and to upgrade / refurbish supported housing schemes at St. Ives Court and Baileys Farm Gardens.
- 3.36 It is also proposed to repay loan debt of £5m. The funding for the capital programme and debt repayment is from £21.8m of revenue surpluses that arise after all other costs including day to day repairs have been included.
- 3.37 There is no additional borrowing currently planned to be undertaken in the current proposed 2013/14 programme.
- 3.38 The proposals contained in this report will produce a balanced HRA budget in 2013/14.

General Fund Rents and Service Charges

- 3.39 Rent increases for the residential properties owned by the general fund (including the David Murray John Tower - DMJ) will follow the same rent setting approach as used for HRA properties. Appendix 6 shows the proposed service charges for the DMJ and Christopher House (Flats over the new shops at Marlowe Avenue).

Hay Lane Residential Gypsy Site

- 3.40 There are 37 plots at Hay Lane and a rent of £45.00 per week is charged in 2012/13. It is proposed to increase this charge for 2013/14 in line with other general fund properties to £47.00 per week, an increase of £2.00 per week.
- 3.41 Workpens at Hay Lane vary in size. It is proposed that the charges are frozen at the 2012/13 levels for 2013/14. It is recommended that charges for Hay Lane outlined at Appendix 6 be approved.

Homelessness Contributions

- 3.42 Cabinet has previously agreed the charges for Private Sector Leasing (PSL) properties. These are linked directly to the Local Housing Allowance which is not changing for 2013/14, and it is therefore not proposed to increase the rents within this scheme, except for the specific cases detailed below which applies to 4 bedroom properties within the scheme.

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- 3.43 Due to the introduction of Welfare Reform a benefit cap of £500 per week will be introduced which will have an impact on 8 large families that are currently housed in 4 bed accommodation under the Council's Private Sector Leasing Scheme (PSL). Currently the Council receives £235.50 via Housing Benefit per week for these properties, which represents 47% of the benefit cap.
- 3.44 There is no current guidance from Central Government as to what level of rent is considered to be affordable when compared with average income but guidance used by mortgage companies is that no more than 40% of income should be used for housing costs. In London, The Mayor and his housing adviser have proposed that this cap of 40% should be adopted. This would result in these families paying a weekly rent of £200.00 and it is proposed that the Council adopt a cap of 40% for rents when these households are affected by Welfare Reform. The financial impact of capping these rents is a loss of rent income to the General Fund of c£15k p.a. However, not agreeing to this proposal could result in the families facing financial difficulty which could result in non-payment of rent and ultimately additional cost and resources in resolving any issues. Appendix 7 contains further detail around this.

12/13 Budgeted debt repayment

- 3.45 The current 2012/13 HRA budget includes provision for repaying debt of £7,977,300. The financial implications of reducing this repayment would be a resulting increase in the interest charges to the HRA in 2013/14 and each subsequent year of 3.32% per £1,000,000 repaid. Therefore making no debt repayment in 2012/13 will increase interest costs in 2013/14 and each subsequent year by £264,717 which will need to be funded from elsewhere within the HRA budget.

Alternatives

- 3.46 The level of rent increase no longer impacts subsidy under the new self-financing rules and the Council therefore has freedom as to what level these are set at. The level of income directly impacts the funds available for capital investment and/or debt repayment and again there is freedom as to how this is allocated.
- 3.47 Limiting the rent increases to RPI plus 0.5% instead of moving towards convergence would result in a reduction of income to the HRA of £708k pa when compared with an increase based on convergence.
- 3.48 Increasing the debt repayment in 2013/14 from £5m to £8m would result in £3m less funding being available for capital investment, but would result in a reduction of £99,600 per annum in interest costs from 2014/15 and each year beyond.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No.463976, or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) **– Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14**

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Any alternative options for specific areas are set out within the report.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 These have been reflected in the body of the report.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 All legal and human rights considerations have been taken fully into account in compiling this report. It is considered that the recommendations of this report are compatible with Convention rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.3 There are no such direct implications.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.4 The effective management of financial resources through robust financial management processes underpins the Council's ability to achieve its plans and priorities.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Analysis (DIA) has been completed. Adverse impacts were identified and have been mitigated. Implementing the proposed rent increase has some potential to create an adverse impact particularly on the basis of age and disability where increases in rent levels are not covered by housing benefit. This is unlikely for those currently in receipt of benefit. It should also be noted that welfare reforms do not impact on anyone who is of pensionable age. The difficulties will arise for those on low incomes such as occupational pensions and low paid full time workers where living costs rise above the annual rate of increases in personal income.
- 5.6 The Council's Discretionary Housing Payment Fund will be used to target those in greatest need on the basis of age and disability.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paul Smith on Direct Dial No.463976, or Email psmith2@swindon.gov.uk.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Revenue and Capital Investment Budgets 2013/14

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

7. Background Papers and Appendices

Appendix 1 – Overview of HRA Revenue Budget.

Appendix 2 – Service charges for 2013/14.

Appendix 3 – Leaseholder Charges.

Appendix 4 – Detailed HRA Budget 2013/14.

Appendix 5 – Proposed HRA Capital Budget 2013/14.

Appendix 6 – Proposed HGF Rents & Service Charges 2013/14.

Appendix 7 – Proposed Cap on Private Sector Leasing Rents.

8. Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

- 8.1 This is not a key decision for the Cabinet as it will be determined by the full Council. This item is included in the Cabinet Work Programme / Forward Plan for February 2013.

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Appendix 1 – Overview of HRA Revenue Budget

	2012/13 Budget	2013/14 Proposed Budget
	£	£
<i>Expenditure</i>		
Management (staff, overheads and service charge costs)	11,525,300	11,744,600
Repairs (incl. staff costs)	9,106,900	10,020,800
Rent, Rates and Taxes	40,100	75,000
Debt Management fees and Debt Rescheduling Premium	275,400	148,400
Gross Expenditure	20,947,700	21,988,800
<i>Income</i>		
Rents	(40,398,400)	(42,376,100)
Voids and Bad debt	936,000	1,481,300
Service Charges	(3,410,600)	(3,675,200)
Other Income (garages, commercial property, Homeline)	(3,325,400)	(3,910,600)
Gross Income	(46,198,400)	(48,480,600)
Net Cost of Services	(25,250,700)	(26,491,800)
Net Interest costs (after interest receivable has been deducted)	6,131,100	4,667,500
Projected (surplus) / deficit for the year	(19,119,600)	(21,824,300)
Use of operating Surplus with £5m Loan Repayment		
Contribution to capital expenditure and loan repayment	7,977,300	5,000,000
Dep'n Charges = tfr to Major Repairs Reserve to fund capital	11,142,300	11,142,300
Revenue Surplus used in Capital Programme (RCCO)	0	5,699,900
Use of Operating Surplus	19,119,600	21,842,200
Opening Revenue Balances at 1 April	(6,776,014)	(6,776,014)
Approved for use in year	0	100,000
Closing Revenue Balances at 31 March	(6,776,014)	(6,676,014)

Appendix 2 – Service charges for 2013/14

	Current Charge 2012/13	Proposed Charge 2013/14
	£	£
<u>Flats (Communal entrance)</u>		
Service Charge - Staircase Lighting	0.85	0.85
Multi Storey service charge	14.88	13.96
Neighbourhood Wardens Low & medium rise blocks service charge	1.95	1.95
Neighbourhood Wardens General stock service charge	1.17	1.16
<u>Sheltered Housing</u>		
Sheltered service charge	21.60	22.46
Heating charge - private use	10.06	11.30
Heating charge - communal use	3.37	3.74
Water charge	3.49	3.46
Guest room charge	13.00	13.00
Guest flat charge	15.00	15.00
<u>Other</u>		
Cable TV charge	2.00	1.97
Communal TV aerials	1.03	1.06
Home contents insurance (per £100 of cover)	0.11	0.11
Grass Cutting	1.18	1.22
Hedge	1.18	1.22
Grass Cutting for communal areas around flats & bungalows		
<u>Supporting People Charges</u>		
Sheltered housing support charge	6.19	6.19
Sheltered transitional protection	-1.67	-1.67
Homeline Charge	4.04	4.17
Homeline transitional protection	-0.30	-0.30
Homeline Charge - private tenants	5.46	5.46
Homeline Plus level 1	12.85	12.85
Homeline Plus level 2	14.30	14.30
Homeline Plus level 3	16.22	16.22

	Current Charge 2012/13	Proposed Charge 2013/14
	£	£
<u>Garage / Parking Charges</u>		
Garage rent	7.51	7.51
Account Garage + VAT	8.30	8.30
Parking space	2.54	2.54
Cross over - existing tenants	2.07	2.13
Cross over - new tenants	4.04	4.17
Cross over - new build properties (2 spaces)	8.08	8.33
Account parking space + VAT	2.83	2.83
Premium Garage + VAT	9.60	9.60
Premium parking space + VAT	6.00	6.00
<u>Supported Housing</u>		
Service Charge	37.45	36.25
Heating charge - private use	10.15	9.73
Heating charge - communal use	3.38	3.42
Water charge	6.57	5.42
Electricity	5.40	6.27
<u>Small Housing Schemes</u>		
Service charge - Moredon Road	35.32	34.26
Service charge William Robins Court - LD clients	25.31	26.09
Service charge William Robins Court - General needs	13.70	14.12
Service charge Baileys Farm Gardens - General needs	12.24	13.42
Service charge Baileys Farm Gardens - General needs water	4.51	3.30
Service charge - Marlowe Avenue	22.47	23.17
Service charge - Twyford Close	8.09	8.62
Service charge - Tyndale Gardens	20.85	20.96
Service charge - Evelyn House	25.32	26.10

Appendix 3 - Leaseholder Charges

	Current Annual Charge 2012/13	Proposed Annual Charge 2013/14
	£	£
Ground Rent - Annual Charge	10.00	10.00
Leaseholder management charge -all properties	139.36	143.68
Leaseholder management charge - properties with communal areas	166.89	172.06
Service Charge - Staircase Lighting adjusted to actual charge during annual review	44.20	40.31
Multi Storey service charge	655.20	599.59

Appendix 4 - Detailed HRA Budget 2013/14

Item		2012/13 Budget	2013/14 Proposed Budget
		£	£
	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
1	S&M General	6,554,900	6,311,000
2	S&M Special	4,970,400	5,433,600
3	Repairs Administration	1,536,900	1,921,000
4	Contribution to Repairs Account	7,570,000	8,099,800
5	Rent, Rates & Taxes	40,100	75,000
	<u>Capital Financing</u>		
6	Capital Charges - depreciation council dwellings	11,142,300	11,142,300
7	Capital Charges - debt rescheduling premium	225,400	88,400
8	Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) - Charged	0	5,699,900
9	Debt Management	50,000	60,000
10	Provision for Bad Debts	330,000	833,000
11	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	32,420,000	39,664,000
	<u>INCOME</u>		
	<u>Rent income</u>		
12	Dwellings	(40,398,400)	(42,376,100)
13	Less voids	606,000	648,300
14	Garages	(1,171,400)	(1,056,300)
15	Shops / Commercial	(142,600)	(172,300)
16	Support charges - Sheltered	(434,400)	(434,400)
17	Sheltered Housing Service Charges	(1,740,300)	(1,840,700)
18	Homeless Hostel Service Charge	(390,100)	(416,900)
		(43,671,200)	(45,648,400)
19	Miscellaneous Properties Rent	(149,700)	(928,600)
20	Service Charges - Flats	(65,300)	(78,400)
21	Sheltered Housing Heating Charges	(780,500)	(904,800)
22	Homeline	(687,800)	(717,100)
23	Other Service Charges / Other income	(1,173,900)	(1,036,300)
		(2,857,200)	(3,665,200)
24	TOTAL INCOME	(46,528,400)	(49,313,600)
25	NET COST OF SERVICES	(14,108,400)	(9,649,600)
26	Loan Charges - Interest	6,220,100	4,730,500
27	Interest on balances (interest receivable)	(85,000)	(59,000)
28	Right to buy mortgage interest (interest receivable)	(4,000)	(4,000)
29	NET OPERATING EXPENDITURE	(7,977,300)	(4,982,100)
30	Loan repayments	7,977,300	5,000,000
31	PROJECTED (SURPLUS) / DEFECIT FOR THE YEAR	0	17,900
32	HRA Revenue balance at 1st April	(6,776,014)	(6,776,014)
33	Approved for use in year		100,000
34	ESTIMATED REVENUE BALANCE AT 31st MARCH	(6,776,014)	(6,676,014)

Appendix 5 - Proposed HRA Capital Budget 2013/14

<u>Item</u>		2012/13 Budget	2013/14 Proposed Budget
		£	£
	<u>HRA Capital Schemes</u>		
1	Capital Projects and Planned Maintenance Programme	11,012,000	14,792,200
2	Regeneration and Acquisition Programme	4,300,000	1,000,000
3	Non-Core Works:		1,050,000
4	Total Capital Programme	15,312,000	16,842,200
	<u>HRA Capital Funding</u>		
5	Depreciation - transfer to MRR to fund capital	11,089,778	11,142,300
6	Direct Revenue Financing	0	5,699,900
7	In year resources available	11,089,778	16,842,200
	<u>HRA Capital Reserves</u>		
8	Usable Capital Receipts		
9	Prudential Borrowing		
10	HRA Reserves	9,967,783	5,745,561
		9,967,783	5,745,561
11	Total HRA Capital Funding	21,057,561	22,587,761
12	Surplus (Deficit) in Funding	5,745,561	5,745,561
13	<u>Revenue</u>		
14	Repairs Budget	8,249,800	8,565,000
15	Total Revenue and Capital Repairs	19,261,800	24,407,200

Appendix 6 - Proposed HGF Rents & Service Charges **2013/14**

	Current Charge 2012/13	Proposed Charge 2013/14
	£	£
<u>Hay Lane Caravan Site</u>		
Caravan Site Pitch Rent	45.00	47.00
Caravan Site Workpen Rent	4.00	4.00
	8.00	8.00
	10.00	10.00
	12.00	12.00
<u>Christopher House, Marlowe Avenue</u>		
Service Charge	18.66	18.66
<u>David Murray John Building</u>		
Heating charge - 1 bed property	9.68	11.17
Heating charge - 2 bed property	11.38	13.14
Service charge - 1 bed property	23.70	26.13
Service charge - 2 bed property	27.88	30.74
<u>PSL rents</u>		
1 Bed	148.28	148.28
2 Bed	169.04	169.04
3 Bed	195.00	195.00
4 Bed	235.50	200.00

Appendix 7 - Proposed Cap on Private Sector Leasing Rents

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1. To consider what will be defined as an affordable rent in Private Sector Lease properties provided for households accepted as homeless or placed under our prevention responsibilities, in the light of the introduction of the Benefit Cap from April 2013.
- 1.2. A decision now will enable the homeless team to work with households and prepare them well in advance of the changes.

2. Detail

- 2.1. The Welfare Reform Bill received Royal Assent on 8th March 2012 and represents the biggest change to the welfare system for over 60 years.
- 2.2. The Bill will introduce a Benefit Cap of £350 per week for single households and £500 per week for families from June 2013.
- 2.3. There are currently 269 households placed in PSL Properties, but 8 families currently occupying 4 bed properties have been identified as being adversely affected by the benefit cap.
- 2.4. When the cap is introduced this will initially be fully recovered by reducing Housing Benefit rather than any other benefit payments. These families will have significant weekly reductions in Housing Benefit ranging from £149.53 to £235.50. In 1 case they will lose all current Housing Benefit entitlement and only receive 50p per week in line with the benefit cap regulations.
- 2.5. The current rent for 4 bed properties is £235.50 as per the subsidy regulations used for temporary accommodation, compared to the current average rent for a Council 4 bed property is £92.80.
- 2.6. Four of these households are in Band B and the remaining in Band C under our allocations policy. They have been in these Bands for a limited time and based on length of time on the waiting list and availability of suitably sized properties extremely unlikely to secure social housing in the foreseeable future.
- 2.7. Despite the introduction of the benefit cap there has been no guidance issued from Central Government around the definition of affordable.
- 2.8. In some London Boroughs, they have determined if the households do not get enough housing benefit then they are 'allowed' to spend up to 40% of their benefit income on rent, in effect this means £200 per week for a couple capped at £500 per week.
- 2.9. This is based on a similar formula to that used by mortgage companies. Boris Johnson and his housing advisor have said that in London people can spend up to 40% of their income on housing costs; however this is not the official guidance coming from Central Government.
- 2.10. In reality households on benefits that are being capped and having to pay rent of £150 plus a week are going to find it very difficult to sustain tenancies, irrespective of where they live, as it will be a large proportion of their income.
- 2.11. We have assessed that the benefit cap will impact on a few households in 3 bedroom properties with 4 or more children, although their current rent are £195 per week and less than 40% of the household benefit cap.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1. Leave the current rent for 4 bed properties at £235.50, which equates to 47% of the benefit cap.
- 3.2. Wait for guidance to be issued around the definition of an affordable rent from Central Government, although it is not certain whether this will be issued.
- 3.3. Use Discretionary Housing Payments, although this is likely to be large amounts due to the reduction in Housing Benefits for the families affected.

4. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 4.1. If rents are capped at no more than 40% of the benefits cap. There will be a reduction in rent income to the General Fund of £35 per week per household.
- 4.2. The estimated financial loss to the General Fund for 2013/14 of £14,560 if all households remain in their current tenancies.

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CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2013

MINUTE FOR CONFIRMATION

96. Housing Revenue Account
- Revenue and Capital Investment Budget 2013/14
(Minute for Confirmation)

The Cabinet Member for One Swindon, Localities and Housing, and the Board Director, Service Delivery submitted a joint report concerning the proposed budget for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2013/14, including proposals for rents, service charges and support charges and the debt for 2013/14.

Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for One Swindon, Localities and Housing, presented the report and advised that revised appendices had been circulated at the meeting. He explained how the report set out the context and background to the proposed Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2013/14, and the reasons for the proposed changes in the levels of rents and services charges. He referred to the issue of debt repayment and to the reasons that he was now suggesting that the figure appearing in Appendix 4 “Loan Repayments” should be changed from £8m to £5m and the implications of this for the HRA Budget and investment in the Council’s Housing stock. The proposed change was reflected in the revised appendices that had been circulated at the meeting.

Councillor Holland explained the reasons why he supported the recommended increases in rents and service charges. Whilst he recognised that this would cause some hardship for some tenants, he believed the majority would not be badly affected, particularly, the many tenants who were receiving benefits to assist meeting their housing costs. He stressed the importance for tenants and for the Council of seeking to invest in the Council's housing stock now rather than delaying this to sometime in the future with an associated increase in interest payments associated with delayed repayment of debt.

Councillor Holland referred to the consultation that had taken place with tenants and stakeholders and, particularly, to the discussions that had taken place at the Housing Advisory Forum held on 23rd January 2013. He noted the comments made by the Chair of the Housing Advisory Forum and the views expressed by the tenant representatives and Councillors at the meeting. He acknowledged the vote that had taken place at the Advisory Forum meeting and advised that he would seek to amend the draft minute that appeared in paragraph 3.27(3) of the report by deleting the words “some of the members” and their replacement by the words “a vote was taken such that a majority of the”. He hoped that this would clarify the conclusions reached.

Councillor Bob Wright commented on the discussions that had taken place at the Housing Advisory Forum and on alternative ways in which the Council could invest in its Council stock, encourage local jobs and deliver a reasonable rent for its tenants. He believed that the suggestions put forward by his colleague Councillor Moffatt to the Forum and the Cabinet Member were worthy of further consideration. He welcomed the proposal to reduce the level of Loan Repayments but believed

this should go much further.

Councillor Holland noted Councillor Wright's comments and reiterated that he believed the proposed recommendations offered the best outcomes for both the Council and its tenants.

Resolved – That, subject to the confirmation of the Council –

- **The Rents for 2013/14 are increased in line with convergence targets of Retail Price Index (RPI) plus 0.5% plus maximum of £2.00, which will increase average rents for Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings to £77.82 per week (52 week basis), an increase of 4.8%. This will be an average increase of £3.59 per week.**
- **The housing related support charges for 2013/14 and service charges for 2013/14, as outlined in Appendix 2(revised) of the joint report of the Cabinet Member for One Swindon, Localities and Housing and the Board Director, Service Delivery, be approved.**
- **Leaseholder service charges set for 2013/14 as shown in Appendix 3(revised) of the joint report, be approved.**
- **Based on the proposals set out within the joint report the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) proposed budget for 2013/14, as shown in Appendix 4 (revised) to the joint report, be approved and that the HRA Repairs Budget and Funding be approved as shown in Appendix 5 (revised) to the joint report.**
- **The provision for debt repayment in 2013/14 of £5m, as detailed in Appendix 1(revised) to the joint report, be approved.**
- **The Council include within its Constitution's Scheme of Delegations an authority enabling the Board Director, Service Delivery in consultation with the Board Director, Resources, Head of Housing Services and the Cabinet Member with portfolio responsibility for Housing, to use the Regeneration and Acquisition fund of up to £1m, to purchase 1 and 2 Bedroom accommodation to enable these properties to be included with the Council's housing stock.**
- **Rents charged on General Fund properties be on the same basis as HRA properties resulting in an average increase of 4.4% and the service charges as shown in Appendix 6(revised) to the joint report, be approved.**
- **Rents charged for plots at the Hay Lane Residential Gypsy Site be increased by £2.00 per week to £47.00 per week (52 week basis) and the rents for work-pens (small lock-ups), as shown in Appendix 6 (revised) to the joint report, be approved.**
- **The homelessness contribution, as outlined in Appendix 6 (revised) to the joint report, be approved.**
- **The budgeted 2012/13 Debt repayment of £7,977,300 be reduced to £5m, and the additional funding be transferred to HRA reserves at year end, subsequently to be allocated towards increasing the capital programme for 2013/14 as detailed at paragraph 3.45 of the joint report.**

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

Pay Policy Statement

Council

Date: 21 February 2013

Author:	Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services and Head of People and Change
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to agree and publish a Pay Policy Statement by 1st April each year. This report sets out the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2013/14 for approval by Council.

2. Recommendations

Council is recommended to:

- 2.1 Approve the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2013/14, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

3. Detail

- 3.1 Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 placed a requirement on local authorities to prepare a pay policy statement for each new financial year. The Pay Policy Statement for 2012/13 has been updated for 2013/14 and must be approved by the full Council before the 31st March 2013. It must be published as soon as is reasonably practicable after approval and this must include publication on the authority's website. The Statement must set out the Council's policies relating to the:
- 3.1.1 Remuneration of its Chief Officers,
 - 3.1.2 Remuneration of its lowest paid employees,
 - 3.1.3 The relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and the remuneration of its employees who are not Chief Officers, and
 - 3.1.4 The Pay Policy Statement does not cover or include school staff and is not required to do so.
- 3.2 Each Council is an individual employer in its own right and has the autonomy to make decisions on pay that are appropriate to local circumstances and which deliver value money for local taxpayers. The provisions of the Localism Act do not seek to change this or determine what decisions on pay should be taken. They do however require councils to be open about their policies in relation to pay and how decisions are made.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Nicola Houwayek, Head of People & Development, 07824 550456, nhouwayek@swindon.gov.uk.

Pay Policy Statement

Council

Date: 21 February 2013

- 3.3 The proposed Swindon Statement has been put together taking into account the relevant sections within Chapter 8 “Pay Accountability” of the Localism Act 2011. In its development, consideration has also been given to the guidance produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government - *Openness and Accountability in Local Pay* (February 2012) - guidance under Section 40 of the Localism Act” and the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.
- 3.4 The statement is broadly the same as that published for 2012/13, with the following changes and updates having been made:
- 3.4.1 Page 1: Transparency and autonomy – this section has been extended to include information on equalities and information on the provisions of the Redundancy Payments Modification Order.
- 3.4.2 Page 3: We have added further information about our lowest paid employees, including the ratio of lowest to highest and definitions of median pay.
- 3.4.3 Page 3: We have added a new section on how we apply pay increases.
- 3.4.4 Page 3: The pay figures shown are those for April 2012 and will be updated as at 1 April 2013, to reflect the actual figures at that time. Please note that ratios are not expected to significantly change from those in 2012/13.
- 3.4.5 Page 6: More information has been added on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). This includes a table of pension contribution bands, benefits of the LGPS and we have also included information about the NHS Pension Scheme.
- 3.5 The proposed Pay Policy Statement 2013-14 is attached as **Appendix A**. The Statement sets out the Council’s policies in relation to the pay of its workforce, particularly its Chief Officers.
- 3.6 The Statement aims to ensure the Council’s approach to pay and reward attracts and retains a high performing workforce whilst ensuring value for money. The Council has previously published information on pay as part of its responsibilities under the Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.
- 3.7 The Council is required to approve the Statement before 31st March each year and as soon as possible publish it on its website demonstrating an open and transparent approach to pay policy. The Statement may be amended by resolution of full Council during the year to which it relates.
- 3.8 The Pay Policy Statement references a number of existing policies and other information that will be linked to the statement on the internet. These links will be made available as soon as the statement is made available on the internet in
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Nicola Houwayek, Head of People & Development, 07824 550456, nhouwayek@swindon.gov.uk.

Pay Policy Statement

Council

Date: 21 February 2013

April. The majority of these are already available to Members and staff via the intranet.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 As this is a requirement under the Localism Act, there are no alternative options being put forward.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report as the Pay Policy Statement sets out the Council's policies relating to remuneration. It does not serve to set or agree specific rates or numerical amounts.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.1 The attached Pay Policy Statement complies with Sections 38-43 of the Localism Act 2011. All other legal and human rights implications have been considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that the report and its recommendations are compatible with Convention Rights.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.2 There are no other implications arising from this report.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.3 The Council's policies in respect of pay and terms and conditions support the Council's strategic objectives as part of ensuring that services to the community can be delivered to the required standards and with due regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA)

- 5.4 The Pay Policy Statement is not a policy in its own right but brings together and references existing policies. All these existing policies have all been through the DIA process.

Risk Management

- 5.5 No other risks have been identified other than those mentioned in the body of the report.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Nicola Houwayek, Head of People & Development, 07824 550456, nhouwayek@swindon.gov.uk.

Pay Policy Statement

Council

Date: 21 February 2013

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports. The Pay Policy Statement has been consulted on with the trade unions

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Openness and accountability in local pay - guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG, February 2012).
- 7.2 The Localism Act 2011 – chapter 8 “Pay Accountability.”
- 7.3 Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency (DCLG, September 2011).
- 7.4 LGA and ALACE Pay Policy Statement Guidance.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A - Pay Policy Statement

9. Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

- 9.1 This is not a Key Decision for the Cabinet (as adoption is by the Council) and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme / Forward Plan for March 2013.

Swindon Borough Council Pay Policy Statement 2013-14

Introduction

This statement sets out the Council's policies in relation to the pay of its workforce (excluding schools), particularly its Chief Officers, in line with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The statement is approved by Full Council each year and published on the Council's website demonstrating an open and transparent approach to pay policy.

This statement draws together the Council's policies relating to the payment of the workforce particularly

- Chief Officers;
- Its lowest paid employees; and
- The relationship between the pay of Chief Officers and the pay of other employees.

Objectives of the statement

This Statement sets out the Council's key policy principles in relation to pay evidencing a transparent and open process. It does not supersede the responsibilities and duties placed on the Council in its role as an employer and under employment law. These responsibilities and duties have been considered when formulating the Statement.

This Statement aims to ensure the Council's approach to pay attracts and retains a high performing workforce whilst ensuring value for money. The Council's aims are to ensure that remuneration policies are fair to staff, across all posts, and that they comply with all legal obligations, such as the Equal Pay Act. It sits alongside the information on pay that the Council already publishes as part of its responsibilities under the Code of Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency. Further details on this information can be found on the Council's website under [Open Data and Transparency](#).

Transparency and autonomy

The Council recognises and welcomes the aim behind this pay policy statement to ensure that its approach to pay is accessible for all and to enable local people to take an informed view of whether local decisions on all aspects of remuneration are fair and make the best use of public funds.

It also welcomes the government's recognition that each local authority remains an individual employer in its own right and, as such, has the autonomy to make decisions on pay that are appropriate to local circumstances and deliver value for money for local taxpayers.

The Council is under statutory duty to appoint on merit and has to ensure that it complies with all appropriate employment and equalities legislation e.g. Equalities Act. The Council will always seek to appoint the best available candidate to a post who has the skills, knowledge, experience, abilities and qualities needed for the post. The Council will therefore consider all applications for candidates to try to ensure the best available candidate is appointed.

If a candidate is a former employee in receipt of a Local Government Pension Scheme pension or a redundancy payment this will not rule them out from being re-employed by the Council. Clearly where a former employee left the Council on redundancy terms then the old post has been deleted and the individual cannot return to the post as it will not exist. The Council will apply the provisions of the Redundancy Payments Modification order regarding the recovery of redundancy payment if this is relevant. Pensions Regulations also have provisions to reduce pension payment in certain circumstances to those who return to work within the local government service.

Chief Officers

Chief Officers have been defined as the posts of:

- Chief Executive – Head of Paid Service
- Statutory and non-statutory Chief Officers (a person for whom the head of the authority's paid service is directly responsible), ie:
 - Board Director – Commissioning (DCS/DASS)
 - Board Director – Localities
 - Board Director – Service Delivery
 - Board Director – Resources and Section 151 Officer
 - Director of Law and Democratic Services – Monitoring Officer
 - Change Leader & Programme Director Stronger Together
 - Head of Internal Audit
 - Director of Public Health
- All Deputy Chief Officers (a person who reports directly to or is directly accountable to one or more of the statutory or non-statutory Chief Officers), ie:
 - All Tier 2 posts at Head of Service Level

Identified Chief Officer roles and salaries can be found on the Council's website under [Open Data and Transparency](#).

New Appointments

In addition to publication of the pay policy statement, Full Council, or a meeting of Members, should be offered the opportunity to vote before large salary packages are offered in respect of a new appointment. For this purpose, salary packages should include salary, any bonuses, fees or allowances routinely payable to the appointee to which the officer is entitled as a result of their employment.

The Secretary of State considers that £100,000 is the right level for that threshold to be set. In Swindon, this approach will be applied for all roles graded at Director 5 and above. Please see Appendix 1 for the Council's grading structure and pay scales. This will apply to the Chief Executive and all Board Directors, and will be applied for new appointments made after 1 April 2012.

The Special Committee has delegated powers to make decisions for the Full Council on the advice of the Chief Executive on any policy or particular matters that are urgent and considered necessary in the best interests of the Council.

Process for setting pay of Chief Officers including Pay Progression and Performance Bonus

Pay for Chief Officers is set in line with the [Executive Pay Strategy](#) as agreed by Full Council in June 2005. In addition, any new appointments to Director 5 and above from 1 April 2012, will have their salaries agreed by Members. The Council's grading structure and pay scales can be found at Appendix 1.

The Executive Pay Strategy also provides details on the Performance Bonus Scheme for those on Executive contracts. It should be noted that no Performance Bonus Payments have been taken since 2009 and it is not anticipated that any payments will be taken for the year 2013 / 2014.

Pay relationships

Pay of the council's lowest paid employees

The definition of the "lowest-paid employees" adopted by the Council for the purposes of this statement is as follows:

The lowest paid employees within the Council are those substantive employees who are paid on the minimum salary point of the Council's substantive pay structure, i.e. point 1 of Grade J.

The current annual full-time equivalent value of this pay level, based on a 37 hour standard working week, for the financial year 2013/14 is £12,145 pa (£6.30 per hour). This figure has not increased since April 2010 when the Council implemented a new pay structure as part of its Pay and Grading Review. If any national pay award is agreed for 2013/14, this figure will be adjusted accordingly.

The Council considers this to be the most appropriate definition as this is the lowest pay point/pay level on its substantive pay structure and which normally applies to

new entrants to the lowest graded jobs within the organisation. The exception is staff who are employed on a government sponsored apprenticeship programme that allows for staff to be paid at nationally agreed apprenticeship rates.

The tables below show the relationship between the highest and lowest paid employees. The highest rate of pay in the first table is based on the Chief Executive's substantive rate of pay:

Highest Pay	£178,457.00
Mean Pay	£23,435.30
Median Pay	£19,003.00
Lowest Pay	£12,145.00
Ratio of Mean to Highest	1 : 7.6
Ratio of Median to Highest	1 : 9.4
Ratio of Lowest to Highest	1: 14.7 (to be checked)

The Chief Executive has taken a voluntary reduction in pay and the table below reflects this reduced rate implemented from 1st April 2012, however in a redundancy situation, the highest payment indicated in the table above would come into effect.

Highest Pay	£161,003.00
Mean Pay	£23,435.30
Median Pay	£19,003.00
Lowest Pay	£12,145.00
Ratio of Mean to Highest	1 : 6.9
Ratio of Median to Highest	1 : 8.5
Ratio of Lowest to Highest	1 : 13.2 (to be checked)

Definitions

Mean = average pay of Swindon Borough Council (ie total pay for substantive employees divided by the number of substantive employees)

Median = middle amount pay of Swindon Borough Council (between the highest and lowest amounts)

The rates of pay above do not include any pension contributions. Information about the pension schemes and contribution rates can be found on pages 6 and 7.

The ratio between the two salaries above, the 'pay multiple' is **(X)**.*(to be inserted once the final pay figures, as at 1 April 2013, confirmed)* This Council does not have a policy on maintaining or reaching a specific 'pay multiple', however the council is conscious of the need to ensure that the salary of the highest paid employee is not excessive and is consistent with the needs of the Council as expressed in this policy statement.

The Council's approach to payment of other staff is to pay that which the Council needs to pay to recruit and retain staff with the skills, knowledge, experience, abilities and qualities needed for the post in question at that time, and to ensure that the Council meets any contractual requirements for staff including the application of any local or national collective agreements, or Council decisions regarding pay.

Pay increases

The Council will apply any annual pay increases that are agreed by relevant national negotiating bodies and / or any pay increases that are agreed through local negotiations. Where a change in the duties of the post is significant a revised job description will be submitted for re-evaluation in accordance with the Council's approved job evaluation scheme.

Further information about the Council's approved job evaluation scheme can be found on page 5.

Terms and Conditions

The Council reviewed its employees' pay, grading and terms and conditions when it implemented a new pay structure in 2010. The Council wanted to ensure that the new [pay structure](#) and [terms and conditions](#) were modern, fair and compliant with equal pay legislation. It was applied to all groups of employees, with the exception of:

- Chief Executive, Board Directors and Directors
- Staff employed on Soulbury terms and conditions
- Youth workers on JNC for Youth and Community Workers terms and conditions
- Teachers

All other groups of employees are covered by separate national terms and conditions of employment.

Job Evaluation

Jobs have been linked to a job evaluation carried out using either the National Joint Council (NJC) job evaluation scheme or the Hay Evaluation Scheme.

Hay

The Hay Job Evaluation Scheme is widely used in both public and private sectors, primarily for managerial, administrative and clerical roles, but in some cases for all jobs within user organisations.

Jobs have been evaluated by trained assessors. A trained evaluation panel evaluates jobs against each of the elements within the scheme using detailed job descriptions. The outcome of the evaluation assigns a profile and points score that shows the total size of the job.

All jobs from grade Q and above, including Chief Officers, are graded using the Hay Job Evaluation scheme.

NJC Evaluation Scheme

The NJC scheme comprises 13 factors of various weightings. The scheme was jointly developed and agreed between the local authority employers and the unions. A trained evaluation panel evaluates jobs against each of the elements of the scheme using detailed job descriptions. The outcome of the evaluation assigns a points score that shows the total size of the job. The points score enables jobs to be placed in a rank order with other jobs in the organisation.

All jobs from grade N and below are graded using the NJC Evaluation scheme.

Pay Progression

From April 2010, staff have not been entitled to automatic incremental pay progression. Since this time, there has been an option for the Council to apply pay progression, however, due to financial reasons no pay progression has been applied.

Staff have also not received a national cost of living pay award since 2009.

Pay progression for those on Executive Contracts is outlined in [The Executive Pay Strategy](#).

Honorariums and Higher Duty Pay

Staff on any grade may be awarded an honorarium payment or a higher duty Allowance if they meet the criteria for either payment. The Council has a policy covering Honorariums and Higher Duty Pay. This could apply to Chief Officers.

Election Payments

Payments made to staff (including the Returning Officer and the Deputy Returning Officer) working during local, parliamentary or European elections or referenda are made in line with either the statutory fees or a local scale of fees agreed in consultation with Wiltshire Council. This could apply to Chief Officers.

Market Factor Supplements

All employees are appointed to posts, which have been evaluated and graded through either the NJC or Hay job evaluation scheme. Salaries are linked to the grading structure.

External labour market conditions can produce a situation in which staff with scarce skills and expertise can command higher salaries than the maximum provided under the current grading mechanism for that post. In these circumstances, based on evidence from the relevant labour market, it may be deemed appropriate to pay an additional Market Factor Supplement in addition to basic pay.

The relevant labour market may include another local authority or elsewhere in the public or private sectors. Market factor supplements are not linked to an individual's actual or anticipated performance within the role. They are linked to the difficulty in

recruiting to certain posts requiring specific skills or qualifications. The Council has produced guidance for employees on Market Factor Supplements.

Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The Council offers all its employees access to the Local Government Pension Scheme, in accordance with the statutory provisions of the scheme.

Any pension payments made on termination of employment either on grounds of redundancy, in the interests of the efficiency of the service or on grounds of ill health will be made within the statutory terms of the LGPS.

The discretions which the Council is able to apply under the scheme upon termination of employment are the same for senior employees as for all other employees who are LGPS members.

Employee contribution levels vary between 5.5% - 7.5%. The following pay ranges will apply to contribution rates (as of April 2012):

Band	Whole time equivalent pay rate	Employee contribution rate	Employer contribution rate
1	£0 to £13,500	5.5%	15.4%
2	£13,501 - £15,800	5.8%	15.4%
3	£15,801 - £20,400	5.9%	15.4%
4	£20,401 - £34,000	6.5%	15.4%
5	£34,001 - £45,500	6.8%	15.4%
6	£45,501 - £85,300	7.2%	15.4%
7	Above £85,300	7.5%	15.4%

The benefits of the LGPS scheme for all members include:

- A tiered ill health retirement package if employees have to leave work at any age due to permanent ill health. This could give employees benefits, paid straight away, and which could be increased if they are unlikely to be capable of gainful employment within 3 years of leaving.
- Early payment of benefits if employees are made redundant or retired on business efficiency grounds at age 55 or over.
- The right to voluntarily retire from age 60, even though the Scheme's normal pension age is 65. Employees can retire from as early as age 55, provided the employer agrees.
- Flexible retirement from age 55 is employees reduce their hours, or move to a less senior position. Provided the employer agree, employees can draw all of their benefits – helping them ease into their retirement.

Further information about the LGPS can be found on the [pensions website](#).

NHS Pension Scheme

The council also have employees who were transferred from the NHS. As part of the transfer agreement (TUPE), these employees were able to keep their NHS pension scheme and continue to contribute into that scheme.

The NHS Pension Scheme has undergone significant changes that became effective on 1 April 2008. [Members Guide - SD Guide \(PDF 919kb\)](#) provides further information on this

Allowances

The implementation of the Pay and Grading Review in 2010 allowed for a review of the Council's allowances. This ensured that:

- Principles of equality have been applied
- Allowances reflect the current market and business needs
- Allowances are consistently applied

An allowance is a payment made to staff by the Council that is not part of the basic contracted salary. Allowances are subject to taxation rules provided by the Inland Revenue and some are pensionable. Guidance about allowances is available for employees.

Reimbursement of Subsistence or Other Expenses

In accordance with the requirements of the National Conditions of Service, the Council makes provision for the reimbursement of approved expenses. The Council has produced guidance for employees on travel and subsistence and this applies equally to all staff, irrespective of grade.

Flexible Retirement, Early Retirement and Redundancy Payments Policy

On termination, redundancy payments and any discretion exercised in relation to retirement or redundancy will be paid in line with the Council's Policy on Flexible Retirement, Early Retirement and Redundancy Payments Policy.

The Council may, in certain circumstances, also apply its discretionary powers in relation to premature retirements and redundancies for Chief Officers. This approach is in line with Part 4 paragraph 85 of the Chief Officers of Local Authorities, Constitution Conditions of Service Salaries which states that "Authorities should bear in mind the possible application of discretionary powers of premature retirement and permissible enhancements of benefits or redundancy payments".

Termination Payments

The Council does not provide any further payment to employees leaving the Council's employment other than in respect of payment for accrued leave, if agreed that it is not possible to take this leave before the date of leaving. Any other

payments that are agreed or negotiated will be done so in line with current employment law practices.

The Council needs to retain the flexibility as regards re-employing former local government employees. Such an occurrence would be considered very much the exception rather than the rule. If the Council were to re-employ a previous local government employee who had received a redundancy or severance package on leaving, or who was in receipt of a pension covered by the Redundancy payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government Modification order 1999, known as the Modification Order) (with the same or another authority), then the Council's policy is to ensure that the rules of the Modification Order are applied. In addition the council will ensure that an open and fair selection process has taken place before any appointment is confirmed. The same principle would be applied to such a person if there were to be engaged by the Council on a "contract for services" basis.

Removal/Relocation expenses

Where senior employees need to move house in order to take up an appointment with the Council, the Council will reimburse their removal, legal and other associated relocation costs in accordance with its policy, which sets maximum limits on the levels of payment. The Council's policy requires repayment in part or in full if the employee leaves within 5 years of appointment.

Amendments to this pay policy statement

This pay policy statement relates to the financial year 2013/14. Information on our workforce will be published after 1st April 2013 for the financial year.

The statement will be updated annually but may be amended during the year, with agreement by Full Council, if the need arises.

Publication of and access to information

The Council will publish this pay policy statement on its website at www.swindon.gov.uk as soon as is reasonably practicable after it has been approved by the Council. Any subsequent amendments to this pay policy statement made during the financial year to which it relates will also be similarly published.

For further information about this pay policy statement please contact the Council's Head of People and Development at nhouwayek@swindon.gov.uk.

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Swindon Borough Council and NHS Swindon Diversity Impact Assessment for Pay Policy Statement 2013 / 2014

1 What's it about?

Refer to equality duties

What's it there for? What's it set up to deliver? What's the proposed change? What do you want to achieve?

This statement sets out the Council's policies in relation to the pay of its workforce, particularly its Senior Officers, in line with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The statement is approved by full Council each year and published on the Council's website demonstrating an open and transparent approach to pay policy.

This is the second Pay Policy Statement that the Council has had to produce – will thereafter be an annual Statement approved by Full Council.

What potential is there to meet the equality duties?

The Council recognises and welcomes the aim behind this pay policy statement to ensure that its approach to pay is accessible for all and to enable local people to take an informed view of whether local decisions on all aspects of remuneration are fair and make the best use of public funds.

The Pay Policy Statement applies to all staff excluding school based staff.

The Pay Policy Statement makes reference to a number of existing policies and other information. Diversity Impact Assessments have been completed for these existing policies.

What equality benefits does it create? (for people, organisation etc...)

The Council is complying with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The Council has previously published senior officers pay on the Council's website to comply with [open data and transparency](#).

When the Council undertook its pay and grading review it had been assessed by independent consultants, TMS, who are recognised as one of the leading consultants on equality issues. They identified some outcomes from this – need to find out what these were and where we are with them.

What are the barriers to meeting this potential?

It is a legal requirement to publish this information under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011. The Statement is approved by Full Council each year and need to ensure that this is included as an agenda item before 1st April every year.

2 Who's it for?

Refer to equality groups

Who is expected to benefit or use the service (internal/external)?

The Pay Policy Statement will be approved by Full Council and published on the Council's website. We will ensure that staff are aware of this Statement. Salary information will be updated and published at the end of April 2013. It has to be the end of April as we need information as of

1st April 2013. However, the Pay Policy Statement will be available on 1st April 2013.

What do you know about them (evidence)?

We have published information on our Council workforce on an annual basis and undertaken reviews on pay issues when completing our pay and grading review – [Annual Workforce Report](#). For those earning over £58,200 pa, gender data indicates that we have 16 males and 14 female.

We are in the process of publishing information on our Council workforce on a quarterly basis. This information will be communicated to staff and published on the intranet.

In comparison to our gender data on Senior Officer salaries who earn over £50k from the previous Pay Policy Statement, we now have x males and x females who earn over £50k as of 1st April 2013). Our Pay Policy Statement for 2012 / 2013 we had x males and x female.

(Information to be updated after 1st April 2013 when the reports have been produced).

The Council had undergone a major restructure of the top 2 levels of the organisation towards the end of 2011 and the beginning of 2012 which resulted in senior posts being deleted. The Council is currently going through more restructures which will see further senior posts being deleted.

Who is missing or may find it difficult to use the service?

Under the legislation we are required to publish salaries of staff over £58,200 pa. We have not published information on salaries on those earning below that rate. Employees, apart from those who are categorised as Chief Officers, are not identifiable by salary, only job titles are mentioned.

Do you know why?

It's a legal requirement to publish this information, in line with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

3 Impact

Refer to dimensions of equality and equality groups
Show consideration of: age, disability, sex, transgender, marriage/civil partnership, maternity/pregnancy, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation
and if appropriate: financial economic status, homelessness, political view

Is there any potential or real issue which will stop some groups or people getting involved? (adverse impact)

None. We are not amending policies or procedures which would have been previously agreed but we are issuing a Statement that makes reference to previous policies and procedures.

Is that reasonable? Can it be justified or mitigated?

It's a legal requirement to publish this information, in line with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

How will this service be successfully delivered to a diverse group of people? (positive impact)

N/A – it's a legal requirement.

Is there any innovative thinking, working or technology that could improve delivery?

There is a need to ensure that everyone who is involved in the production and publication of the Pay Policy Statement is aware of the deadlines and provision has been made to meet these deadlines.

What consultation has taken place? How has the consultation influenced the service?

Consultation will take place with Cabinet as then full approval by Full Council.

We also worked in partnership with the Trade Unions in producing the Council's Pay Policy Statement before it goes to the Full Council Meeting.

4 So what?

[Link to business planning process](#)

What changes have you identified?

The Pay Policy Statement will need to go to Full Council if any changes are made after full approval – Council policy. Salary information, as of 1st April 2013, will be made available after this date.

What will you do now and what will be included in future planning?

We will publish a Pay Policy Statement on an annual basis. We may receive further guidance on what needs to be included for 2014 / 15 from Department of Communities and Local Government. We will share our Pay Policy Statement with other Councils.

When will this be reviewed?

On an annual basis.

How will success be measured?

Full Council approval and publishing on the Council's website.

For the record	
Name of person leading this DIA – Claire Taylor	Date completed: January 2013
Names of people involved in consideration of impact – Nicki Jackson	
Name of director signing DIA	Date signed

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2010-2011 & 2011-2012 & 2012-2013

Pay Scales

NJC Pay Grades			New rate	Hour Rate
Grade	Point	Payroll Point		
J	1	1	12,145.00	6.30
	2	2	12,576.00	6.52
	3	3	13,009.00	6.74
	4	4	13,440.00	6.97
	5	5	13,870.00	7.19
K	1	6	14,241.00	7.38
	2	7	14,923.00	7.73
	3	8	15,605.00	8.09
	4	9	16,286.00	8.44
	5	10	16,968.00	8.79
L	1	11	17,372.00	9.00
	2	12	18,188.00	9.43
	3	13	19,003.00	9.85
	4	14	19,819.00	10.27
	5	15	20,634.00	10.70
M	1	16	21,008.00	10.89
	2	17	21,854.00	11.33
	3	18	22,700.00	11.77
	4	19	23,546.00	12.20
	5	20	24,392.00	12.64
N	1	21	24,846.00	12.88
	2	22	25,705.00	13.32
	3	23	26,563.00	13.77
	4	24	27,422.00	14.21
	5	25	28,280.00	14.66
Hay Pay Grades				
Q	Q1		28,634.00	
			33,254.00	mid point
			37,875.00	
R	R1		32,348.00	
			37,780.00	mid point
			43,211.00	
S	S1		36,764.00	
			42,996.00	mid point
			49,227.00	
T	T1		42,943.00	
			49,255.00	mid point
			55,567.00	
U	U1		48,338.00	
			55,109.00	mid point
			64,100.00	

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Swindon Borough Council Executive Pay Strategy

This paper provides an overview of the revised Executive Pay Strategy as approved by Full Council on 9th June 2005 and has been updated to reflect the revised bonus arrangements agreed by the Corporate Board in June 2008. If you require further information or clarification, please contact HR First Response on extension 4343 or on freephone 0800 032 5642 or email hfirstresponse@swindon.gov.uk.

1. Overview

This paper outlines the terms of Swindon Borough Council's senior executive pay strategy.

The Strategy ensures that Swindon Borough Council's top pay is:

- Market competitive
- Sufficiently flexible
- Performance based
- Clear and transparent

Further, it provides the opportunity to genuinely reward those individuals who consistently demonstrate the behaviours and commitment to achievement that will support our transformation as an authority.

The Strategy is consistent with the requirements of the Government's *Pay and Workforce Strategy* in that it aligns reward with market and performance. The Strategy has been approved by Corporate Board and was endorsed by Full Council on 9th June 2005.

For ease of reference, a list of definitions of terms is provided in section 5.

2. Pay Strategy

2.1 Pay Structure

There are 5 levels in Swindon's Executive pay structure as detailed below:

Level	Salary Range	
	From	To
CEO	£147.4k	£183.7k
Group Director	£115.2k	£138.0k
Director 5	£95.1k	£113.9k
Director 4	£78.5k	£94.0k
Director 3	£64.9k	£77.7k

NB: Salary figures effective as at 20011/2012



Swindon Borough Council

Executive Pay Strategy

As can be seen in the table above, a salary range applies to each level. The salary range identifies the minimum and maximum salary outcome for posts. **Please note that this is NOT an incremental scale.** Appointments are made to a spot point within the band. Further information on pay outcomes is detailed in point 2.3 below.

The salary ranges in the pay structure are benchmarked to the market and informed by Hay management information on Local Government, National Industrial and Service base pay and total cash statistics, and the local government survey of Chief Executives and Chief Officer average pay data. They will be reviewed annually with any changes taking effect from 1 April each year.

2.2 Determination of Job Level

Each job is assigned to a level within the pay structure on the basis of job size. Job size is currently measured via Hay Job Evaluation Methodology.

2.3 Pay Outcome

Appointments are made to a spot salary within the job range for the level. The spot salary will take into consideration reasonable market competitiveness and internal relativities.

2.4 Movement within a Level

There is no automatic right to salary progression based on time served.

An annual salary review cycle occurs in April each year. Group Directors may make proposals for salary review of staff reporting to them, providing such review would keep the salary outcome within the designated job range for the post.

All salary reviews require the approval of the Chief Executive and must have the endorsement of the relevant Lead Cabinet Member. As salary review is not an automatic entitlement, a sound business case must be made. (For information on national pay increases refer to section 2.7 of this paper).

A business case for out-of-cycle salary review may be made to the Chief Executive in circumstances where either a) a job substantially changes as a result of organisational re-structure or b) salary review is necessary to meet an urgent staff retention need.

2.5 Performance Bonus

2.5.1 General Conditions

The performance bonus is designed to encourage and reward performance beyond the norm against stretch objectives in the areas of culture, transformation and financial management. It is not for the purpose of rewarding sound business as usual achievements and on this basis, the award of a performance bonus should not be seen as an automatic entitlement. Nor should a decision to withhold a bonus payment be seen as a punitive action.

A table summarising performance bonus provisions is provided as Appendix 1.

2.5.2 Eligibility

Chief Executive and Group Director posts attract a non-pensionable performance bonus of up to 15% of gross annual salary (or pro-rata) and Director posts attract a non-pensionable performance bonus of up to 10% of gross annual salary (or pro rata). Eligibility will be considered in April each year, based on a retrospective assessment of performance across the previous 12 months.

With effect from the 2008/9 bonus round the following approach will be taken to assessing bonus eligibility.

All individuals will be firstly assessed on a 3-point scale:

A.	Exceeds Expectations	Outstanding achievement against both targets and behaviours. Achievements are of the most major significance, impact and difficulty, and have been delivered to a high standard.
B.	Meets Expectations	Achievements above the norm against both targets and behaviours. All targets met or almost met plus one or two of particular significance and difficulty achieved to a high standard.
C.	Does not meet expectations	Not yet achieving stretch targets consistently. May have achieved some targets and behaviours, but missed some of the more significant or difficult, and/or some significant quality shortfalls.

An overall performance rating of A or B must be achieved for any bonus payment to be made. As a guide, those rated as B could expect to achieve a bonus in the range 1 – 7% (Directors) and 1 – 10% (Group Directors), and those rated as A could expect to achieve a bonus in the range 5 – 10 % (Directors) and 8 – 15% (Group Directors).



Swindon Borough Council

Executive Pay Strategy

Assessment will then be made against the set of over-arching annual criteria set by the Corporate Board (in the case of Directors), Chief Executive (in the case of Group Directors) or Leader (in the case of the Chief Executive).

2.5.3 Review & Decision Making

While the bonus is an annual payment, progress on achieving targets set for the annual bonus payment should be monitored and be the focus of ongoing dialogue between the individual and their line manager on at least on a quarterly basis. In the case of Directors, a view on progress against objectives and targets will be discussed at the Corporate Board 6 monthly, to ensure that there are no surprises at the end of year moderation meeting.

At the end of the bonus year, all Director bonus recommendations will be subject to moderation by the Corporate Board. The moderation process will ensure that there is consistency in the assessment of achievements across Groups. The Chief Executive will then discuss the schedule of bonus recommendations with the Leader of the Council before making the final determination.

The Chief Executive will determine each Group Director's eligibility for performance bonus in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

2.5.4 Payment

The bonus will be paid as a lump sum each May, or in the earliest possible pay-run thereafter, based on a retrospective assessment of performance across the previous financial year.

2.5.5 In-year appointments and departures

Individuals appointed to the Executive Pay Structure in-year will be eligible to be considered for a pro-rata bonus payment. The exception to this is anyone appointed on or after 1 January in any year. These individuals will not normally receive a bonus for that year unless the Chief Executive grants special consideration.

Individuals who leave the employment of the Council mid-year may request to be considered for bonus for the relevant period, provided that they worked for at least 3 months of the bonus year.

2.7 National Pay Adjustments

The salary range applicable to each band will be reviewed and adjusted in line with national pay awards agreed by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives and Chief Officers and in conjunction with a review of the national market for jobs of this size.



Swindon Borough Council Executive Pay Strategy

Where individual performance across the previous year has been confirmed as satisfactory, an adjustment will be made in accordance with the national pay award. Where performance has not been satisfactory, the Council may utilise its discretion not to award the national pay increase.

2.8 Associated Terms and Conditions of Employment

Individuals will be expected to work the hours necessary for the efficient and effective performance of their appointed role. Annual salaries are all inclusive, and no further allowances or additions will be paid for out of hours working, travel within the Borough, home telephones etc. Annual leave entitlement is 30 days per annum and other leave provisions will be in accordance with Council policy for all other employees.

3. Definitions

Spot Salary – The determination of a fixed-point salary based on market, job size and internal relativity.

Salary Range – The agreed salary bandwidth for a range of jobs determined by job size through job evaluation.

Job Level – This is the evaluated job size which determines where the job fits on a relativity basis with other roles in the Council.

Market – This is determined on the basis of job size and geographic population against which job ranges are matched.

Moderation – the process of ensuring consistency of assessment against generic or similar criteria.

Swindon Borough Council Executive Pay Strategy

APPENDIX 1

Overview of Bonus Arrangements

Level	Up to %	Criteria Set By	Monitoring	Moderated by	Recommendation	Approval
Chief Executive	15	Leader	¼ly by Leader	NA	Leader	Leader
Group Director	15	Chief Executive	¼ly by Chief Executive	Chief Executive	Chief Executive	Leader
Director	10	Corporate Board	¼ly by Group Director & reported to Corporate Board 6 monthly	Corporate Board	Group Director	Chief Executive

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2013

MINUTE FOR CONFIRMATION

**101. Pay Policy Statement 2013/14
(Minute for Confirmation)**

The Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services, and the Board Director, Transformation and Strategic Projects submitted a joint report concerning the proposed Swindon Borough Council Pay Policy Statement for 2013/14.

Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services, explained that Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 required all local authorities to agree and publish a Pay Policy Statement by 1st April each year. This was the Council's second Pay Policy Statement and was put forward for consideration prior to its submission to the Council for approval. The Policy Statement for 2013/14 had been prepared with regard to the statutory requirements and Guidance.

Resolved – That the Council's proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2013/14, as set out in Appendix A to the joint report, be endorsed and submitted to the Council for approval.

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

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Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

Author: Cabinet Member for StreetSmart and Corporate Services
Head of Public Protection and StreetSmart

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

1.1 The purpose of this Report is to set out the Council's proposed measures for the management of demand for garden waste collections.

1.2 At Council on 20th September, 2012, the following Motion was approved:

"This Council expresses its concern at the recent increase of green waste collection and a reduction in waste taken by residents to the household waste recycling centre.

This Council requests that the Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services and the Streetsmart Service Delivery Manager produce a report for Cabinet as soon as practicable outlining what action will be taken to manage future demand."

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the investigation that has taken place and the findings outlined in the report;
- 2.2 Note the communications measures planned that will be carried out by the Head of Public Protection and StreetSmart;
- 2.3 Authorise the Board Director for Service Delivery to introduce a limit on the volume of garden waste presented from each house to four bags per fortnight (maximum 90 litres per bag). and,
- 2.4 Advise the Council of the contents of the joint report and of the recommendations in 2.1 to 2.3 above.

3. Detail

Garden waste collection service

- 3.1 The Council offers a garden waste collection service that is free of charge at point of use and where residents may present an unlimited amount for collection. The waste must be presented in green plastic sacks for identification purposes.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Richard Fisher, 01793 466461, refisher@swindon.gov.uk.

Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections

Cabinet

Date: 6th February 2013

All areas of the Borough receive this service on a fortnightly basis. In most cases this is the same day as the refuse collection day.

Household Waste Recycling Centre

- 3.2 Garden waste may also be taken to the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) at Waterside Park, Cheney Manor Industrial Estate. There are no restrictions on the quantity that can be delivered to this location. The only limitation is that any vehicle over 2m in height may only visit up to 12 times each year, to reduce large quantities of waste, which reduces queuing times and potential abuse by commercial waste producers.
- 3.3 The HWRC is open during the summer, between 0800 and 2000 seven days per week. During the winter, this is reduced to between 0800 and 1630 but remains open seven days per week with the exception of Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

2012 collection issues

- 3.4 The tonnages of garden waste produced for the whole summer period will not be known until the end of the financial year (2012/13) but early indications are that there was a significant increase in the amount of waste collected from the kerbside, rather than delivered to the HWRC, although there was a marginal increase in the overall tonnage produced.
- 3.5 The amount of garden waste produced has been approximately 10,000 tonnes per year since 2008. This makes up approximately 10% of our overall waste arisings and contributes significantly to the recycling and composting performance of the Council.
- 3.6 In previous years, it is estimated that 40% of this waste was delivered to the HWRC, whereas in the summer of 2012, it is estimated that only 25% of the garden waste collected was delivered to the site and the 75% of it was presented for collection.
- 3.7 Weather conditions in the early summer period (2012) meant that grass was growing at a much quicker rate than in previous years. This resulted in large quantities of waste being presented for collection and the service becoming inundated. In the most extreme circumstance, this resulted in some areas of the Borough missed a collection day, making a delay of a fortnight. Other areas were delayed by up to 6 days.
- 3.8 Additional resources were put in place by Swindon Commercial Services Limited to enable the collections to catch up. This included double-shifted vehicles and crews and additional rounds. It also involved a change in the collection process to make the kerbside element quicker, yet resulted in additional demand at the

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Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections

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transfer station, where the plastic sacks required manual splitting to remove the garden waste prior to being sent for composting.

- 3.9 A further delay occurred towards the end of the summer, when the facilities that were available for composting, and storage prior to composting, exceeded their capacity for safe storage.
- 3.10 This longer-term issue had built up due to the over-supply of garden waste and compost in the market meaning that demand for the compost product was not as high and throughput of facilities slowed down. There was also a technical reason: due to the high moisture content of the garden waste, it was taking longer to compost and required more storage space during that time.
- 3.11 Based on anecdotal evidence and conversations with residents' groups, associations and individuals, there are various reasons for them preferring to use the collection rather than the HWRC, even when the service was delayed. Those cited include:
- 3.11.1 Convenience: The collection service remains preferred as it is easy and does not require residents taking time to deliver the waste;
- 3.11.2 Cleanliness: With the waste being wetter than normal, the collection service meant residents didn't have to put it in their own vehicles;
- 3.11.3 Volumes: The volumes that many houses presented would have meant several trips to the HWRC, making it more inconvenient;
- 3.11.4 Expectation: Residents expected the HWRC to have queues and did not wish to 'risk it' by going to the site; and,
- 3.11.5 Cost: With increasing fuel costs, the ability to have waste collected free of charge meant that the residents would not incur the fuel and vehicles costs of taking the waste to the site.
- 3.12 Whilst the external factors of cost and convenience are not able to be influenced by the Council directly, the provision of an alternative site for garden waste disposal in another area of the Borough (i.e. a second HWRC specifically for garden waste) may be possible to reduce the burden on residents and the HWRC at Waterside Park. This will be investigated to determine whether a feasible site (or sites) exist and what consent and permitted will be required.

Communications

- 3.13 In hindsight, it is apparent that the most frustrating element for residents was the lack of awareness and accurate information on the delays, their length and when they could expect the collection to actually take place. Delays can be caused for many reasons and in any of the waste collection services; therefore, the Council is working on developing systems to get accurate data to residents so they are

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Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections

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aware of when delays are happening and when they can expect the service to take place.

- 3.14 This will include social media and the use of the existing Council feeds for the popular systems, including Facebook and Twitter. A series of standard messages are being developed so that they can be used quickly and by the Officers with the real-time information to reduce delays and improve accuracy. These will be trialled over the winter and rolled out on a service-by-service basis.
- 3.15 Swindon Commercial Services Limited will be extending their roll-out of vehicle tracking and route optimisation systems that will improve the information they have available on the location and efficiency of the collection crews. It is then intended that this information can be combined with the communications to provide publically-available real-time systems where residents will be able to see their collection vehicles.
- 3.16 The same system can also be used to promote the HWRC and highlight when there are low levels of queuing when residents may expect it to be busy. For example, on the Easter Bank Holiday in 2012, there were no queues at the site yet this has historically been one of the busiest weekends.
- 3.17 Additional communications will take place about waste minimisation and reminding residents of home composting opportunities. If possible, the Council will identify sources for discounted compost bins but this is dependent on offers available in the market at that time. The most appropriate period to review this is late Spring 2013.

Operational changes

- 3.18 The main issue during Summer 2012 was the volume of waste presented for collection, whereas previously it had been taken to the HWRC. To resolve this, it is proposed that the Council introduce a limit on the volume of waste collected from each household, of four bags per household per fortnight. All other aspects of the service shall remain the same, including the householder providing their own sacks, of approximately 90 to 100 litres capacity each - any sack larger will not be acceptable.
- 3.19 Any additional waste that households produce can be taken to the HWRC. The majority of households should be able to manage within these limits Additional waste presented for collection will not be taken.
- 3.20 This will provide a consistent load for the collection crews to deal with and not encounter the high-volumes experienced in 2012. It will improve the presentation of waste outside properties, reduce obstructions caused by large volumes, and reduce the manual handling risk of large numbers of sacks that is currently a prevalent risk for staff involved in these collections.

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Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections

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- 3.21 Due to the restriction, there is a risk that increased volumes of waste will be flytipped. This will require strong enforcement action in those areas where it takes place; however, flytipped garden waste will only be removed where it poses an immediate risk to the environment or obstruction of the highway or drainage. Where excessive amounts of waste are presented, residents will be written to in the same way as side waste for wheeled bin collections is managed and enforcement action taken for repeat offences.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 An additional HWRC is discussed within the report.
- 4.2 Other alternative options have been considered as part of the preparation of the report, including only two sacks and the introduction of wheeled bins. The financial implications and risks of these options limit their viability.
- 4.3 If Cabinet does not wish to introduce a volume-limited collection, the existing service will remain unchanged and will be susceptible to delays due to large volumes in peak periods, as experienced in Summer 2012.
- 4.4 A further option is to consider the introduction of charging for green waste collection to cover the full or partial contribution to service costs. While feasible, practical methods of implementation would be a challenge to raise and maintain sufficient revenue. For example green bags could be purchased either from the Council or from a supermarket. No work has been undertaken on this option because of the Cabinet's standing objection to charging.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 This report does not propose any actions with financial or procurement implications.
- 5.2 Any subsequent actions, such as the investigation into alternative HWRC provision, will have a separate business case to consider these implications.
- 5.3 The introduction of a volume-limited collection will reduce the risk of volatility in costs and ensure the collection service is economically sustainable. The service was originally budgeted at £598,000 per year; however, actual costs have been £850,000 for the last few years, with the overspend being offset by income from recycling. The restrictions on bags will enable the service be reliable within this actual spend.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.4 The Council has a legal obligation, by virtue of Section 45 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, for the collection of household waste. This can be

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Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections

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constrained through the setting of Regulations and service of Notice but neither are proposed in this report.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.5 Garden waste is a significant tonnage of household waste that needs to be dealt with in a sustainable manner and, wherever practicable, diverted from landfill to avoid the production of methane and other harmful gases.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.6 The diversion of waste landfill from landfill is a strategic objective and forms part of the Council's aspiration to achieve 60% recycling and composting.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.7 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this specific decision because it is covered in the DIA for the overarching Municipal Waste Management Strategy. This identified that disability and race should be clearly considered in future developments. The communications outlined in this report will be considered carefully to maximise understanding wherever possible.

Risk Management

- 5.8 Failing to manage the garden waste collection service in the event of similar circumstances in future years would result in significant reputational and financial impacts for the Council.
- 5.9 The recommendation for safe collection system from the Health and Safety Laboratory is to use wheeled bins wherever possible. We consider that the reduction of the number of bags appropriately limits the risk posed to manual handling of large numbers.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Finance, Revenues, Benefits and Property (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Richard Fisher, 01793 466461, refisher@swindon.gov.uk.

Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections

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9. Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

- 9.1 This is not a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme / Forward Plan for February 2013.

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CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2013

MINUTE TO NOTE

103. Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections

The Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services and the Head of Public Protection and Streetsmart submitted a joint report concerning the Council's proposed measures for the management of demand for garden waste collections and responding to a motion submitted to the Council meeting held on 20th September 2012 (Minute 47 of the Council refers).

Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services, referred to the problems that had occurred during the summer of 2012 with garden waste collections. She referred to the exceptional demands placed on the service as a result of the wet summer and the steps that had been taken to respond to the problems at the time. She highlighted the proposed measures to be introduced to improve the management of demand for garden waste collections and explained her reasons for believing that these offered the most practical solution.

Councillor Foley referred to issues raised by Chiseldon Parish Councillor Mr Eric Shaw at the Open Forum held immediately prior to the Cabinet meeting where he had highlighted the problems likely to be faced by those residents who supported their communities by cutting Highway verges adjacent to their homes and by collecting leaves in autumn from street trees. He had also highlighted the problem for some residents of transporting green waste to the Household Waste Recycling Centre from rural parts of the Borough. In view of these issues and other comments she had received from Councillor colleagues she intended to add an additional recommendation to request that a further report be submitted to the next Cabinet meeting on these and other operational issues.

Councillor Bob Wright believed that the cost of using wheeliebins for green waste collections should again be investigated. He also suggested that different coloured bags could be issued to those who were undertaking grass cutting and similar activities for their communities to avoid any confusion with householder generated green waste.

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability, referred to the success of Swindon's Recycling Service and that Swindon offered a better service than many other local authorities, and the problems experienced in an exceptional summer should not detract from the success of the service. He commented on the proven success of initiatives like community composting and his confidence that this could also be successful in Swindon.

Councillor Foley thanked Councillor colleagues for their comments and suggestions. She confirmed her support for initiatives that would encourage greater composting of green waste.

Resolved – (1) That the investigations that had taken place into the problems experienced with garden waste collections, and the findings outlined in the joint

report, be noted.

(2) That the communication measures planned in respect of garden waste collections to be carried out by the Head of Public Protection and StreetSmart, be noted.

(3) That the Board Director, Service Delivery be authorised to introduce a limit on the volume of garden waste presented from each house to four bags per fortnight (maximum 90 litres per bag) from 1st April 2013.

(4) That the Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services, and the Board Director, Service Delivery, be requested to submit a report to the Cabinet meeting on 20th March 2013 relating to any operational issues around the new green waste scheme and other related matters that have been brought to Ward Councillors' attention.

(5) That the Council be advised of the contents of the joint report and of the decisions set out in (1) to (3) above in response to the Council Motion on 20th September 2012 (Minute 47 of the Council refers).

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