

Swindon Borough Council

Cabinet

Wednesday, 22 October 2014

Committee Room 6, Civic Offices
(Anticipated meeting room)

At 6.00 p.m. or at the Conclusion of the Cabinet Open Forum

Conservative Councillors

David Renard (Chair)
Brian Mattock (Vice-Chair)
Russell Holland
Emma Faramarzi
Brian Ford
Fionuala Foley
Dale Heenan
Richard Hurley
Garry Perkins
Keith Williams

Committee Officer: Ian Willcox (Telephone 01793 463601)
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Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street,
Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

Access Arrangements - The venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you have any special requirements to enable you to attend the meeting or would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size, please contact the Committee Officer as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.

AGENDA

NOTE:

A Cabinet Open Forum is held at 6:00 p.m. prior to the start of each scheduled Cabinet Meeting. The Open Forum is similar to the 'public question time' that happens at most Council meetings but without the need for questions. It provides the chance to meet with Cabinet Members as well as Board Directors and Directors to discuss matters relevant to the Cabinet and its responsibilities. It provides an opportunity to raise issues and give views. The Forum will normally close at 6.30 pm and the Cabinet will then reconvene for the start of the formal Cabinet meeting. If the Open Forum completes its business earlier than anticipated then the Cabinet Meeting will commence at

6:15pm or at the Forum's conclusion.

1. Apologies for Absence.

2. 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.

3. Minutes. (Pages 1 - 12)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September 2014.

4. Public Question Time.

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

5. Results of the Children's Centre Consultation. HCCA (CM: FF)

Appendix 2 – is available by way of the following link -

<http://www.swindon.gov.uk/cd/cd-consultations/cd-consultations-current/Pages/Childrens-Centres-Consultation.aspx>

6. Result of the Consultation for Children's Centres (Pages 13 - 28)

7. Budget Management 2014/15 and Draft Budget 2015/16. BDR (CM: RH)
(Pages 29 - 54)

8. Additional Primary School Places in Swindon Town Centre. HE&S (CM: FF)
CE; ET; MW; OT (Pages 55 - 60)

9. Progressing the Economic Strategy - Developing Skills and Employment Opportunities through the Construction Industry. HE&S (CM: GP)
(Pages 61 - 70)

10. Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review of Swindon. DLDS
(CM: DR) (Pages 71 - 88)

11. References from Other Council Bodies: Town Twinning Network. DLDS
(CM: DR / RH) (Pages 89 - 106)

12. Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances - Recommendations 2015/16. DLDS (CM: DR) (Pages 107 - 114)

Date of Despatch: 14 October 2014

Key:

Officers:

BDC	-	Board Director Commissioning (DCS/ DASS)
BDSD	-	Board Director Service Delivery
BDR	-	Board Director Resources (Section 151 Officer)
DPH	-	Director of Public Health
DLDS	-	Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)
HE&S	-	Head of Economy and Skills

Wards

CE	-	Central
EA	-	Eastcott
MW	-	Mannington and Western
OT	-	Old Town

Cabinet Members Responsible for the Service Area concerned:

DR	-	David Renard	Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet
BM	-	Brian Mattock	Deputy Leader of the Council, Vice-Chair of Cabinet, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care
EF	-	Emma Faramarzi	Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety
FF	-	Fionuala Foley	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
BF	-	Brian Ford	Cabinet Member for Streetsmart
DH	-	Dale Heenan	Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport
RH	-	Russell Holland	Cabinet Member for Finance
RHu	-	Richard Hurley	Cabinet Member for Communities and Volunteering
GP	-	Garry Perkins	Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills
KW	-	Keith Williams	Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). We will give priority to those who submit questions in writing at least two days before the meeting. Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements.

Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Director of Law and Democratic Services, we will publish it, along with the answer, alongside the Minutes. The process associated with asking a public question is set out in the "Public Question Time at Council Meetings Protocol and Guidance" available on the Council's Website (<http://www5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

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CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2014

PRESENT:- Councillors David Renard (Chair), Brian Mattock (Vice-Chair), Russell Holland, Emma Faramarzi, Brian Ford, Fionuala Foley, Dale Heenan and Garry Perkins.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Richard Hurley and Keith Williams.

Councillor Jim Grant attended the meeting in respect of Minutes 27, 28, 30, 31, 32 and 34. Councillor Stan Pajak attended the meeting in respect of Minutes 27, 30 and 31.

24. Declarations of Interest

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

25. Minutes

Resolved –That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

26. Public Question Time

The following question was asked in accordance with Standing Order 28 –

Questioner

Mr Tim French, Cassan Road, Swindon

Questions

Mr French asked a question regarding the need for the holding of a Public Planning Inquiry into the proposed Solar Farm at Wroughton Swindon, given the support for this proposed development from the local community, Wroughton Parish Council and the Borough's Planning Committee.

Response

The Chair thanked Mr French for his question and comments. Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport, and Councillor Brian Ford, Cabinet Member for Streetsmart, and a Wroughton and Wichelstowe Ward Councillor, responded at the meeting to the question and comments.

27. Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority Consultation

The Leader of the Council and the Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a joint report concerning the Council's response to the consultation being undertaken by the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority regarding the future of the service.

The Chair referred to the consultation being undertaken by the Joint Fire Authority on the future of the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire and Rescue Service. He commented on the significance of the decision to be made by the Fire Authority for Swindon and its residents. He referred to the options being presented for consideration and to the response of Wiltshire Council set out in Appendix 2 to the joint report. He advised that the Fire Authority had requested that responses to its consultation exercise be received by 20th October 2014.

The Chair welcomed Mr Simon Routh-Jones, Chief Fire Officer of Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service to the meeting and invited him to address the Cabinet on the consultation document, the options that it contained and the views of the Service.

Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills, and a Swindon appointed member of the Joint Fire Authority, commented on the background to the proposals and the options under consideration. He believed that the proposed third option involving a merger with the Dorset Fire Authority and increased collaboration with local partners was the only solution that could ensure that there was no negative effect on the current level of service provided to Swindon residents and that could support the future development of the Fire and Rescue Service. He commented on the consultation exercise and to the wish of the Fire Authority to receive as much feedback as possible from the local community on this important issue.

Councillor Stan Pajak, Leader of the Minority Group on the Council, welcomed the opportunity for the public to contribute to this important consultation. Based on the information available and the comments of the Service and Joint Fire Authority, he and his group was supportive of Option 3 as this seemed to offer the most security for the maintenance and development of the Fire and Rescue Service in Swindon and the rest of Wiltshire.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition Group on the Council, advised that based on the information available, his group was also supportive of Option 3 in view of the security it would offer Swindon and its residents. He asked whether the Fire and Rescue Service could give an assurance that if Option 3 was approved, the ten minute service response time in Swindon would be maintained.

Councillor Perkins and the Chief Fire Officer confirmed that under Option 3 it was believed that the 10-minute response time would be maintained. The Chair suggested that the requirement for this assurance being highlighted could be included as part of the Borough's response to the Joint Fire Authority's Consultation.

The Chair thanked Mr Routh-Jones and Councillors for their contributions, and explained that whilst there appeared to be a clear preference for Option 3 within the Borough, it was his view that this matter would be most appropriately dealt with by way of a joint "cross-party" written response on behalf of the Council.

Resolved – (1) That the contents of the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority Consultation Document, be noted.

(2) That the Director of Law and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the political group leaders on the Council be authorised to develop, finalise and submit the Council's response to the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority by 20th October 2014.

(3) That the Cabinet express its appreciation to Mr Simon Routh-Jones, Chief Fire Officer of Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service, for his attendance and contribution to this meeting of the Cabinet.

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

28. Budget Management 2014/15

The Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources submitted a joint report setting out (a) the current forecast outturn position of the Council's Revenue Budget as at the end of July 2014, (b) issues impacting on the Council's finances, including (i) Capita Integration, (ii) Sports Pitches, and (iii) Swindon Commercial Services Ltd (SCS), and (c) the current forecast out-turn position for the Housing Revenue Account and the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, introduced the report and referred to the continuing work being undertaken by the Council's officer team to deliver budget savings early for the next Financial Year to both strengthen the Council's financial position and provide capacity to fund the Council's on-going transformation.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition Group on the Council, referred to the current Public Inquiry into the proposed Wroughton Solar Farm and asked what "Plan B" existed should the Planning Inspector refuse planning permission.

Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills, advised that whilst the Wroughton Solar Farm was an important scheme for Swindon Commercial Services Ltd. (SCS), it did have a number of other energy related schemes within its business plan that could be brought forward if required.

Resolved – (1) That the Cabinet notes the Projected Out-turn by Service 2014/15, as set out in Table 1 and Appendices 1 and 2 to the joint report.

(2) That the proposed Budget virements, as set out in Appendix 3 to the joint report, be approved.

(3) That the use of in-year savings resulting from the early achievement of measures to deliver the 2015/16 Budget, as highlighted in paragraph 4.4 of the joint report, being set aside for any one-off implementation costs, be approved.

(4) That, in the event that savings are realised in the current year that directly relate to re-integration of services from Capita, their use to contribute to the one-off contract severance costs as referred to in paragraph 5.1 of the joint report, be approved.

(5) That up to £10,000 from one-off reserves be spent on football pitch security and equipment to support the implementation of part of the £40,000 Budget saving to reduce the annual subsidy of sports pitches, as referred to in paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2 of the joint report.

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

29. Capital Programme Monitoring - First Quarter 2014/15

The Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources submitted a joint report setting out the 2014/15 Capital Programme position as at the end of June 2014.

Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, referred to the report and explained that it addressed the projected outturn position of the Council's Capital Budget for 2014/15 and highlighted proposed changes to the current Capital Programme.

Resolved – (1) That the 2014/15 Capital Programme position, as set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.3 of the joint report, be noted.

(2) That the changes to the Council's Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the joint report, be approved.

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

30. Education Provision 2014-2017

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Board Director, Commissioning submitted a joint report concerning (a) school place planning pressures relating to Early Years, Primary and Secondary education arising from new housing developments and increasing demand associated with Special Educational Needs, (b) proposed responses to these pressures and the associated legal and consultation processes, (c) the progress of proposals to establish Secondary age "Free School" provision in Swindon, (d) Early Years education provision and the proposed Council approach to ensure Government targets were achieved, (e) progress made in establishing additional Primary School Places, (f) the requirement for school places and schools in new areas of major housing development within the Borough, and (g) pressures within Special Educational Needs provision at Primary and Secondary levels, and proposals to respond to existing pressures and future demands.

Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, introduced the report and drew attention to the differing but significant pressures effecting education provision in the Borough. She highlighted how the Council was seeking to respond to these pressures. She expressed her thanks to the officer team that had produced the report and that were working to deliver the best possible outcomes for Swindon's children and young people.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition Group on the Council, referred to the proposal to establish Free Schools in Swindon. He commented on his opposition to the Government's policy on Free Schools and to his belief that local authorities should be able to build and run schools where there was a need for school places to be provided. He hoped that the Council would lobby the Government to change its policies. He asked what would happen should the bids for Free Schools fail.

Councillor Foley noted the comments and reiterated that the Council was following Government policy and requirements. Should the applications for Free Schools fail then this Council would be required to provide the necessary Capital

funding to provide the required schools by way of “Borrowing”. The sums were likely to be significant and this would have a considerable on-going effect on the Council’s Revenue Budget. The Council had few options available to it in order to respond to the pressures to provide secondary places.

Councillor Stan Pajak, Leader of the Minority Group on the Council, referred to the possible reasons for the high numbers of children with Statements of Special Education Need in Swindon. He welcomed the proposed research into this and wondered if a factor could be the high number of children with “English as an Additional Language” classification. He referred to the petitions required to support Free School bids and noted that only parents were permitted to sign these. He believed that such petitions should be accessible to all to sign.

Councillor Foley commented that she was not aware of any direct link between the number of children with Statements of Special Educational Need and English as an Additional Language, but that the proposed research should give clarity to the position. She hoped that as many parents as possible would sign the Free School petitions given the significance of these for the future of secondary provision in the Borough.

Resolved – (1) That the education place planning demand arising for Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Special Educational Needs places, be noted.

(2) That the progress of the Free School applications from New College and the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust be noted and the Council offer further assistance, if required, by the sponsor.

(3) That the Board Director, Commissioning be authorised to commence statutory processes for the expansion of the (a) Chalet Special School for September 2015, and (b) Primary Emotional and Social Difficulties (ESD) provision at Nyland Special School for September 2015.

(4) That the Head of Property Assets in consultation with the Board Director Resources and the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised to complete the necessary legal documentation to transfer the Local Authority ownership of part of the South Marston Primary School site to the Bristol Diocese to ensure continuity of education provision on the site and allow the Diocese to negotiate the extension of the site with South Marston Parish Council.

(5) That the next steps towards an 11 to 25 years Special Education Needs place planning strategy, as referred to in paragraphs 3.36 to 3.47 of the joint report, be approved.

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

31. Housing Strategy 2015-2026

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety and the Head of Housing and Community Safety submitted a joint report setting out a proposed Housing Strategy 2015-2026.

Councillor Emma Faramarzi, Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety, introduced the report and highlighted the key themes of the proposed Strategy and the proposed Actions over the next five years to deliver the plan. She referred to the issue of Housing Growth and to the shortage in Swindon of housing aimed at high-earners and key workers. She drew attention to proposals for the rented sector and

the possible development of a Municipal Housing Company. She commented on the consultation process associated with the Strategy and noted that the consultation period was to run until 10th November and not 13th October 2014 as had been stated in the report. She referred to the work that had been undertaken to develop the Strategy and to produce the evidence base that supported it. She thanked the officer team for their hard work and commitment.

Councillor Stan Pajak, Leader of the Minority Group on the Council, welcomed the Strategy. He noted that the key measurement of its success would be the ability to deliver the required actions. He welcomed the aim to bring more empty properties back into housing use and hoped that the time taken to achieve this with individual properties could be speeded up. He welcomed the reference to Houses in Multiple Occupation and hoped that effective solutions could be identified to overcome the type of problems identified in his and other wards.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition, referred to the Motion at the Council meeting on the 17th July 2014, calling for the investigation of the introduction of a licensing scheme similar to that adopted by Oxford City Council for Houses in Multiple Occupation, but that this did not appear to be being pursued.

Councillor Emma Faramarzi and the Head of Housing and Community Safety explained that cross-party discussions were taking place on Houses in Multiple Occupation and that the situation in Swindon was very different from that in Oxford. It was unlikely given the differences in the scale of the problem and number of properties involved that the Secretary of State would support a licensing scheme in Swindon. However, ensuring that residents in shared accommodation could occupy safe and comfortable homes remained a priority.

Councillor Brian Mattock, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, welcomed the Strategy and referred to its links to other Council strategies and actions supporting Social Care and helping to maintain independence.

Resolved – (1) That the Draft Housing Strategy 2015-2026 and Action Points, as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the joint report, be approved, and an eight week consultation exercise be undertaken with interested parties, to run from Monday 15th September to Monday 10th November 2014.

(2) That the findings of the consultation referred to in (1) above, be reported to the Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety with a summary of the responses received and any proposed amendments to the Strategy being published for approval within a Cabinet Member Decision Note, once the consultation period has closed.

(3) That it be noted that the consultation exercise referred to in (1) above will include conversations with housing developers and house builders on how Swindon can achieve greater depth to its housing market.

(4) That it be noted that the proposed Housing Strategy 2015-2026 also addresses the Housing issues raised in the Council Motions of 20th September 2012 (Council Minute 49, 2012/13), 21st February 2013 (Council Minute 111, 2012/13), 11th April 2013 (Council Minute 130, 2012/13), 7th November 2013 (Council Minute 62, 2013/14) and 17th July 2014 (Council Minute 30 refers).

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

32. Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Governance

The Leader of the Council and the Head of Economy and Skills submitted a joint report concerning the approval of a proposed governance structure within the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership which would enable it in a robust, open and transparent manner, to develop, assess and deliver the projects outlined in the Growth Deal and funded by the Local Growth Fund.

The Chair explained that following Government advice a proposed governance structure had been developed by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) in consultation with both Swindon and Wiltshire Councils. It aimed to provide a governance structure that would strengthen the democratic accountability of the SWLEP by demonstrating transparency supported by a robust joint scrutiny function that would be managed by Swindon Borough Council. He referred to the significance of the decisions to be made regarding the delivery of the projects within and affecting the Borough that were contained within the Growth Deal and funded by way of the Local Growth Fund held by SWLEP. It was important to both the Council and residents that appropriate governance was in place to ensure that the decision-making process was robust. He highlighted the success of the SWLEP's Strategic Economic Plan bid and the funding that would be forthcoming for Swindon schemes. He thanked the Council's officer team involved in preparing the Swindon elements of the bid.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition Group on the Council, welcomed the intention to address the democratic deficit surrounding the operation of SWLEP and the proposed parity arrangement regarding the representation of the two local authorities involved. He sought clarity on the Borough's representation on the proposed Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task Group, which the Head of Economy and Skills provided.

Resolved – That subject to the approval of the Council –

- (a) The proposed governance structure for the Local Growth Fund, as proposed by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Secretariat and presented to its Board for approval on 9th September 2014, be noted.
- (b) The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Governance Structure, as set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report be approved.
- (c) The Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Head of Economy and Skills be authorised to undertake the necessary actions, including changes to the Council's Constitution, to enable the implementation of the governance structure set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report.
- (d) The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership proposal to create three new posts and that there will be no financial implications of this for Swindon Borough Council, be noted.

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

33. Town Centre Car Parking Rationalisation

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport and the Board Director, Service Delivery, submitted a joint report concerning Town

Centre Car Parking Rationalisation and in particular (a) objections received in response to the advertisement of the related Traffic Regulation Order, (b) a proposed response to the objections received and to address concerns raised, (c) an additional change to the Traffic Regulation Order required as a result of developments on the Civic Offices campus effecting public use of the Clarence Street Car Park, and (d) the progress of the Town Centre car park rationalisation proposals previously agreed by the Cabinet (Minute 33, 2013/14 refers).

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport, introduced the report and highlighted the actions proposed in response to concerns that had arisen through the Traffic Regulation Order process. He believed that the proposed actions would respond to these concerns raised and together with the progression of the rationalisation of car parking provision, produce positive results for the local economy and for car park users.

Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills, referred to the importance of the car park rationalisation process to the Council and to the viability of Swindon Town Centre. He particularly welcomed the revised proposal for the Commercial Road / Davis Place Car Park that he believed would help local small businesses by allowing short-term parking encouraging trade. He hoped that the operation of this car park could be monitored to measure its success and to identify whether the approach could be used in other Swindon car parks.

Councillor Heenan confirmed that he would welcome the monitoring of the effectiveness of the proposed changes at the Commercial Road / Davis Place Car Park and for a review, also examining the possible implications for other car parks, to be submitted to the Cabinet at an appropriate time in the future.

Resolved – (1) That the objections received to the Traffic Regulation Order advertising the changes necessary to implement the first stage of the rationalisation of Swindon Town Centre car parks, be noted.

(2) That the proposed change to the original decision in relation to the Commercial Road/Davis Place Car Park, as referred to in paragraph 3.8 of the joint report, be approved.

(3) That consideration of the objections received and the decision whether to proceed with implementation be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills.

(4) That the Head of Highways and Transport be authorised to advertise the necessary Traffic Regulation Order to implement the changes to the Clarence Street Car Park as referred to in paragraphs 3.19 and 3.20 of the joint report.

(5) That consideration of any objections received to the advertised changes for the Clarence Street Car Park and the decision whether to proceed with implementation be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills.

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

34. Motion at Council - Traffic on Cricklade Road, Swindon

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport and the Board Director, Service Delivery, submitted a joint report concerning a proposed response to the Motion at the Council meeting on 3rd April 2014 regarding traffic problems on Cricklade Road, Swindon and calling for action to seek a new or improved Moonrakers Junction to ease traffic flow (Council Minute 114, 2013/14 refers).

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport, introduced the report and referred to the original Council motion. He highlighted the background and key issues surrounding traffic problems at the Moonrakers Junction and for the Cricklade Road corridor. He believed that there were no clear or easy solutions that would both satisfy motorists and local residents. He commented on the limited resources available to the Council for major traffic schemes and the competing demands for the use of such resources. However, he was hopeful that the proposed actions referred to in the report would identify a workable solution that would assist both residents and drivers.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition Group on the Council, expressed disappointment that there were no plans for an immediate survey or preliminary design to overcome the problems being experienced by residents. He enquired whether in the shorter term the Cabinet Member could request officers to investigate the possible removal of the bus lane that had previously supported the former Park and Ride Site, as he believed this could help improve traffic flows in the area.

The Chair referred to the north bound bus lane in the vicinity of the Headlands Road Junction and whether this could be changed to improve traffic movements.

Councillor Heenan thanked Cabinet colleagues and Councillors for their comments but believed that the issue of reviewing Bus Lanes in the area should take place as part of the overall review. He cautioned about taking a piecemeal approach to changes in an area of complex traffic movements. He reiterated that the Council needed to make the best use of the limited resources available, both in terms of staff and funding, to deal the Borough's traffic problems and future growth plans.

Resolved – (1) That the summary of the history and key issues surrounding traffic problems at the Moonrakers Junction and Cricklade Road corridor, Swindon, as referred to in the joint report, be noted.

(2) That the work currently under way to update the Swindon Strategic Transport Model (Saturn) and the significant number of major transport infrastructure projects entering the design and feasibility stage in the planning process in the coming months, as highlighted in the joint report, be noted.

(3) That the Head of Highways and Transport in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport, be authorised to agree an appropriate position for Moonrakers Junction in a prioritised, three-year programme of design and feasibility work for major transport schemes.

(4) That the Head of Highways and Transport circulate the programme referred to in (3) above, to Members once agreed.

(5) That the Council be advised of the contents of this joint report in response to the Motion at the Council meeting on 3rd April 2014 (Council Minute 114, 2013/14 refers).

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

**35. Invest and Save for a Low Carbon Swindon
- Swindon's Energy Future - Motion at Council**

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport, the Cabinet Member for Finance and the Head of Economy and Skills, submitted a joint report concerning (a) the proposed response to a Council motion approved at the Council meeting on 3rd April 2014 seeking the setting up of a Swindon Energy Social Enterprise (Council Minute 110, 2013/14 refers), (b) progress on “Swindon’s Energy Future” since last reported to the Cabinet (Minute 114, 2013/14 refers), and (c) proposed models to enable “Investment in Renewables”.

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport, welcomed the report and explained how it sought to encourage community and partner investment in the delivery of Swindon’s Energy Future. He referred to the type of options available and the role of the Council as an enabler in the process helping local energy schemes to develop and become successful.

Resolved – (1) That it be noted that Swindon Borough Council seeks to work with partners such as Swindon Commercial Services Ltd (SCS) who have the experience and capability to delivery successful community investment initiatives.

(2) That the Head of Economy and Skills be authorised to work with Swindon Commercial Services Ltd (SCS) and other selected partners to develop appropriate investment initiatives that could allow communities to benefit financially from local energy schemes.

(3) That the Head of Communications be authorised to work with partners to agree an approach for the promotion of the local energy schemes highlighted in the joint report to local communities with a target date of April 2015.

(4) That it be noted that requests to the Cabinet will be required as and when any Swindon Borough Council funding implications arise from proposed schemes.

(5) That the Council be advised of the contents of this joint report in response to the Motion at the Council meeting on 3rd April 2014 (Council Minute 110, 2013/14 refers).

(Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills, made a personal declaration of interest in respect of the above item as he was a Council appointed Director serving on the Board of Swindon Commercial Services Ltd (SCS).)

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

36. References from Other Council Bodies - Licensing Committee

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety and the Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a joint report concerning recommendations

arising from a meeting of the Licensing Committee held on 13th August 2014 regarding licensing responsibilities under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013.

Councillor Emma Faramarzi, Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety, expressed her support for the recommendations of the Licensing Committee as she believed that the Licensing Committee was the most appropriate body to oversee the licensing of scrap metal dealers and motor salvage operators.

Resolved – (1) That, further to Minute 16(1) of the Licensing Committee, and to the endorsement of the Council, all the Council's (executive) functions under the Scrap Metal Act 2013, be delegated to the Licensing Committee.

(2) That, further to Minute 16(2) of the Licensing Committee, the following functions be delegated to the Ad-Hoc Licensing Sub-Committee:

(i) The determination of new and renewal applications under the Scrap Metal Act 2013 where: (a) the applicant or site manager has been convicted of a relevant offence or subject to relevant enforcement action under the Act, or (b) a previous application for a scrap metal licence or environmental permit/registration has been refused, or (c) a previous scrap metal licence has been revoked; and (ii) The revocation of a licence issued under the Act or the variation of a licence to include conditions.

(3) That, further to Minute 16(2) of the Licensing Committee, the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services be authorised to exercise the following delegated powers: (i) The administration and enforcement of the functions under the Scrap Metal Act 2013; (ii) The power to request further information of applicants; (iii) The determination of new, renewal or variation applications, other than where: (a) the applicant or site manager has been convicted of a relevant offence or subject to relevant enforcement action under the Act, or (b) a previous application for a scrap metal licence or environmental permit/registration has been refused, or (c) a previous scrap metal licence has been revoked; (iv) The power to give notice to an applicant or licensee of the authority's proposal to consider refusing an application or revoking or varying a licence, and to invite representations from the applicant or licensee; and (v) The power to issue or cancel a closure notice for unlicensed sites under Schedule 2 to the Act, and where appropriate, to apply for closure orders and take such other action in this respect as may be required.

(4) That, further to Minute 16(4) of the Licensing Committee and to the decisions set out in (1) to (3) above, the Director of Law and Democratic Services be requested to make the necessary arrangements for the inclusion of these delegations within the Council's Constitution and Scheme of Delegations.

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

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Result of the Consultation for Children's Centres

Cabinet

22nd October 2014

Author: Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Board Director, Commissioning (DCS/DASS)

Wards: All

Locality Affected: All

Parishes Affected: All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To report on the outcome of the consultation on the proposed changes to the provision of Children's Centres in Swindon to focus the service in the areas of the Borough with the highest number of vulnerable children. Through this, the Council would be able to realise savings of £770,000 in 2015/16 to contribute towards the challenging financial position of the Council.
- 1.2 As part of this, the consultation invited views on innovative ways to use existing community facilities/children's centres in order to build self-supporting communities and improve children's lives. The consultation also explored how vulnerable children would be supported through the increase in health visitors and increase of children accessing fifteen hours of early years' education for vulnerable two year olds.
- 1.3 The proposals were consulted for a period of 10 weeks from 29th July – 3rd October 2014, in line with the Council's consultation policy (See 3.4-3.6 below).
- 1.4 The proposals have been revised following consideration of the consultation feedback always ensuring that the protection of children is a priority.
- 1.5 The proposals contribute to the Council's Corporate Strategy priorities: "Making best use of available resources", "Together find new ways to reduce vulnerability and improve health for all," and "Work with people and families to help them fulfil their potential."

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider the responses set out in **Appendix 1** of the consultation carried out on the proposals to changes to children's centre provision.
 - 2.2 Endorse the approach set out in this report in relation to improving children's lives in those areas with the most vulnerable children and families.
 - 2.3 Note that the following children's centres will remain unchanged: Penhill & Pinehurst, Moredon, Drove, Gorse Hill (referred to as the Supercluster), and Parks & Walcot East.
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sue Wald 01793 465713, swald@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 2.4 De-commission the following seven children's centres: Eldene, Croft, Butterflies, Ladybird, Saltway, Robert le Kyng and West Swindon.
- 2.5 Establish two multi-generational family centres in Abbey Meads/Greenmeadow (Butterflies) and West Swindon (West Swindon Family Project) using two thirds of their existing funding based on the budget 2014/15 for two years.
- 2.6 Authorise the Group Director Commissioning (DCS/DASS) to work with stakeholders and parents in developing how a multi-generational family centre would operate and ensure that evidence based support for families with children under three is part of the model.
- 2.7 Develop family support outreach work across the areas of Swindon and Highworth without a children's centre so that vulnerable families are supported to build self-supporting groups, increased support from volunteers and evidence based parenting groups. Priority will be given to families living in areas with high numbers of vulnerable children, for example Eldene, East Wichelstowe and parts of Central. There will also be a service in Highworth and Stratton. It is recommended that the allocation of £194,000 one off resources over two years is included as part of the wider Council-wide draft budget report which is included within the Cabinet agenda for 22nd October 2014. This recommendation addresses some of the concerns raised in the consultation.
- 2.8 Authorise the Board Director Commissioning (DCS/DASS) to implement the proposals by 31st March 2015.
- 2.9 Authorise the Director of Law and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Board Directors for Commissioning (DCS/DASS) and Resources, to agree terms and conditions on which any changes to lease arrangements would be made to protect the Council's interests and ensure continued use of children's centre buildings for services for children and families.

3. Detail

Reason for consultation

- 3.1 Swindon Borough Council Cabinet agreed in July 2014 to consult on the proposals to change the provision of children's centres in order to achieve savings towards the budget 2015/16 (Cabinet Minute 17, 2014/15 refers).
- 3.2 Local Government is currently experiencing its biggest challenge in at least a generation. Swindon faces a growing population with increased demands for services and raised expectations of the level of provision that the Council can secure. At the same time, the coalition government is taking the necessary steps to restore fiscal responsibility, which is bringing reductions in funding. As a result, over the next three years this Council will need to find around a further £52.8m of savings, on top of £70m over the past five years. If we are to achieve

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this and secure a sustainable future for the Council and the Borough, we need to look very carefully at all services the Council provides and supports.

- 3.3 The proposals were consulted on because alongside children's centre services, there is now a range of universal services offered across Swindon.
- 3.3.1 Health visitors provide additional support for vulnerable children. The number of health visitors is due to increase from 35 to 52 in April 2015.
- 3.3.2 Parents or guardians of vulnerable children aged 2 can apply for 15 hours of early years' education per week. Currently just under 600 are supported with an additional 400 places by March 2015.
- 3.3.3 All children aged 3 and 4 are entitled to 15 hours of early education per week and 90% of children receive this service. During 2015, early years education providers will be paid an additional £300 for each vulnerable 3 and 4 year-old children to enable them to be ready for school.
- 3.3.4 A range of mother and toddler groups and self-help groups run by parents and for parents operate across Swindon. This information will be made available on line through My Care My Support website for children and young people from September 2014 www.mycaremysupport.co.uk.
- 3.3.5 During 2012-2014, there have been significant changes in Swindon. Our population of children under five has grown significantly due to a rising birth rate and the expansion of Swindon in the north and now in the south. The demand for specialist children's social care services has been unprecedented. In the past twelve months, the number of children in need of protection from abuse and neglect has increased by almost 50% (147 children in March 2013 to 217 children in March 2014). At the same time, referrals to social workers have increased by 25%.

Consultation

- 3.4 The Board Director Commissioning (DCS/DASS) led the public consultation on:
- 3.4.1 Two pilot multi-generational family centres to be established in West Swindon (West Swindon Family Project) and Abbey Meads (Butterflies) with two thirds of their existing funding for a period of two years during which the centres are required to raise funds and work towards reducing the need for funding.
- 3.4.2 Developing innovative ways to use existing community facilities at Robert Le King and Ladybird (Highworth) in order to build self-supporting communities and improve children's lives.
- 3.4.3 De-commissioning the remaining facilities as Children's Centres by 1st April 2015. This applies to Butterflies, Ladybird, Eldene, Croft, Saltway,

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Robert Le Kyng, and West Swindon Children's Centres and may lead to their de-registration by Ofsted.

- 3.5 The consultation opened on 29th July 2013 for 10 weeks until 3rd October 2014. The consultation was launched on-line with a press release to local media. A total of 1,000 copies of the consultation documents were distributed to children's centres across Swindon so that parents were able to consider the proposals in detail.
- 3.6 We held thirty-one consultation events with parents at all of the ten children's centres and public events were held in the afternoons and evenings. Stakeholder and partner sessions were also held to accommodate the needs of working parents, residents, and staff. We spoke to 158 parents and 40 partners, practitioners and stakeholders during the consultation events and received more than 480 submissions through email, post and on-line. A full range of groups at children's centres was consulted with including those that only vulnerable families attended. There were also one to one discussions with vulnerable families who did not feel comfortable attending groups. The consultation asked for responses to a number of questions. Parents and members of the public were able to respond through a range of media:
- Online survey monkey questionnaire,
 - By email,
 - During consultation meetings, and
 - Submission of written responses.

Results of the Consultation

- 3.7 A detailed summary of the results of the consultation is set out in **Appendix 1**, including results of feedback forms received, consultation events and responses to some of the key issues raised. Two petitions were also received. The first sought the retention with funding of the Butterflies Centre and contained 1041 signatures (plus a further 141 "on-line"). The second sought the retention with funding of the Highworth Ladybird Centre and contained 244 signatures. Folders containing copies of all responses received have been made available to each Cabinet Member, placed in the Members Room, and will be made available at the Cabinet meeting.
- 3.8 In total we received 1,963 responses including the petitions received. This represents a response rate of approximately 15% who object to the proposals.
- 3.9 The following section sets out the response to the key issues raised.

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Definition of a 'vulnerable family'

- 3.10 A significant number of parents requested the definition of 'vulnerable' during the consultation events. Although it was explained that this was based on the definition used by the Ofsted inspection framework, parents pointed out that families could become vulnerable at different stages of their lives depending on changes within their family. Parents also stressed that low income did not in itself define a vulnerable family. It is recommended that we maintain the definition of vulnerable children as this is a requirement under the Ofsted Framework against which existing children's centres are inspected. This is attached in **Appendix 3**. It is also recommended that multi-generational family centres in particular and the proposed family support service in Highworth adopt a more flexible definition to be agreed as part of the specification for the new services.

Children's centre closure will increase demand for social care

- 3.11 A number of respondents suggested that the loss of children's centres would increase the demand for children's social care services further. We have analysed the demand for children's social care and how far children's centres have identified children who then became children in need or children in care. There were 628 children under five referred to children's social care of whom 39 (6.2%) were referred by children's centres. This compared to 63 (10%) referred from early education services. 44 children under five came into care and none of those were referred by a children's centre. Of the 44 children, only 16 children had attended a children's centre prior to becoming looked after and only eight of those were attending a centre identified for closure. Those children would be supported by the family support service referred to below in paragraph 3.13.

The Importance of a local service for families with children under the age of five

- 3.12 Parents felt strongly that there was a need for a local service and that they would not be able to travel to centres that are to be maintained. This was particularly raised by parents living in the north and south of the Borough and Wichelstowe where the nearest centre is Drove in the centre of Swindon. Parents felt that particularly vulnerable parents would not have the money to travel and could become isolated and thereby increasing their vulnerability.
- 3.13 Parents in Highworth stressed the distance they would need to travel and the fact that it would involve at least two bus journeys.
- 3.14 Parents felt that funding for early education for children aged two was valuable but reached only a small number of children. They also questioned whether the additional 14 health visitors would be able to provide all the support and in particular parenting groups and support groups currently provide by children's centres.

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3.15 Since the start of the consultation, the Department of Health has set out the requirements for the health visiting services. As the service focuses on support for all, we recognise the potential risk to vulnerable parents across Swindon, particularly in areas such as Eldene, East Wichelstowe and areas of Central. We have recognised the importance of the concerns raised and are keen to ensure that the consultation process responds to concerns where appropriate. We are therefore proposing an additional one off investment of £194,000 to fund the following initiatives to mitigate those risks:

3.15.1 Ladybird Centre (Highworth and Stratton) to deliver a family support service in Highworth and Stratton two years. The Ladybird Centre will also consider raising more income through increasing the provision of child care for 2 – 4 year olds, creating family led parent groups, linking with the wider community to raise funding, explore the use of spare building capacity (Bungalow) on the school site to increase its funding. This could involve the disposal of an asset that would generate a capital receipt.

3.15.2 A Swindon-wide family support service is created targeted to work with children under 3 who are vulnerable. The service would work in partnership with health visitors, early years settings, midwifery and social care. The support offered would be short term, measurable, outcomes based, and would seek to evidence long-term effects, using Working Together with Parents, Baby Steps, Positive Parenting, and with a focus on developing parent led support groups. The service would receive pump priming funding and be expected to explore how it can become self-sustaining after two years. As the service will need to work very closely with health visiting, we propose to test the model initially within the health visiting service before consideration is given to commissioning it. This would also reduce the need for setting up costs and management overheads. We would be working with all partners to test and evaluate this service.

Importance of a service open to all

3.16 Cabinet believes that the principle of helping families who need help the most is correct and that the majority of resources that are available should be directed to support vulnerable families. We also recognise that there is a need for some support for all families. The health visiting service with an increased number of staff will offer an initial set of visits to all families as well as a check for all 2 year olds. In addition, we believe that our proposal for multi-generational family centres enables us to test a new model of providing support to vulnerable families, which also gives a space for parent led groups to meet. There would be a specific focus on how the wider community can support families.

3.17 Respondents to the consultation questioned whether it was prudent to invest in an untested model of delivery and asked that the new multi generational centres should be thoroughly evaluated.

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Multi-Generational Family Centres

- 3.18 We recognise the challenges in establishing a new model of family centres for Swindon. However, given the interest, the Council wishes to establish two multi –generational family centres in North Swindon and West Swindon based on two thirds of the funding that was budgeted for those children's centres in 2014/15. We propose to work with Abbey Meads School and West Swindon Family Project, local parents and stakeholders to develop jointly the specification for this before implementation in April 2015. This will include a data set of qualitative and quantitative measures so that we can measure the new model's effect. Part of the specification will be evidenced based support interventions for parents such as Baby Steps.
- 3.19 Initial research into centres has been undertaken with colleagues in Germany. Many centres developed out of children's centres and childcare providers. Centres have said that coordination is critical as well as good administrative support to encourage wider engagement of parents. Centres have been successful in enabling older people to volunteer in children's groups, For example, offering support to parents, with a second language and developing community ownership of the centres. There is also an increasing number of volunteers supporting centres and joint projects across different groups who use centres. Together with the centres in Abbey Meads and West Swindon we will be exploring wider sources of funding

Volunteering and charging for services

- 3.20 We were encouraged by the number of parents who said they were already volunteering and those who said they would be happy to help. Volunteering will be particularly important in the new multi-generational centres and the Swindon wide family support service. We will be working with all providers to discuss how volunteers can be recruited and trained together rather than in isolation. Similar to the consultation in 2013 there were some parents who thought that fundraising and charging could raise additional income for centres.

Maintaining the existing provision of all twelve Children's Centres

- 3.21 Parents attending centres felt strongly that all 10 Children's Centre buildings and all twelve children's centres should be maintained. A significant number of consultation responses came from those geographical areas as set out in **Appendix 1**. Given our limited financial resources and the importance of maintaining front line staff, it is recommended that the remaining seven children's centres cannot be maintained and that those are de-registered with Ofsted. Instead, it is proposed to test multi-generational family centres and a family support service focusing on building capacity in parents to support each other, encouraging other community members to support parents and to promote parent led groups.

Result of the Consultation for Children's Centres

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22nd October 2014

Future use of buildings

- 3.22 The consultation asked for suggestions of how buildings, which would be de-registered, should be used in future. Most respondents wanted buildings to be maintained as children's centre. However, it is clear this is not possible given the challenging financial situation we face. Respondents also suggested that buildings should be maintained for early years education, use by families and health clinics. Buildings at Croft and Eldene are already used for early years' education, Stay and Play and health clinics: this will be maintained. We propose that Highworth continues to be used for early years' education, health clinics and family support work. Robert le Kyng is to be explored for early years' education, education for two year olds, health clinics and parent led groups. The Saltway Centre already supports families with disabled children. We will be discussing how the Saltway Centre can continue to support families with disabled children and offer space for parent led groups and family support work.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could decide to maintain the status quo. However, the option of not making any changes to children's centres is not supported because it would mean that savings cannot be realised and the budget gap for 2015/16 remains too large.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The current budget for children's centres is £2,098,000 per annum plus a contribution of £74,400 from Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group for the children's centre in the super cluster (Penhill & Pinehurst). Funding is allocated to twelve centres in six clusters based on 80% of funding targeted at vulnerable children. The recommendations represent a £770k reduction in funding whilst maintaining five remaining children's centres and two multi-generational family centres.
- 5.2 The proposed budget before inflation for children's centres for 2015/16 is £1,328,000. In addition, it is recommended in the Council-wide draft budget report that £194,000 is funded from one off resources over 2 years. The funding has been allocated based on the number of vulnerable children. There were 285 vulnerable children (using the proxy agreed for the allocation of funding for 2014/15 for children's centres) in Ladybird/Saplings area and 801 in the Croft, Eldene, Robert le Kyng and Saltway areas. Using the formula (80% vulnerable and 20% universal) the allocation for Highworth would be £51,000 and £143,000 for a Family Support service.

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- 5.3 The contracts for Parks and Walcot East Children's Centre and West Swindon Children and Family Project end in March 2015. A procurement exercise may therefore be required.
- 5.4 There will be potential redundancy costs associated with the proposals for which the local authority is liable as contracts are ended.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.5 The Director of Law and Legal Services would deal with the changes to proposed lease(s) to the proposed occupiers.
- 5.6 All legal and human rights implications have been taken into account in preparing this report. It is considered that the report's recommendations are compatible with Convention Rights.

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

- 5.7 There are significant implications for staff employed by children's centres as the proposals involve the potential loss of staff. It is also possible that the delivery of services may deteriorate as staff retention may reduce.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.8 A Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken and updated as a result of the consultation, A copy can be obtained from the author. This Diversity Impact Assessment together with a summary of the Public Sector Equality Duty has been circulated to all Cabinet Members. These will be published on the Council's Internet alongside the Cabinet papers.
- 5.9 The Early Help services of the local authority will support families with children under five through the health visiting service. Education for vulnerable 2 year olds is 15 hours a week. This could provide a greater level of service than the current weekly Stay and Play support provided by centres currently through the increase in places by 400 by March 2015. The additional family support services will be addressing the needs of vulnerable parents. This will mitigate against the risk of vulnerable children in areas of Swindon not receiving support from a centre under the proposals. This may include children from minority ethnic communities, those living in households where parents are not in work and children living with lone parents.

Risk Management

- 5.10 The risks associated with the recommendations are as outlined in the Diversity Impact Assessment and within the body of the report.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sue Wald 01793 465713, swald@swindon.gov.uk.

Result of the Consultation for Children's Centres

Cabinet

22nd October 2014

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.
- 6.2 All children's centre providers have been consulted between July 2014 – October 2014
- 6.3 Other consultees are set out in Appendix One.

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 None

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – Consultation summary report, the full version is available online on www.swindon.gov.uk/Cabinet
- 8.2 Appendix 2 - Consultation Paper <http://www.swindon.gov.uk/cd/cd-consultations/cd-consultations-current/Pages/Childrens-Centres-Consultation.aspx>
- 8.3 Appendix 3 – Ofsted definition of vulnerability

9. Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

- 9.1 This is a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme / Forward Plan for October 2014

Appendix 1 - Summary of the Consultation

1. This report summarises the results of a consultation, managed by the Council, on proposals to de-commission some children's centres and to convert others into multi-generational family centres.. An online questionnaire with explanatory documentation received 480 responses, whilst 198 people attended a series of group discussions held throughout the Borough at which the proposals were explained. In addition, eleven letters addressing the subject were submitted.
2. Most of those taking part are people with some present or past relationship with the existing children's centres, either as users of the service or as professional or volunteer workers in centres or associated services. There has been little interest shown in this consultation by the wider public.
3. The response to the questionnaire centres particularly on two centres, at Abbey Meads (Butterflies) and Highworth (Ladybird). The groups widen the consultation geographically, but people living in these two catchment areas still predominate.
4. Although there is a little support for some aspects of the proposals, the general tenor of the response, from parents, current and past users, and professionals, is strongly opposed to the plan. The principal reasons given for objection are:
 - the importance of the centres in the lives of parents and children who have benefitted from them, and the sometimes life-changing impacts that families have received; many people give anecdotal evidence to this effect.
 - the remoteness of some parts of the Borough, especially Highworth, but also Wichelstowe and elsewhere, from the centres expected to remain open.
 - the apparent unfairness of removing services from some parts of the Borough, creating a postcode lottery.
 - the apparent presumption that vulnerability only exists in some geographical areas, or is solely determined by economics or location of residence.
 - the loss of professional guidance and support, should centres close or funding be reduced, and the reduction in quality of service if centre activities are managed and led voluntarily.
 - the distance involved for some users, should their local centre close, and the practical difficulties, and costs, of travelling with young children and buggies.
 - the loss of the opportunity for social contact and informal network-building, especially for new parents with low self-confidence.
 - the potential for significant impact on individual children and parents through loss of early intervention, and the impact of this on the Council's future costs of care.
 - the loss of an integrated and collaborative system of working between different agencies that comes from working through children's centres.

- the impact on other services, including schools, health visitors, and wider care services, of a reduction in early years interventions.
- 5. Centre users are primarily female, and under the age of 40. Four out of five current users have a child aged two or under. Two in five are looking after the home, and a third are working part-time; one in five works full-time. One in seven centre users is a lone parent, while four out of five share their home with another adult.
- 6. Most centre users visit the centre that is geographically closest to their homes; two thirds of users travel to their centre on foot. Two thirds of those currently using children's centres attend at least once a week, and almost everyone else using a centre visits at least monthly. Reliance on children's centres is highest among those with very young children, and reduces as the child gets older.
- 7. Among the respondents, three quarters of centre users enjoy 'Stay and Play' activities, and over half visit other groups. Two in five attend clinics, and one in five current users receives one-to-one support. The demand for most activities reduces as the child gets older, but the demand for one-to-one support is similar for all ages of child in these settings.
- 8. Should the proposals go ahead, 60% of current users say they would use the new centres; one in five current users would not, and a similar proportion are unsure. Two-thirds of those whose centres would become multi-generational say they would continue as users. Over half of those whose current centre might close say they would be likely to use a centre in the future; around a quarter say they would not. Abbey Meads and West Swindon, the two proposed multi-generational centres, would retain the majority of their existing clientele, but only a quarter of Highworth users are prepared to migrate to another centre, and there is little apparent additional interest in those centres planned for retention as children's centres.
- 9. One in seven respondents is interested in knowing more about volunteering, and a further one in five express possible interest for the future. Over half would not volunteer. Volunteers are more interested in helping, than in leading, but express interest in several aspects of children's centre work.
- 10. There is strong support for continued use of de-commissioned buildings, and all options suggested receive strong support. Other suggestions also focus on community use, especially for children and young people.
- 11. There is no clear understanding of what a multi-generational family centre would be or would offer; several respondents interpret the change of function as effective closure. The uncertainty helps to fuel concerns about safeguarding children, alongside concerns about their future viability and sustainability after Council funding is removed, and their capacity to raise the finance needed to remain open. There are concerns that the change is happening too suddenly without an adequate lead in time. Respondents express some doubts about the capability of volunteers and raise issues of recruitment, retention, reliability and resilience.
- 12. Overall, three-fifths of those who use centres that are staying, and two-thirds of those whose centres are becoming multi-generational, say they would continue to use

centres in the future. Over half (53%) of those whose current centre might close say they would be likely to use a centre in the future; a substantial minority, around a quarter (23%) say they would not. Abbey Meads and West Swindon, the two proposed multi-generational centres, would retain the majority of their existing clientele, but only a quarter of Highworth users are prepared to migrate to another centre.

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1. Ofsted definition of a vulnerable child

1.1 Ofsted refers to vulnerable children and families as target groups with additional needs. Below is the definition published by Ofsted in "The framework for children's centre inspections from April 2013."

1.2 **Target groups:** refer to the groups and families the centre identifies as having needs or circumstances that require particularly perceptive intervention and/or additional support. The following list is not exhaustive and does not imply that young children or families in any of these categories require additional support. The target groups will vary according to the centre's identification of its community and their needs but in any particular centre may include:

- lone parents, teenage mothers and pregnant teenagers
- children from low income backgrounds
- children living with domestic abuse, adult mental health issues and substance abuse
- children 'in need' or with a child protection plan
- children of offenders and/or those in custody
- fathers, particularly those with any other identified need, for example, teenage fathers and those in custody
- those with protected characteristics¹, as defined by the Equality Act 2010
- children who are in the care of the local authority (looked after children)
- children who are being cared for by members of their extended family such as a grandparent, aunt or older sibling
- families identified by the local authority as 'troubled families' who have children under five
- families who move into and out of the area relatively quickly (transient families), such as asylum seekers, armed forces personnel and those who move into the area seeking employment or taking up seasonal work
- any other vulnerable groups or individual families including those young children and families identified as at risk of harm by other services – such as adult social care, schools, police, and health services.

¹ Children and families with protected characteristics may include: those for whom English is an additional language; those from minority ethnic groups; those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families; those from lesbian, gay and transgender families.

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Budget Management 2014-15 and Draft Budget 2015-16

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

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

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1. This report sets out the projected out-turn for 2014-15, the initial draft Budget proposals for 2015-16 and the context for the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 1.2. The Council's Constitution states that the Cabinet will publish initial Budget proposals no later than 2 months before the Budget is adopted. In practice, the scale of the financial challenges facing local authorities requires consideration of proposals as part of a continuous cycle of service reviews.
- 1.3. The effective management of financial resources through robust financial management processes underpins the Council's ability to achieve its strategies, plans and priorities, including the corporate objectives.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended:

- 2.1 To note:-
 - 2.1.1 That the Council expects to deliver services within the overall cash limit for 2014-15 with a current projected underspend of £26k;
 - 2.1.2 The medium term financial assumptions and high-level resourcing plan set out in Table One;
 - 2.1.3 That the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2015-16 has yet to be published and therefore the funding assumptions in this report contain levels of uncertainty;
 - 2.1.4 The current gap between the assumed funding levels for 2015-16 and the current proposed cost of services set out in Table Three, and that work is continuing to identify further options to close this gap for consideration by Members once actual funding levels are confirmed and before the Final Budget is recommended to Council;
 - 2.1.5 That the current draft proposals assume a level of base budget contingency of £0.5m and that Council will need to take a view on the level of contingency it should hold to support the 2015-16 Budget in February 2015, based on the advice of the Section 151 Officer at that point;

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole, Direct Dial 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 2.1.6 That severance payments in line with existing policy will be made to those individuals affected by the Budget proposals and that these will include payments to partner and external organisations where the payments will result in on-going savings for the Council;
 - 2.1.7 That the impact on minority groups has been considered for all savings proposals and a full diversity impact assessment has been undertaken where an impact was perceived.
 - 2.2 To agree:-
 - 2.2.1 To recommend that Council agrees at its meeting on 6th November 2014 that the Council Tax Support Scheme adopted by Council for 2013-14 and 2014-15 should continue unchanged throughout 2015-16;
 - 2.2.2 That consultation with service users, staff and other stakeholders on the detailed Draft Budget proposals set out in Appendix 4 should commence, with feedback to be considered by Cabinet in advance of proposing the 2015-16 Final Budget to Council;
 - 2.2.3 That £133k of Council Tax Support Grant be passported from the Borough Council to Town and Parish Councils in 2015-16;
 - 2.2.4 That joint work should continue with those parish and town councils where both Borough Council and Parish Councillors have a mutual desire to explore the transfer of service responsibilities from the Borough to those local councils; and that the Board Director Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance and Streetsmart plus relevant ward members, be authorised to agree any resulting transfers and that the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised to complete any necessary documentation;
 - 2.2.5 The Council's match-funding contribution to the district heating projects of £60k with a maximum value of £30k being drawn from reserves;
 - 2.2.6 That at this stage the minimum level of General Reserves should be maintained at £5m, acknowledging that a decision on the level to be held to support the 2015-16 Budget will be taken later in the year with full knowledge of the details of the Local Government Finance Settlement and as assessment of financial risks at that time;
 - 2.2.7 Subject to Members supporting the proposed changes to Children Centres as set out in a report elsewhere on the agenda, the allocation of £194k of one-off funding from specific Council reserves to support the proposed changes to Children Centres over two years;
 - 2.2.8 That officers be authorised to implement as soon as practicable those proposals for the 2015-16 Budget that represent efficiency measures, including those affecting staff.
-

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole, Direct Dial 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

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3. Detail

Projected Out-turn 2014-15

- 1.4. The projected out-turn as at 31st August 2014 shows a small underspend of £26k. As indicated in the last report there were a number of risks emerging across service areas that are now reflected in the projected position, many of which are of a one-off nature. The strategy of early delivery of future year savings continues to be part of the mitigation. In this context, it is to be expected that the Council will deliver services within the overall cash limit for 2014-15.
- 1.5. The budget and projected out-turn by Department is set out in Table 1 below and a more detailed analysis is set out in Appendices 1 and 2.

Table One – Projected Out-turn 2014-15

Department	Budget 2014/15 £'000	Full-Year Projected Out-turn £'000	Projected Variance £'000	Movement since last report £'000
Chief Executive	775	673	(102)	0
Resources	3,914	3,914	0	0
Corporate	(3,199)	(3,960)	(761)	(126)
Commissioning	95,925	95,408	(517)	(85)
Service Delivery	45,253	46,607	1,354	224
Total General Fund	142,668	142,642	(26)	13

Financial Context and Medium-Term Forecast

- 3.1 Table Two below sets out a high-level assessment of the Council's financial position over the next three years. This shows that the scale of change required is equivalent to spending £52.8m lower than on current service levels or generating new income of that level, by 2017-18. The 2015-16 numbers reflect the position before the proposals contained within this report are taken into account.

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Table Two – Three Year Funding Financial Forecast

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
	£000's	£'000	£'000
Predicted Funding Reduction	7,000	6,000	5,500
Inflation	4,403	4,500	5,000
Social Care Packages	2,840	3,000	3,000
Pension and Debt Charges	2,000	2,000	2,000
Pay Incremental Progression	700	700	700
Other Cost Pressures	1,357	1,500	1,500
Reduction in Collection Fund Surplus	500	800	800
Less Council Tax Income Growth	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
Funding Gap	17,800	17,500	17,500

- 3.2 There are a number of high-level assumptions within this forecast, and Members are asked to note the significant levels of uncertainty within it. In particular, councils have received no clear indication around future grant levels and therefore the forecast assumes a continuation of the 13% assumed grant reduction for 2015-16 across all three years. In addition, any new funding pressures or resourcing implications resulting from the proposed new Care Act have also not been reflected in the figures at this stage. The Board Director Resources is in regular contact with professional groups and the Local Government Association to keep up to date with the latest information and to understand the assumptions being made by other authorities. Through this, the forecast will be continually adjusted as more information comes to light.
- 3.3 The 2015-16 provisional grant settlement is not expected to be received until late December 2014 and at that time the assumptions in Table Two can be updated. Based on recent years, it has become normal practice to publish a fairly accurate projection of the next year's funding level and an indicative figure for the year beyond. Therefore, this should give firmer estimates for both 2015-16 and 2016-17.
- 3.4 However, the national agenda is changing on a regular basis and the impact of future devolution settlements for Scotland and potentially other major cities, plus future plans around Health and Social Care funding could have very material effects on funding levels for English councils.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole, Direct Dial 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 3.5 Our overall financial forecast has remained broadly in line with the assumptions formulated three years ago that resulted in the Council agreeing the Stronger Together approach. A number of corporate priorities arose from this work that were agreed by all political parties and led to the creation of the Council's transformation strategy through its six change programmes. This strategy is contributing significantly to the Council's medium term resourcing plan with approaching £10m of savings and new income being generated from the change programmes and growth in the Borough in 2015-16.

Initial Draft Budget Proposals 2015-16

- 3.6 Significant progress has been made to closing a large part of the funding gap of £17.8m for 2015-16 with the detailed draft proposals set out in Appendix Four of this report.
- 3.7 In contrast to budget proposals agreed in previous years that contained large numbers of smaller savings spread across most areas of the Council, the focused effort on a number of targeted areas of Council activity has resulted in a much smaller number of significant savings proposals. Around £5m of savings have been identified from four of the Change Programmes. In addition, the recent decisions to insource services from Swindon Commercial Services and Capita plc. have led to the identification of £3.5m of savings from services previously run by these organisations.
- 3.8 Growth across the Borough has led to an anticipated extra £1m of Council Tax income from new households and an extra £1m of business rates income retained by the Council under the Business Rates Retention Scheme introduced last year. In addition, it is proposed that an extra £2.6m of New Homes Bonus (NHB) received annually from growth in the Borough is added to the £2.5m already supporting the base budget to fund on-going expenditure from 2015-16. This still leaves unspent NHB received in previous years and further growth beyond the level received in 2014-15 available to fund new infrastructure investment.
- 3.9 The proposals formulated from insourced services and the redirection of NHB has released £8.1m of savings over 2014-15 and 2016-17 that would have likely to have been found from front-line services. Therefore, despite some impacts in both 2014-15 and 2015-16, these key decisions have delayed the impending greater impact of the national austerity measures on services received by residents.
- 3.10 Based on the current funding assumptions summarised in Table Two above, a gap still exists between the cost of services set out in the Draft Budget and the assumed level of funding available. This is set out in Table Three below.

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Table Three – Current Level of Assumed Funding Gap

	Net Change from 2014-15 Budget	Assumed Funding Reduction	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cost Pressures	11,800	6,000	17,800
Savings/ New Income	(15,190)	0	(15,190)
Estimated Gap before Council Tax Freeze Grant or Tax Increase			2,610

Debt Charges

- 3.11 The Council's long term debt position at the start of the Financial Year was £113m for General Fund services, including the cost of schools and highways. The annual cost of interest and debt repayment is £10.7m per annum which tends to increase by around £1m per annum to cover the underlying borrowing position resulting from additions to the capital programme each year.
- 3.12 Officers proactively manage the level of debt in order to ensure a balance of long and short-term borrowing to mitigate the risk of interest rate changes. In addition, officers and Members give careful consideration to new investment decisions recognising the on-going impact on the Council's revenue account, often for up to 25 or 50 years, recognising the life of the assets being funded.
- 3.13 Due to the length of time necessary to move significant capital schemes from budget approval through to delivery and spend, the impact of changing expected borrowing levels is typically felt in the year after the capital budget is approved.

Council Tax

- 3.14 Following the practice in recent years, it seems likely that the Government will again offer councils the incentive to freeze Council Tax levels for a fifth year running. Assuming the same arrangements and thresholds for 2014-15 are repeated for 2015-16, the Council Tax freeze grant received by maintaining the Band D charge for the Borough Council's share of the Council Tax bill at 2009-10 levels would be £830k. A Council Tax increase just below the expected 2% referendum limit would generate £1,493k, £663k more than the Freeze Grant.
- 3.15 It is recommended that a decision on the level of Council Tax to be set for 2015-16 is delayed until the provisional grant settlement is received later in the year. However, the assumptions set out in Table Two above about future funding levels assume a modest inflationary uplift from 2016-17 onwards.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole, Direct Dial 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

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Council Tax Support Scheme and Grant

- 3.16 The Government's revised approach to Local Council Tax Support was introduced as part of the Welfare Reforms in 2013-14. The aims of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 are to reduce expenditure on Welfare, ensure families in work are better off than those on benefits and give greater local choice. As part of the changes, the national Council Tax Benefit scheme was abolished and the Council set its own 'Local Council Tax Support scheme' which was approved by Cabinet and Council in December 2013, following a wide consultation that included writing to all Benefits recipients. Councils are required to approve any amendments to the scheme by January each financial year. Cabinet is asked to recommend to Council at its meeting on 6th November 2014 that the scheme continues unchanged during 2015-16.
- 3.17 Members will recall that the changes implemented for 2013-14 reduced the on-going level of Council Tax income for all billing and precepting bodies including parish and town councils and that part of this funding was replaced by an increase in the level of Government grant received by the Borough Council with a request from central government that this would be shared proportionately with parish and town councils. In 2014-15, the level passported to parishes amounted to £150k and, as this grant forms part of the overall formula grant that is predicted to reduce by 13% in 2015-16, it is recommended that £133k be passported in 2015-16. This equates to 13% reduction compared to 2014-15 which results in an expectation that the Borough Council will be no better or worse off compared to 2014-15 as a result of passporting this grant.

Joint Work with Parish and Town Councils

- 3.18 The Localism Act 2011 encourages all councils to work more closely with local people. In response to this and as part of the Council's continued desire to bring services closer to local communities, officers and members from the Borough and some parish councils have been undertaking joint work to explore whether some services would be better provided by parish councils in some areas.
- 3.19 Where there is a mutual desire from both the parish or town council and Borough Council wards, work is progressing to consider whether services such as grounds maintenance, street cleaning, litter picking etc. could be undertaken and funded by the relevant parish council. This recognises the pressure on Borough Council funding and also allows for services to be prioritised locally.
- 3.20 Early work suggests that agreement could be reached with some of the larger parishes to transfer some service responsibilities from the Borough Council to parish councils whereby the Borough could cash flow the cost of work and/or set up costs for a period of time with the parish council taking over the cost in the medium term.

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- 3.21 Members are asked to agree that joint work should continue with those parish and town councils where both Borough Council and parish Councillors have a mutual desire to explore the transfer of service responsibilities from the Borough to parish councils. It is proposed that the Board Director Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Finance and Streetsmart plus relevant ward members, be authorised to agree any resulting transfers, and the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised to complete and necessary documentation.

General Reserves

- 3.22 The Comprehensive Performance Assessment 'rule of thumb' introduced for 2003-04 suggested that a level of General Reserves equivalent to not less than 5% of net revenue 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 £6.5m for Swindon, assuming a small reduction in the Net Budget for 2015-16.
- 3.23 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.
- 3.24 At present, the Council is holding general reserves of £6m with the minimum level agreed at £5m. A decision will be taken later in the year over whether to maintain this for 2015-16 with the full knowledge of the Local Government Finance Settlement and the level of other risks being faced at that time.

Severance Costs

- 3.25 In recent years, the level of severance costs resulting from the annual Budget rounds have been in the region of £1m per annum and this sum has been built into the base budget. However, this figure was much lower for 2014-15 and with a financial strategy now focused around a smaller number of significant savings and income opportunities; the annual level of staffing reductions is expected to be lower in future. Alongside this, the Council has one-off money available in its reserves that could be called on to fund future severance costs. As a result, the proposals set out in Appendix Four assume that the base budget for severance costs is removed from 1st April 2015.
- 3.26 Members are asked to approve that proposals not affecting front-line services are implemented at the earliest opportunity and that any severance costs arising from these changes are funded from the 2014-15 base budget set aside for this purpose or from one-off reserves, should this sum prove insufficient.

One-Off Investment

- 3.27 The report elsewhere on the agenda concerning the consultation feedback in relation to Children Centres proposes one-off investment to help deliver a family

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support service in Highworth and Stratton for up to two years and pump-prime funding for a Swindon-wide family support service to work with vulnerable children under three years old. Subject to the Cabinet supporting the recommendations in that report, Members are asked to approve that £194k of one-off funding is earmarked for this purpose.

District Heating

- 3.28 Swindon Borough Council has been successful in securing funding from the Heat Networks Delivery Unit (HNDU) at the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) for feasibility studies on three proposed sites for district heating networks (New Eastern Villages, Wichelstowe and the North Star leisure development) and also to support capacity in project managing this work. The overall project cost is £180k of which the Council is required to contribute one-third and HNDU two-thirds.
- 3.29 Half of the Council's £60k contribution has already been secured with the work and funding for North Star and New Eastern Villages (£20,000) being agreed by Cabinet in 2013-14 (Minute 114 (9)). The Wichelstowe programme budget will provide the £10,000 contribution for its work. This leaves a shortfall of £30,200 to secure the £60,600 from HNDU to fund capacity for two years to run the feasibility work on the three schemes. Officers are working on methods of securing the additional funding from existing budgets, but need to include the possibility of a request to allocate £30,200 of one-off funding from the reserves and Cabinet is asked to approve this approach.
- 3.30 In total, the HNDU will provide £180,800 against a Council match of £60,200 which the breakdown of funding set out in Table Four below.

Table Four – District Heating Funding

Site/project	SBC contribution (one-third)	HNDU Match-funding (two-thirds)	Total Project
North Star	£10,000	£20,000	£30,000
Wichelstowe	£10,000	£20,000	£30,000
New Eastern Villages	£10,000	£20,000	£30,000
Capacity funding	£30,200	£60,600	£90,800
Total	£60,200	£120,600	£180,800

- 3.31 The low carbon economy is a key focus for the Council. In the context of Swindon's growth ambitions, the benefits of heat networks in terms of CO2 reduction and long term price stability are clear. However, the Council also considers the wider benefit of heat networks as catalysts for growth which are crucial to ensure cost competitiveness. The local economic benefit through jobs and skills are also significant in this respect and the Council has an adopted Sustainable Energy Framework which emphasises the importance of heat networks.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole, Direct Dial 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

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- 3.32 Our initial work on heat network feasibility was undertaken back in 2010 as part of a knowledge transfer project match funded through the Swedish Government. Since this time, further more detailed work has been undertaken on key sites and expert support from HNDU has been secured. Funding from HNDU now offers the opportunity to move these projects over the finishing line.

Consultation

- 3.33 The Council's constitution states that the Cabinet will publish initial Budget proposals no later than 2 months before the Budget is adopted. Members are therefore asked to approve that consultation is undertaken on the proposals set out in Appendix Four.

Alternative Options

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

4. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

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

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 4.2 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)

- 4.3 Where there are such implications these have been reflected in the body of the report.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 4.4 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been produced for each of the savings proposals that could impact on minority groups. These will be published on the Council's Internet alongside the Cabinet papers.

Risk Management

- 4.5 Any risks arising from the proposals contained within this report will be managed through their implementation taking into consideration feedback from the consultation exercise.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Kirsty Cole, Direct Dial 01793 464610, kcole@swindon.gov.uk.

5. Consultees

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

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 None

7. Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – Forecast Out-turn by Directorate 2014-15
7.2 Appendix 2 – Forecast Out-turn by Service 2014-15
7.3 Appendix 3 – Summary Draft Budget Proposals 2015-16
7.4 Appendix 4 – Detailed Draft Budget Proposals 2015-16

8. Key Decision/Decision in Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan

- 8.1 This is a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan for October 2014.

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Budget Management 2014-15 - Projected Out-turn By Department

Appendix 1

Fund	Tier 1 Pillar	Tier 2 Function	Budget 2014/15 £'000	Full-Year Projected Out- turn £'000	Projected Variance £'000	Projected Variance - last report £'000	Movement since last report £'000	Commentary on Reasons for Variance
General Fund	Chief Executive	Stronger Together	195	195	0	0	0	
		Internal Audit	418	403	(15)	(15)	0	
		Law & Democratic Services	2,708	2,649	(59)	(59)	0	
		Localities	440	440	0	0	0	
		One Swindon Transformation	0	0	0	0	0	
		Economy & Skills	(2,986)	(3,014)	(28)	(28)	0	
		Finance	775	673	(102)	(102)	0	
		Revenues & Benefits	3,179	3,179	0	0	0	
			(1,873)	(1,873)	0	0	0	Monthly monitoring continues and forecasts will be updated once the outcome of the DWP data matching exercise and the impact of reducing the numbers of Council Tax non-payers being taken to court are known.
		Corporate	(3,199)	(3,960)	(761)	(635)	(126)	Further savings identified through outturn/budget variance comparison work
Commissioning		IT & HR	2,282	2,282	0	0	0	
		Communication & Insight	326	326	0	0	0	
		Management	715	(46)	(761)	(635)	(126)	
		Children & Adults	752	734	(18)	(18)	0	
			63,212	62,472	(740)	(740)	0	No material changes from previous report although seeing increasing demand for Older People residential and nursing placements that needs careful monitoring.
		Economy / Attainment	2,417	2,419	2	(2)	4	
		Public Health & Public Protection	9,858	9,818	(40)	(40)	0	Additional income from enforcement within Public Protection.
		Children and Families	19,426	19,805	379	463	(84)	Reduction in staffing pressure including vacant posts remaining unfilled as restructure is finalised.
		Housing Services	260	160	(100)	(95)	(5)	Small increase in reported staff savings
			95,925	95,408	(517)	(432)	(85)	
Service Delivery		Commercial Services	1,308	1,305	(3)	(3)	0	
		Streetsmart	11,184	11,622	438	350	88	Waste disposal budget pressure due to increased tonnages £200K, officers are exploring options to mitigate this pressure. One off cost pressure from external vehicle hire and increased operational costs due to vehicle downtime across refuse and recycling.£48K. Projected reduction in recycling income £89K, grounds maintenance income £80K and cremations income £60K.

Fund	Tier 1 Pillar	Tier 2 Function	Budget 2014/15 £'000	Full-Year Projected Out- turn £'000	Projected Variance £'000	Projected Variance - last report £'000	Movement since last report £'000	Commentary on Reasons for Variance
		Leisure, Libraries, Culture & Traded Services	3,957	4,740	783	631	152	One-off additional costs of running the golf courses and leisure centres up to the transfer date of 1st November, which is later than originally anticipated. Current projected overspend in the Library Service. Officers are looking at how this can be mitigated.
		Highways & Transport	8,619	8,824	205	128	77	One of cost pressure on Home to school contracts pending procurement exercise £113K: car parks increased NNDR £130K, car parks PCN income pressure £35K, offset slightly by one off reduction in car park maintenance costs (£37K) and vacancy savings (£31K)
		Planning & Regulatory	131	(158)	(289)	(191)	(98)	Increased one off planning fee income (£200k), increased building control, land charges and taxi licencing income (£45k) and vacancy savings (£50K)
		Business Services & Support Delivery Assets	17,909	17,864	(45)	(36)	(9)	Savings on budgets across the service.
			2,145	2,410	265	251	13	
			45,253	46,607	1,354	1,130	223	
			142,668	142,642	(26)	(39)	13	
General Fund Total								
Health	Health	Health Children and Adults	36,731	36,731	0	31	(31)	
	Health Service	Health Children and Families	1,875	1,875	0	0	0	
		Income from CCG and NHS England	(38,606)	(38,606)	0			
Health Total			0	0	0	31	(31)	
Dedicated Schools Grant	DSG Commissioning	DSG Economy / Attainment Dedicated School Grant	149,000	149,125	125	220	(95)	
			(149,000)	(149,000)	0	0	0	
			0	125	125	220	(95)	
Dedicated Schools Grant Total								
Housing Revenue Account	Housing Revenue Account	Supervision & Management	(36,571)	(37,010)	(439)	(339)	(100)	Further additional staff savings have been identified in various areas, as well as a further reduction in estimated rent losses from voids.
		Special Services	118	109	(9)	(19)	10	Staff savings
		Repairs	10,704	11,389	685	39	646	Additional trade operatives and planners have been recruited along with external contractors to reduce the backlog of work to meet service standards to deliver routine repairs within the 40 day target time. Further work is also underway to identify the capital budget savings from contract works due to more direct employment of staff and it is expected that the overall HRA budget will be on target once these adjustments have been made and costs capitalised.
		HRA Capital Financing	25,749	25,749	0	0	0	
			0	237	237	(319)	556	
Housing Revenue Account Total								
			142,668	143,004	336	(107)	455	
Grand Total								

Budget Management 2014-15 - Projected Out-turn By Service

Appendix 2

Service Area Summary 2014/15	Budget 2014/15 £'000	Full-Year Projected Out-turn £'000	Projected Variance £'000	Movement since last report £'000
Culture, Leisure & Libraries	4,637	5,402	765	125
Education and Other Children Services	7,009	7,194	185	(145)
Environmental & Regulatory	15,157	15,572	415	97
Highways & Transport	1,202	1,273	71	86
Housing GF	3,423	3,331	(92)	2
Planning & Development	(3,097)	(3,382)	(285)	(97)
Public Health	9,712	9,672	(40)	0
Revenues & Benefits	(2,163)	(2,163)	0	0
Social Care - Adults	57,200	56,452	(748)	(7)
Social Care - Children	21,431	21,756	325	51
Corporate & Support:	0	0	0	0
Central Services	17,501	16,879	(622)	(99)
Contingency Split out	0	0	0	0
Debt Management (Debt Charges & Inve	10,656	10,656	0	0
Total General Fund	142,668	142,642	(26)	13
Total DSG	0	125	125	(95)
Total Health	0	0	0	(31)
Total HRA	0	237	237	555
Grand Total	142,668	143,004	336	442

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Summary of Proposed Budget By Group 2014-15

Appendix 3

	Chief Executive's £'000	Resources £'000	Commissioning £'000	Service Delivery £'000	Total £'000
2014-15 Budget	(2,219)	(10,932)	98,488	57,330	142,667
Changes in Funding (outside Formula Grant)	0	(4,863)	(732)	50	(5,545)
Inflation	0	4,403	0	0	4,403
Other Cost Pressures	567	3,000	2,990	340	6,897
Savings not directly impacting front-line services	(570)	(4,560)	(3,520)	(200)	(8,850)
Service Changes	0	0	(870)	(225)	(1,095)
Net Changes set out in Appendix 4	(3)	(2,020)	(2,132)	(35)	(4,190)
2013-14 Budget	(2,222)	(12,952)	96,356	57,295	138,477

Budget 2014-15

Anticipated Formula Grant Reduction	142,667
Reduction in Collection Fund Surplus	(8,300)
Less Council Tax Income Growth	(500)
Less Business Rates Growth	1,000
Indicative Budget 2015-16	<u>1,000</u>
	135,867

Gap

2,610

Less either Council Tax Freeze Grant 2015-16
Or, 1.94% increase in Council Tax levels 2015-16

(830)
(1,493)

Gap between:-
And:-

1,780
1,117

2015-16 Budget - Detailed Proposals
Service Area - Funding

Appendix 4

Proposal	Consultation Required? Y/N	Total Changes Proposed for 2015-16 £'000	Post Deletions 2015-16 (FTEs)	
			Filled	Vacant
Cost Pressures (positive numbers)				
Education Services Support Grant - expecting a further reduction due to academy conversions and fall in rate from £113 to £87 per pupil		700		
Removal of use of New Homes Bonus to fund Growth salaries		68		
New burdens funding – temporary funding awarded to transition the new Council Support Scheme is expected to cease but we still have staff employed chasing the additional amount of Council Tax to be collected		110		
Additional Income (negative numbers)				
Cashflowing Government Grant Reduction/Other Specific grant changes	N	(2,000)		
Further use of New Homes Bonus for revenue purpose with Regeneration being funded from Capital (£2.7m less £250k debt charges)	N	(2,550)		
Total		(3,672)	0.0	0.0

2015-16 Budget - Detailed Proposals
Service Area - Delivery

Appendix 4 ctd

Proposal	Consultation Required? Y/N	Total Changes Proposed for 2015-16 £'000	Post Deletions 2015-16 (FTEs)	
			Filled	Vacant
Cost Pressures (positive numbers)				
Reduction in Section 106 developer contributions funding for grounds maintenance. Sums from developers only contribute to services for an initial period of time.		50		
Additional waste tonnages being generated by households across the Borough		200		
Net income pressure within the Waterside Grounds maintenance team relating to a fall in external client income.		50		
Change Programme (negative numbers)				
Leisure Change Programme. Balance of full year savings following the transfer of the golf and leisure facilities to new operators. The figure assumes Highworth Rec transfers early in 2015-16.	N - 2014-15 Budget saving	(225)		1.0
Other Tactical Savings (negative numbers)				
Increase in income generated from bus lane enforcement to bring the Budget in line with actual income levels	N	(200)		
Total		(125)	0.0	1.0

2015-16 Budget - Detailed Proposals
Service Area - Vulnerable People

Appendix 4 ctd

Proposal	Consultation Required? Y/N	Total Changes Proposed for 2015-16 £'000	Post Deletions 2015-16 (FTEs)	
			Filled	Vacant
<u>Cost Pressures (positive numbers)</u>				
Increasing demand for services for people with Learning Disabilities - based on latest information from population figures, trend analysis of recent activity and know service users due to transition from Children's Services.		1,300		
Increasing demand for services to Older People - based on latest information from population figures and trend analysis of recent activity		700		
<u>Children's</u>				
Children's - additional front-line staffing capacity to effectively manage case load linked to service demands & service improvement requirements		520		
Children's - Care and Placements increasing demand for Placements		50		
Children's - increments - targeted at Social Work staff due to high levels of turnover		70		
Children's - turnover of SVs requires provision for the occasional use of agency staff to ensure all children are always allocated - to meet demand for services.		200		
<u>Change Programme (negative numbers)</u>				
Reshaping of Learning Disability services focused on community based support and improved outcomes for clients. Supporting service users to access the full range of services available to them. Ensure service are delivered in a more personalised way, maximising community based support. The current proportion of spend on Learning Disability compared to Older People exceeds the national average.	Y - with individual LD clients	(2,350)		

2015-16 Budget - Detailed Proposals
Service Area - Vulnerable People

Appendix 4 ctd

Proposal	Consultation Required? Y/N	Total Changes Proposed for 2015-16 £'000	Post Deletions 2015-16 (FTEs)	
			Filled	Vacant
Renegotiation of contract for Lifeways, a learning disabilities supported living provider - review of service terms and conditions and enhanced rates.	N	(300)		
Ensure maximum utilisation of facilities at Firethorn Close by rescheduling current provision for LD respite care (users may have less choice about when respite is available within a building base). Available capacity will be used for short term residential and crisis services. These changes are the full implementation of the original business case and gateway paper regarding Firethorn Close and LD short break services in 2008/9. (part year saving, £250k was included in budget for 14/15)	N - agreed in 2014-15 Budget	(250)		
Additional funding from Better Care Fund to support rising demand for services of Older People and Learning Disabilities so eligibility criteria are maintained.	N	(800)		
Improved debt recovery processes around home loans	N	(300)		
Children's				
Savings in Community Teams packages for Children in need (current underspend)	N	(100)		
Deletion of vacant post in Court team for Education Psychologist	N	(50)		1.0
Fixed term post for performance management additional resource ceases in September 2015	N	(15)		
Threshold for Payments- ensuring consistent application of financial support to parents/carers with children in care	N	(50)		
Redesign of senior management staffing structure	Y - staff consultation	(90)	1.0	
Corporate Sponsorship - Disabled Children	N	(13)		

2015-16 Budget - Detailed Proposals
Service Area - Vulnerable People

Appendix 4 ctd

Proposal		Consultation Required? Y/N	Total Changes Proposed for 2015-16 £'000	Post Deletions 2015-16 (FTEs)	
				Filled	Vacant
Disabled Children's - Community Capacity Building		N	(20)		
<u>Other Tactical Savings (negative numbers)</u>					
Reprovision of Children's Centres subject to consultation and agreement by Cabinet		Y	(770)	TBC	
Total			(2,268)	1.0	1.0

2015-16 Budget - Detailed Proposals
Service Area - Corporate and Resources

Appendix 4 ctd

Proposal	Consultation Required? Y/N	Total Changes Proposed for 2015-16 £'000	Post Deletions 2015-16 (FTEs)	
			Filled	Vacant
Cost Pressures (positive numbers)				
Pay Inflation (at 2%)		1,340		
Contract Inflation (at average of 3% but some specific areas are different)		3,756		
Income inflation (at 3%)		(693)		
Pensions - 1% superannuation rate increase		1,000		
Debt Charges - cost of interest and debt repayment on investment through additions to the capital programme		1,000		
Contingency for other cost pressures that may arise between October 2014 and 1st April 2015 and changes between grant assumptions and actual grant settlement received from the Government		300		
Loss of Internal Audit income from selling services to the Fire Authority following the contract expiration		17		
Incremental Pay Progression based on annual expenditure levels prior to the pay and grading review implemented in 2010		700		
Other Tactical Savings (negative numbers)				
Savings in the cost of services transferred back from Capita on 1st October 2014 derived from not having to pay profit on those services, savings on manager posts which Capita employed that did not transfer back to the Council plus minor team restructurings post transfer.	Y - staff consultations on minor restructuring	(2,000)	TBC	
Budget reductions driven through a 2013-14 Out-turn versus 2014-15 Budget comparison. These savings cut across many service areas and do not impact service levels as the budgets are being realigned to actual expenditure levels	N	(1,060)		

2015-16 Budget - Detailed Proposals
Service Area - Corporate and Resources

Appendix 4 ctd

Proposal		Consultation Required? Y/N	Total Changes Proposed for 2015-16 £'000	Post Deletions 2015-16 (FTEs)	
				Filled	Vacant
Following the reintegration of services formerly run the Swindon Commercial Services Ltd., further savings have been identified in relation to the cost of insurance and fleet plus some proposed minor staffing changes resulting from process efficiencies		Y - staff consultations on minor restructuring	(500)	TBC	
Delete Corporate Redundancy Budget and fund future severance costs from one-off resources recognising that the annual level of staff reductions is likely to be lower than in previous years due to the historic significant level of staffing savings and the capacity gaps in current resourcing levels		N	(1,123)		
Reshaping and renegotiating the ICT contract with Capita		N	(1,000)		
Deletion of vacant post in Scrutiny section (redundancy was agreed)		N	(42)		1.0
Committee section restructure		N	(25)		1.0
Saving enabled through review of resource required for various elections after taking account of Government contributions		N	(15)		
Total			1,655	0.0	2.0

2015-16 Budget - Detailed Proposals
Service Area - Economy, Skills and Assets

Appendix 4 ctd

Proposal	Consultation Required? Y/N	Total Changes Proposed for 2015-16 £'000	Post Deletions 2015-16 (FTEs)	
			Filled	Vacant
<u>Cost Pressures (positive numbers)</u>				
Loss of rent and service charge plus void NNDR charges regarding the former Ecolab rental at DMJ		200		
Loss of rent plus void NNDR and Security costs relating to Unit 103 Cheney Manor		300		
Cost of Wichelstowe client once project moves into implementation through the joint venture and existing project team charged to the capital programme is refocused		50		
Additional security costs to manage the traffic at the Waterside Depot linked to the CA Site		60		
Increase in the cost of transport, mainly in relation to Special Education Needs plus a small cost pressure on mainstream transport resulting from appeals		150		
Cost of Town Centre CCTV monitoring until funding can be secured		30		
<u>Other Tactical Savings (negative numbers)</u>				
DMJ Apartments - repairs and maintenance and base rent review	N	(30)		
DMJ Commercial - savings materialising from a facilities management review (based on current occupation)	N	(40)		
Additional property income from covenant surrenders etc. linked to property disposals	N	(500)		
Total		220	0.0	0.0

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Additional Primary School Places in Swindon Town Centre

Cabinet

22nd October 2014

Author:	Cabinet Member for Children's Services Board Director, Commissioning
Wards:	Central, Eastcott, Mannington and Western and Old Town
Locality Affected:	North Central, South, Town Centre
Parishes Affected:	None

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To update Cabinet on primary school places required for Swindon Town Centre and present a revised proposal to meet the anticipated demand for places following the release of the birth data in the relevant area.
- 1.2 The recommendations of this report support the delivery of One Swindon Outcome, "We can all benefit from a growing economy and a better Town Centre", and the School Place Planning Strategy, by providing additional education places where required. The proposals for additional school places comply with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to develop school policy to maximise school attendance.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Authorise the Board Director, Commissioning to commence statutory processes for an additional 30 primary school places in September 2015 and September 2016.
- 2.2 Authorise the Head of Infrastructure Assets to investigate the possibility of additional places provided at schools in the Central and South Planning Area (School Place Planning Study update March 2011) for September 2015 and September 2016.

3. Detail

- 3.1 It is the Local Authority's role to ensure there are sufficient school places. Part of the role above is to oversee the legal process for setting up a new school or expansion of existing provision under Local Authority control. The role has changed significantly and the Governing Bodies of all categories of mainstream school can now propose changes and notify the Secretary of State of the outcome (this was previously led by the Local Authority) and Academies are able to agree significant changes directly with the Education Funding Agency (EFA)

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paddy Bradley, 01793 465744, pbradley@swindon.gov.uk

Additional Primary School Places in Swindon Town Centre

Cabinet

22nd October 2014

Primary School Places

- 3.2 Previously, Cabinet has approved a number of expansions of primary schools across the Old Town and Swindon Town Centre area since 2008. In total an extra 245 reception places (just over 8 forms of entry) will be available by September 2016, above the 2008 baseline.
- 3.3 The additional places have been provided at Drove, East Wichel, King William Street, Even Swindon, Croft and Holy Cross primary schools with further increase at Holy Cross planned for September 2016.
- 3.4 Previous reports have estimated an additional one form of entry (210 primary places, opening on a phased basis of 30 per year over 7 years) are required across the area by September 2016, with a focus on the town centre schools as part of the wider Central and South planning area. This requirement was identified and included in the future years Capital Programme considered at Cabinet in February 2014.
- 3.5 Local Government is currently experiencing its biggest challenge in at least a generation. Swindon faces a growing population with increased demands for services and raised expectations of the level of provision that the Council can secure. At the same time, the coalition government is taking the necessary steps to restore fiscal responsibility, which is bringing reductions in funding. As a result, over the next three years this Council will need to find around a further £48m of savings, on top of £70m over the past five years. If we are to achieve this and secure a sustainable future for the Council and the Borough, we need to look very carefully at all services the Council provides and supports.
- 3.6 Funding for school places is delivered through a basic need grant from the Department for Education. The level of funding for each authority is based on estimated pupil numbers in the local area. Therefore, the risk of overprovision of school places will not be met through government allocations. In addition, the pressures on the revenue budget caused by capital borrowing are in the order of £85k per year for 25 years for each £1m borrowed.
- 3.7 In this context, it is prudent for all future school places to be kept under review for any changes in patterns of parental preference or increasing number of children in a planning area. Following the creation of additional places at Holy Cross Primary School in September 2014, this created a small number of surplus places in schools across the planning area.
- 3.8 Primary School Place planning is based on the annual release of the child health data, which updates the number of births and information on pre-school children within Swindon up to the reception classes for September 2018.
- 3.9 The graph below plots the historic increasing capacity in the Central and South planning area from 395 places (2008) to the planned 640 level for September

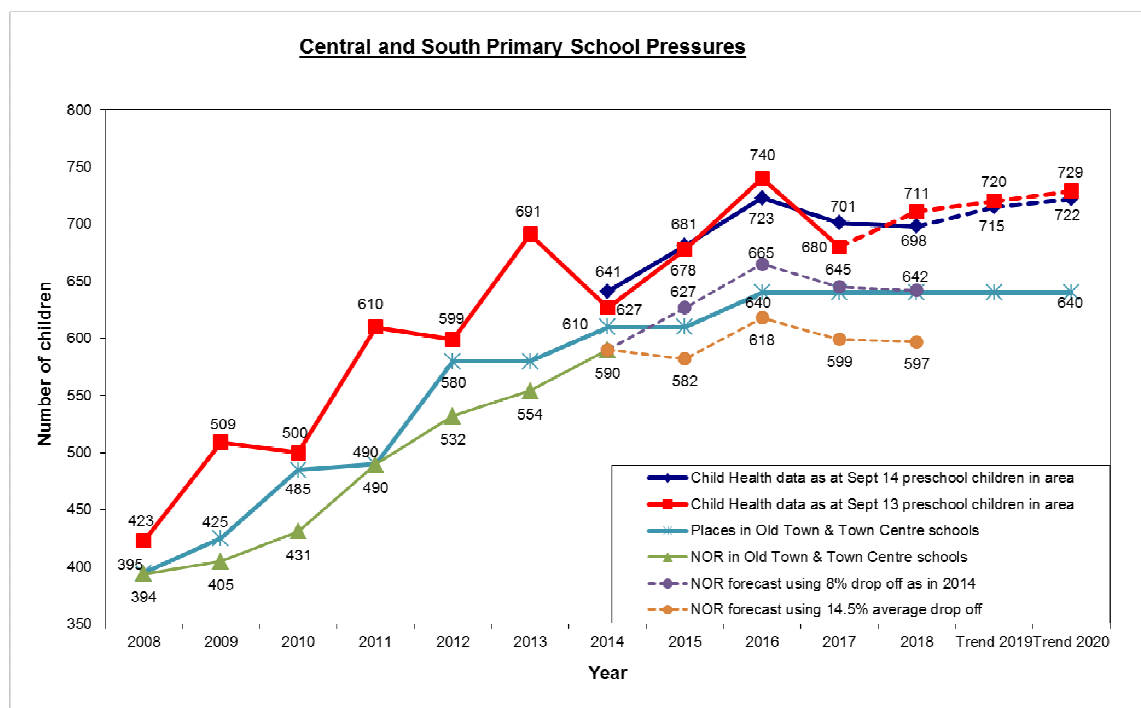
Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paddy Bradley, 01793 465744, pbradley@swindon.gov.uk

Additional Primary School Places in Swindon Town Centre

Cabinet

22nd October 2014

2016. It also plots the changing child health data since 2008 and the updated information from 2014 onwards. The bottom line on the chart is the actual number of children that start school in the relevant reception class, according to the October school census in the relevant year.



- 3.10 From September 2014 the chart then forecasts two separate trends based on the drop of rate from the relevant child health data to the actual number of pupils in the reception classes. The lower trajectory is based on the average drop off rate from 2008 of 14.5%. The higher trajectory is based on the 2014 drop off rate of 8%, which is the smallest drop off rate for the last 7 years.
- 3.11 Based on these patterns of preference there is a risk that the scheme identified in the capital programme for a one form entry expansion of an existing school over 7 years could result in overprovision of school places and leave schools in the area undersubscribed.
- 3.12 There is still a risk however, that a significant number of children will not have access to a reception class in their locality for September 2015 and September 2016. The proposal is therefore to seek a school that can accommodate two bulge classes for those relevant year groups.
- 3.13 Schools that are considered within scope for expansion are those located in the Central and South Planning Area as set out in the School Place Planning Study Update. Officers will commence discussion with these schools on the practical implications and the feasibility of expansion for this shorter period and report to Cabinet on the school identified in Early 2015.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Paddy Bradley, 01793 465744, pbradley@swindon.gov.uk

Additional Primary School Places in Swindon Town Centre

Cabinet

22nd October 2014

- 3.14 Early informal discussion with schools and local councillors has identified Holy Cross Primary as a potential preferred option for September 2015. The school is due to expand from a 30 place to 60 place intake from September 2016 and could be brought forward by one year. The proposal is being considered by the Diocese Trust at the time of writing the report. This option would not deliver a September 2016 solution.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 For Swindon Town Centre provision, alternative options for site and providers will be actively sought and considered by Cabinet.
- 4.2 The alternative options for school places include:
- 4.2.1 to continue with the existing scheme in the capital programme, but risk overprovision based on the current patterns of parental preference,
 - 4.2.2 to not provide any additional places, but risk children not having access to a local school.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 Government capital grant allocations for capital spending on schools have been reduced in recent years and are unlikely to be sufficient to meet the needs of existing schools and the requirement to fund new ones. Any shortfall will result in the Council entering into additional borrowing to support identified needs as has been the case over recent years.
- 5.2 Levels of overall debt have increased to fund capital investment, with overall Council general fund debt currently £101m (although the underlying borrowing requirement is £260m) and net debt charges of £10.7m pa. Options for expansions of schools should, therefore, consider all possible options in order to try to minimise the effect on the revenue budget of increased debt.
- 5.3 A sum of £3.5m for additional primary school places in the Town Centre is included in the Cabinet approvals for 2014/15 capital scheme starts and potential starts in future years. .
- 5.4 All capital proposals will affect the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) although DfE are recognising pupil growth in annual grant settlements albeit on a lagged basis for mainstream pupils. This means that the LA has to top slice the DSG each year in relation to “pre-opening start-up costs”, “trigger” funding (the increased revenue funding provided to schools that have an in-year increase in pupil numbers over a certain threshold) and “set-up” costs (the provision of furniture and equipment for additional classrooms). As a consequence of the DfE’s school funding reform programme, the Local Authority need to consult formally with each

Additional Primary School Places in Swindon Town Centre

Cabinet

22nd October 2014

sector of the Schools Forum to seek agreement to the policies by which funding is allocated and the levels of funding proposed in advance of each financial year.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.5 The Council has a responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient school places available. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires Local Authorities to promote choice and diversity when carrying out their strategic duties in relation to the provision of new school places.
- 5.6 Human rights considerations have been taken into account fully 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)

- 5.7 Implications relating to sustainability and health are included within the school site selection criteria.

Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA)

- 5.8 A DIA for the School Place Planning Strategy was attached to the July 2011 Cabinet report, and this is applicable to the proposals in this report. A copy of the DIA/report is available on request from the report author.

6. Consultees

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

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 Swindon School Place Planning study

8. Appendices

- 8.1 None

9. Key Decision/Decision in Cabinet Work Programme/Forward Plan

- 9.1 This is a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme/Forward Plan for October 2014.

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Progressing the Economic Strategy – Developing Skills and Employment Opportunities through the Construction Industry

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

Author:	Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration, and Skills Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport. Head of Economy & Skills
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to make an application to the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) to achieve 'National Skills Academy' status for construction. This will enable the Council to use the CITB National Framework - 'The Framework' - to assist in creating and developing employment and skills opportunities.
- 1.2 The Framework can be implemented through the Planning process and/ or procurement process. This report makes the recommendation to use the Planning route in the first instance, but to also explore the feasibility of using the procurement route in the future.
- 1.3 National Skills Academy status will support the Council in implementing our Economic Strategy (2013) and the Skills and Employment Strategy, (2013).
- 1.4 The report's recommendations contribute to the Council's priorities in One Swindon: "We can all benefit from a growing economy" and in the Corporate Strategy, "right skills, right jobs, in the right place". In addition the requirement supports the delivery of the emerging Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026's Strategic Objectives 3 and 5 linked to Economy and Education.

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Authorise the Head of Economy and Skills, in consultation with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, the Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration, and Skills and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport, to make an application to the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) to be awarded 'National Skills Academy for Construction' status.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sally Burnett, 01793 463061, email, sburnett@swindon.gov.uk.

Progressing the Economic Strategy – Developing Skills and Employment Opportunities through the Construction Industry

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

- 2.2 Authorise the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, in consultation with the Head of Economy and Skills, the Director of Law and Democratic Services, the Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration, and Skills and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport, to prepare Supplementary Planning Guidance to secure skills and employment opportunities from appropriate new development.
- 2.3 Authorise the Wichelstowe Programme Director, in consultation with the Director of Law and Democratic Services, to work up with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services an acceptable section 106 planning obligation which will enable the Wichelstowe Development to deliver an agreed package of objectives to secure skills and employment opportunities as part of the development, so that the Wichelstowe development can form part of the Council's application for 'National Skills Academy for Construction' status.
- 2.4 Authorise the Head of Economy and Skills, in conjunction with the Head of Procurement and the Director of Law and Democratic Services to explore the feasibility of implementing the framework through the procurement process where considered appropriate.

3. Detail

- 3.1 In April 2014, the Council hosted a Construction Summit for Wiltshire and Swindon, which was attended by Cabinet members, employers, the Local Enterprise Partnership, skills providers, officers from Economy and Skills and planning. The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) gave an overview of the construction industry skills needs across the area and introduced the Construction Skills Academy and the Framework. Portsmouth City Council, which has been very successful in implementing the Framework gave a presentation. The outcome of the meeting was that the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport requested that officers develop an implementation plan to enable the Framework to be adopted in Swindon.

Skills & Employment Priorities

- 3.2 The report presented to Cabinet on 14th April 2010, set out the ambition for the Council (SBC), as a strategic lead for key statutory responsibilities for young people, to lead the way to ensure a wide range of opportunities are in place for young people to gain the skills, knowledge and experience of the world of work (Cabinet Minute 133 2009/10 refers).
- 3.3 The Swindon Economic Strategy (2013) outlines the vision for Swindon to be a place of opportunity for young people, with a higher skilled, higher earning population, where residents have the right skills for the right jobs. The

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sally Burnett, 01793 463061, email, sburnett@swindon.gov.uk.

Progressing the Economic Strategy – Developing Skills and Employment Opportunities through the Construction Industry

Cabinet

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Employment and Skills Strategy (2013) identifies the priorities and specific activities to achieve this, including increasing the number of Apprenticeships, improving links between the world of work and education, raising aspirations through access to skilled employment and reducing unemployment, particularly of young people.

- 3.4 The Swindon Skills and Employment Partnership and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) have identified construction as an important sector to support economic growth. The 2014 CITB report on the construction sector in the Swindon and Wiltshire LEP (SWLEP) area outlines the level of construction investment planned and the skills needs. The SWLEP has agreed to work with the sector to develop a strategy to ensure skills needs of the sector are identified and addressed.

National Skills Academy status and Framework

- 3.5 The CITB raises a Levy from construction businesses that are affiliated to it, and redistributes the levy raised to the industry as grants for training and skills development. The CITB works with the industry to minimise skills gaps by addressing forecasted shortfall, investing in Apprenticeships and promoting careers in UK construction.
- 3.6 The purpose of the CITB National Skills Academy Framework is to enable councils to embed training and employment strategies into the Planning and/or procurement process so that agreed skills and employment outcomes can be achieved across identified projects. The Framework, which is used successfully in over 30 other local authorities, outlines the minimum skills and employment activity (benchmarks) that are required for a project based on the value of the project. The benchmarks have been developed and approved by the construction industry to ensure the requirements are reasonable and achievable.
- 3.7 The Framework covers a wide range of construction projects including residential, retail, sport and leisure, highways and roads, factories and warehouses, education, health, offices and commercial, regeneration, refurbishment and maintenance contracts. There are benchmarks for each type of construction project.
- 3.8 The table below provides an example of the benchmarks and outlines the minimum required skills and employment outputs for a residential construction project between the value of £3.5M and £6M. The full set of benchmarks for a residential project are included in Appendix 1. The full guidance on the National Skills Academy Framework is outlined in the Local Client Guidance and this includes benchmarks for the different types of construction projects. The Local Client Guidance is available from the report author on request.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sally Burnett, 01793 463061, email, sburnett@swindon.gov.uk.

Progressing the Economic Strategy – Developing Skills and Employment Opportunities through the Construction Industry

Cabinet

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Requirement	No	Requirement	NO
Work placement (16+ years)	5	Work placement (14-16 years)	1
Construction Curriculum Support Activities	2	Apprentice Starts	2
Existing Apprenticeships	3	Jobs created	2
NVQ starts for subcontractors	2	NVQ completions for subcontractors	2
Training plans for subcontractors	4	Supervisor training for subcontractors	3
Leadership and management training for subcontractors	1	Advanced Health and Safety Training for Subcontractors	3

Table 1. Employment & Skills minimum requirements for a £3.5M - £6M residential project.

- 3.9 The proposal is for the client (The Council) to develop a Skills and Employment Plan for each construction project for which the framework is being applied. The plan includes the objectives and priorities, employment and skills areas, benchmarks, implementation, roles and responsibilities, monitoring, reporting and review. The contractor will be required to develop a 'Method Statement', outlining how the employment and skills activities will be achieved.
- 3.10 In order to achieve the CITB National Skills Academy status, the Council is required to complete an application to the CITB. The application must include details of a construction project where the Employment and Skills Framework is being applied through Planning or procurement. This report recommends that the planning route is used for this application. It is recommended that the Framework is applied to the Wichelstowe project through the Planning process on a voluntary basis.
- 3.11 The planning and implementation of the National Skills Academy, including the Framework requires engagement with a number of stakeholders at a number of detailed stages. An Action Plan is being developed for its implementation.

Implementing the framework through the planning process

- 3.12 The expectation for new development to help create new Skills and Employment opportunities through the planning process would be embedded in a Supplementary Planning Document 'SPD'. To ensure that our approach is

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sally Burnett, 01793 463061, email, sburnett@swindon.gov.uk.

Progressing the Economic Strategy – Developing Skills and Employment Opportunities through the Construction Industry

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tailored to local needs, the Swindon construction sector and local training providers would be consulted on the approach. The results of the public consultation would be reported to Planning Committee. It is expected that the SPD would include thresholds below which contributions would be neither desirable nor practical. The Swindon Development Delivery Panel has been consulted on these proposals and its members are clear that the thresholds should be set at a level so as not to adversely impact on viability issues, and that the means of securing contributions to skills and employment should not be unnecessarily onerous. The Council must take these concerns into account in preparing the SPD, which would be approved by the Planning Committee.

- 3.13 The SPD will underpin the relevant policies contained in the emerging Local Plan to 2026. It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be adopted by April 2015.
- 3.14 It is proposed that the Wichelstowe development will be used as part of the application to achieve 'National Skills Academy' status. In order to achieve this, the skills and employment requirements as outlined in the Framework will be agreed with the developer and included in the revised section 106 agreement on a voluntary basis.

Next steps

- 3.15 The Swindon Construction Skills Academy Action Plan will be finalised following appropriate engagement and consultation with all relevant stakeholders.
- 3.16 If approved, the CITB Construction Skills Academy application form would be completed.
- 3.17 Add skills and employment requirements to the revised Wichelstowe development section 106 agreement on a voluntary basis. The Skills and Employment Plan for Wichelstowe will be agreed and the contractor will complete a 'Method Statement' outlining how the skills and employment outcomes will be achieved.
- 3.18 Prepare the employment and skills requirements to be integrated into the Planning process through a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 3.19 The feasibility of implementing the framework through the procurement process should be explored where this is considered to be appropriate.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Cabinet could decide not to implement the Construction Skills Academy Framework or to work with construction contractors to implement skills and employment outcomes on a voluntary basis. A coherent and strategic approach

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sally Burnett, 01793 463061, email, sburnett@swindon.gov.uk.

Progressing the Economic Strategy – Developing Skills and Employment Opportunities through the Construction Industry

Cabinet

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however is recommended so that all contractors in scope are able to support the skills and employment strategy.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The implementation of the Framework requires no direct financial contribution from the Council. The performance of construction contractors against the framework will be monitored and reported by Economy and Skills within existing staffing resources.
- 5.2 Skills and Employment Provision is currently delivered by a wide range of providers, principally funded by the Education Funding Agency/Department for Education (DfE), Skills Funding Agency, Department of Work and Pensions and via European Funding. The CITB provides a range of training for the construction industry, which is funded through the levy which construction companies are required to pay.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.3 All legal and human rights implications have been taken into account in preparing this report. It is considered that the report's recommendations are compatible with Convention Rights.

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

- 5.4 There are no immediate implications for staff although, through the Economy Programme, officer priorities roles and capacity will be reviewed on an on-going basis.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 A Diversity Impact Assessment for the Skills and Employment Strategy has been undertaken. It identified no adverse impacts. A copy can be obtained from the report author.
- 5.6 Risk Management The main risks to the project have been identified and are incorporated into the Action Plan. These are the time frames required to integrate contributions to employment and skills into the planning process, and ensuring stakeholder support. The plan clearly outlines the steps to ensure this is integrated into the planning process but also includes the voluntary route until this is in place. There are also a number of approaches to engaging stakeholders.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Sally Burnett, 01793 463061, email, sburnett@swindon.gov.uk.

Progressing the Economic Strategy – Developing Skills and Employment Opportunities through the Construction Industry

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

6. Consultees

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

7. Background Papers

- 7.1 The National Skills Academy Local Client Guidance is available from the report author on request.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 - Example of employment and skills minimum requirements (benchmarks) for residential projects.

9. Key Decision/Decision in Cabinet Work Programme

- 9.1 This is a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan for October 2014.

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Appendix A - Benchmarks

1.0 Residential		band 1	band 2	band 3	band 4	band 5	band 6	band 7	band 8	band 9	band 10	band 11	band 12	band 13	band 14	band 15	band 16
		£1k-100k	£100k-500k	£500k-1m	£1-3.5m	£3.5-6m	£6-10m	£10-15m	£15-20m	£20-30m	£30-40m	£40-50m	£50-60m	£60-70m	£70-80m	£80-90m	£90-£100m
1.	Work Placement (16 plus years) - persons	0	1	2	3	5	7	9	11	13	16	18	19	20	20	21	21
2.	Work Placement (14-16 years) - persons	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	3	4	4	4	5	5	5	5
3.	Construction Curriculum Support Activities - Individual engagement	0	0	0	1	2	4	5	6	7	9	10	11	12	12	13	14
4.	Graduates - persons	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2
5.	Apprentice Starts - persons	0	0	0	0	2	4	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
6.	Existing apprentices - persons	0	1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
7.	Apprentice Completions - persons	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	4	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7
8.	Jobs created on construction projects - number	0	0	0	1	2	3	5	6	7	8	8	9	9	10	10	11
9.	S/NVQ Starts for Subcontractors - persons	0	0	0	1	2	3	6	8	10	13	15	17	19	21	23	24
10.	S/NVQ Completions for Subcontractors - persons	0	0	0	1	2	3	5	7	8	11	12	14	16	17	19	20
11.	Training Plans for Subcontractors - no	1	2	3	4	4	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8
12.	Supervisor Training for Subcontractors - persons	0	0	0	2	3	4	5	5	6	6	6	7	7	7	8	8
13.	Leadership and Management Training for Subcontractors - persons	0	0	0	1	1	2	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7
14.	Advanced Health and Safety Training for Subcontractors - persons	1	1	1	2	3	4	4	5	6	6	7	7	8	8	9	9

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Local Government Ombudsman – Annual Review 2013/2014

Cabinet

Date: 22 October 2014

Author:	Leader of the Council Director of Law and Democratic Services
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All Areas

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To report the receipt of the Local Government Ombudsman's (LGO) Annual Review for 2013/14 which gives the total number of complaints and enquiries received by the LGO.
- 1.2 To highlight the annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the LGO regarding our authority for the year ended 31st March 2014.
- 1.3 Securing good decisions and the effective delivery of services without generating complaints helps the Council act in accordance with Article 13 of the Constitution.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1 To receive the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review and note that there were no cases of Maladministration by the Council but that two complaints were upheld by the Ombudsman in the year ending 31st March 2014.
- 2.2 To request that the Chief Executive, Board Directors and Heads of Service continue to ensure that, where possible, complaints are resolved internally before reference to the Local Government Ombudsman and that requests for information from the Local Government Ombudsman are speedily dealt with.

3. Detail

- 3.1 The Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) traditionally issues an Annual Review Letter and Report in June/July each year. For the first time this year the LGO have sent a copy of each annual review letter to the Leader of the Council as well as the Chief Executive to support greater democratic scrutiny of local complaint handling and to ensure effective local accountability of public services. The Annual Review letter and Swindon Borough Council report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 The LGO will now be producing a summary of complaint statistics for every local authority in England to be included in the yearly report and published alongside the annual review letters. The summary statistics is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.3 Further information on the Annual Review and summary of statistics can be found on the LGO's website www.lgo.org.uk.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Erz Turner, 01793 463002, erz.turner@swindon.gov.uk.

Local Government Ombudsman – Annual Review 2013/2014

Cabinet

Date: 22 October 2014

- 3.4 The total number of complaints received and investigated by the Ombudsman for Swindon Borough Council during 2013/2014 was 65 as set out in Appendix 1. Two complaints were decided upon in 2013/2014 which had been initially received in 2012/2013 hence the discrepancy in the figures. The total number received and investigated during 2012/2013 was 24. However this is the first full year of recording complaints under the LGO's new business model so figures will not be directly comparable to previous years.
- 3.5 Complaints investigated by the LGO are logged onto the Council's customer complaints and comments system (LAGAN) which can be accessed by other users throughout the Council.
- 3.6 There were no findings of maladministration identified. There were two cases upheld by the LGO. In previous years these would have been classed as "Local Settlements". However, the LGO has changed its classification system so that complaints are now simply indicated as "Upheld" or "Not Upheld". The two Swindon "Upheld" decisions concerned complaints relating to Housing Benefits and to the granting of a Planning permission.
- 3.7 With regard to the first upheld complaint regarding Housing Benefits, the Council agreed to make a compensation award to remedy the fault which was offset against the complainant's remaining arrears. With reference to the second upheld complaint regarding Planning permission the Council agreed to make a compensation award for injustice caused by the wrong advice it gave. In both instances the LGO was satisfied with the Council's responses and proposed no further action.
- 3.8 It is clear from a review of the statistics attached at Appendix 2 that in comparison with many comparator authorities, such as other similar unitary authorities and neighbouring councils, Swindon's performance is good. However, it is suggested that to seek to ensure that the Council's performance in this area is maintained and improved the Chief Executive, Board Directors and Heads of Service be asked to continue to ensure that, where possible, all complaints are speedily resolved internally before reference to the Local Government Ombudsman, and that requests for information from the Local Government Ombudsman in respect of complaints are dealt with promptly and in accordance with the timescales required by the LGO.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There are no alternative options. The Council could decide to develop a different approach to the way it responds to Ombudsman's complaints. However, there is no evidence that this is required given the outcome of the Annual Review.

Local Government Ombudsman – Annual Review 2013/2014

Cabinet

Date: 22 October 2014

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

There are no financial implications. Where the Local Government recommends a local settlement then this is met or will come from the appropriate service budget.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.1 Legal and Human Rights implications have been taken fully into account in the preparation of this report and it is considered that the recommendations are compatible with Convention rights.

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

- 5.2 No other specific implications were identified in the preparation of this report.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.3 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has not been undertaken at this stage. The procedure for dealing with Ombudsman's complaints is shortly to be the subject of a DIA and this will be undertaken in consultation with the Change Lead for Equality and Diversity.

Risk Management

Poor performance and findings of maladministration pose a reputational risk to the Council. This is mitigated by the overall performance of the Council and the systems it operates for responding to complaints and ombudsman investigations.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director, Resources (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 Appendix 1 – Review Letter from the Local Government Ombudsman
8.2 Appendix 2 – Summary of statistics

9. Key Decision/Decision in Cabinet Work Programme

- 9.1 This is not a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme for October 2014.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Erz Turner, 01793 463002, erz.turner@swindon.gov.uk.

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7 July 2014

By email

Mr Gavin Jones
Chief Executive
Swindon Borough Council

Dear Mr Gavin Jones

Annual Review Letter 2014

I am writing with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2014. This is the first full year of recording complaints under our new business model so the figures will not be directly comparable to previous years. This year's statistics can be found in the table attached.

A summary of complaint statistics for every local authority in England will also be included in a new yearly report on local government complaint handling. This will be published alongside our annual review letters on 15 July. This approach is in response to feedback from councils who told us that they want to be able to compare their performance on complaints against their peers.

For the first time this year we are also sending a copy of each annual review letter to the leader of the council as well as to the chief executive. We hope this will help to support greater democratic scrutiny of local complaint handling and ensure effective local accountability of public services. In the future we will also send a copy of any published Ombudsman report to the leader of the council as well as the chief executive.

Developments at the Local Government Ombudsman

At the end of March Anne Seex retired as my fellow Local Government Ombudsman. Following an independent review of the governance of the LGO last year the Government has committed to formalising a single ombudsman structure at LGO, and to strengthen our governance, when parliamentary time allows. I welcome these changes and have begun the process of strengthening our governance by inviting the independent Chairs of our Audit and Remuneration Committees to join our board, the Commission for Administration in England. We have also recruited a further independent advisory member.

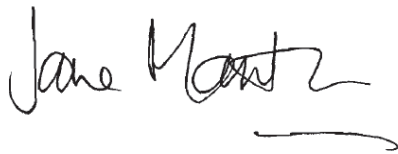
Future for local accountability

There has been much discussion in Parliament and elsewhere about the effectiveness of complaints handling in the public sector and the role of ombudsmen. I have supported the creation of a single ombudsman for all public services in England. I consider this is the best way to deliver a system of redress that is accessible for users; provides an effective and comprehensive service; and ensures that services are accountable locally.

To contribute to that debate we held a roundtable discussion with senior leaders from across the local government landscape including the Local Government Association, Care Quality Commission and SOLACE. The purpose of this forum was to discuss the challenges and opportunities that exist to strengthen local accountability of public services, particularly in an environment where those services are delivered by many different providers.

Over the summer we will be developing our corporate strategy for the next three years and considering how we can best play our part in enhancing the local accountability of public services. We will be listening to the views of a wide range of stakeholders from across local government and social care and would be pleased to hear your comments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Martin', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

Local authority report – Swindon Borough Council

For the period ending – 31/03/2014

For further information on interpretation of statistics click on this link to go to <http://www.lgo.org.uk/publications/annual-report/note-interpretation-statistics/>

Complaints and enquiries received

Local authority	Adult care services	Benefits and tax	Corporate and other services	Education and children's services	Environmental services and public protection and regulation	Highways and transport	Housing	Planning and development	Total
Swindon BC	6	19	4	9	9	6	5	7	65

Decisions made

Local authority	<u>Detailed investigations carried out</u>		Advice given	Closed after initial enquiries	Incomplete/Invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Total
	Upheld	Not upheld					
Swindon BC	2	9	3	21	4	28	67

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Authority	Closed after initial		Referred back for local				Upheld	Not upheld	% upheld*	Total
	Advice given	enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	resolution						
Adur DC	0	4	0	0	5	6	0	100.0%	15	
Allerdale BC	0	3	1	1	5	1	5	16.7%	15	
Amber Valley BC	0	6	3	3	7	3	7	30.0%	26	
Arun DC	0	10	2	2	9	2	2	50.0%	25	
Ashfield DC	3	10	1	1	4	3	4	42.9%	25	
Ashford BC	1	12	1	1	7	3	3	50.0%	27	
Aylesbury Vale DC	0	13	1	1	13	0	8	0.0%	35	
Babergh DC	1	2	0	0	3	0	5	0.0%	11	
Barking & Dagenham	14	36	3	3	48	11	9	55.0%	121	
Barnet LB	14	67	3	3	79	14	10	58.3%	187	
Barnsley MBC	2	18	6	6	29	5	14	26.3%	74	
Barrow BC	3	6	0	0	5	2	2	50.0%	18	
Basildon BC	7	8	1	1	21	1	6	14.3%	44	
Basingstoke & Deane	1	6	2	2	5	0	2	0.0%	16	
Bassetlaw DC	2	8	0	0	6	3	4	42.9%	23	
Bath & NE Somerset C	2	12	1	1	14	1	10	9.1%	40	
Bedford BC	1	10	4	4	18	6	4	60.0%	43	
Bexley LB	0	28	2	2	38	10	12	45.5%	90	
Birmingham City C	52	131	22	22	254	82	43	65.6%	584	
Blaby DC	0	8	0	0	1	1	0	100.0%	10	
Blackburn w/Darwen	2	11	0	0	21	4	4	50.0%	42	
Blackpool BC	4	11	2	2	25	11	5	68.8%	58	
Bolsover DC	2	6	1	1	9	1	1	50.0%	20	
Bolton MBC	2	28	4	4	36	9	12	42.9%	91	
Boston BC	0	4	0	0	4	0	1	0.0%	9	
Bournemouth BC	4	10	3	3	29	6	12	33.3%	64	
Bracknell Forest C	2	9	1	1	10	0	2	0.0%	24	
Braintree DC	0	5	1	1	7	2	4	33.3%	19	
Breckland DC	1	4	0	0	7	3	2	60.0%	17	
Brent LB	10	48	6	6	77	11	15	42.3%	167	
Brentwood BC	2	2	1	1	10	2	3	40.0%	20	
Brighton & Hove City	4	33	4	4	53	12	17	41.4%	123	
Bristol City C	15	55	4	4	46	24	16	60.0%	160	
Broadland DC	0	7	0	0	6	4	5	44.4%	22	
Broads Authority	0	3	0	0	0	0	0		3	
Bromley LB	2	42	3	3	74	14	20	41.2%	155	
Bromsgrove DC	0	8	0	0	7	1	4	20.0%	20	
Broxbourne BC	0	3	0	0	7	3	0	100.0%	13	
Broxtowe BC	1	6	1	1	6	4	2	66.7%	20	

Authority	Closed after initial		Referred back for local				Upheld		Not upheld		% upheld*	Total
	Advice given	enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	resolution	Upheld	Not upheld						
Buckinghamshire CC	2	56	11	22	7	6	53.8%	104				
Burnley BC	0	7	0	8	0	2	0.0%	17				
Bury MBC	0	16	1	16	8	7	53.3%	48				
Calderdale MBC	3	19	3	19	8	8	50.0%	60				
Cambridge City C	2	3	1	5	2	2	50.0%	15				
Cambridgeshire CC	1	15	5	24	9	20	31.0%	74				
Camden LB	24	66	2	37	20	16	55.6%	165				
Cannock Chase DC	0	2	0	8	0	1	0.0%	11				
Canterbury City C	2	6	0	22	1	4	20.0%	35				
Carlisle City C	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2				
Castle Point BC	1	2	0	3	4	5	44.4%	15				
Central Bedfordshire	2	23	3	28	4	13	23.5%	73				
Charnwood BC	2	11	0	9	2	2	50.0%	26				
Chelmsford City C	0	6	1	7	1	4	20.0%	19				
Cheltenham BC	1	8	0	6	4	5	44.4%	24				
Cherwell DC	0	7	0	8	2	4	33.3%	21				
Cheshire East C	3	37	3	50	17	21	44.7%	131				
Cheshire W & Chester	1	34	2	39	13	17	43.3%	106				
Chesterfield BC	0	7	0	7	0	3	0.0%	17				
Chichester DC	0	8	0	6	1	1	50.0%	16				
Chiltern DC	0	4	0	5	0	1	0.0%	10				
Chorley BC	0	2	0	3	1	2	33.3%	8				
Christchurch BC	0	3	0	6	0	1	0.0%	10				
City of Bradford MDC	7	37	8	62	14	22	38.9%	150				
City of London	2	2	0	1	0	1	0.0%	6				
Colchester BC	4	6	1	8	2	2	50.0%	23				
Copeland BC	1	7	0	5	1	6	14.3%	20				
Corby BC	1	2	0	10	4	0	100.0%	17				
Cornwall Council	3	70	14	67	36	32	52.9%	222				
Cotswold DC	0	5	0	3	0	4	0.0%	12				
County Durham C	6	69	3	48	25	26	49.0%	177				
Coventry City C	1	25	9	56	10	9	52.6%	110				
Craven DC	1	3	0	10	0	2	0.0%	16				
Crawley BC	1	6	1	8	2	4	33.3%	22				
Croydon LB	10	71	6	121	37	23	61.7%	268				
Cumbria CC	0	13	3	21	6	5	54.5%	48				
Dacorum BC	1	4	3	12	1	4	20.0%	25				
Darlington BC	0	6	2	7	3	5	37.5%	23				
Dartford BC	0	10	1	7	2	1	66.7%	21				
Dartmoor NPA	1	2	0	0	0	4	0.0%	7				
Daventry DC	2	2	0	7	3	4	42.9%	18				
Derby City C	2	34	1	25	9	10	47.4%	81				
Derbyshire CC	0	26	2	36	11	8	57.9%	83				

Authority	Closed after initial		Referred back for local				Total	
	Advice given	enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	resolution	Upheld	Not upheld		% upheld*
Derbyshire Dales DC	1	3	1	4	0	1	0.0%	10
Devon CC	4	36	4	30	27	40	40.3%	141
Doncaster MBC	5	33	1	33	12	10	54.5%	94
Dorset CC	1	17	2	19	5	12	29.4%	56
Dover DC	2	9	0	11	3	5	37.5%	30
Dudley MBC	4	25	1	38	3	16	15.8%	87
Ealing LB	12	63	6	86	39	21	65.0%	227
East Cambs DC	1	3	0	8	0	2	0.0%	14
East Devon DC	0	15	0	11	4	11	26.7%	41
East Dorset DC	0	5	1	6	3	1	75.0%	16
East Hampshire DC	0	7	0	0	1	3	25.0%	11
East Herts DC	0	4	0	6	0	1	0.0%	11
East Lindsey DC	0	11	0	14	1	10	9.1%	36
East Northants C	1	7	1	3	1	2	33.3%	15
East Riding of Yorks	3	29	1	40	10	15	40.0%	98
East Staffs BC	0	5	1	3	0	3	0.0%	12
East Sussex CC	1	33	6	31	19	21	47.5%	111
Eastbourne BC	1	7	1	12	0	0		21
Eastleigh BC	0	4	2	6	2	2	50.0%	16
Eden DC	0	4	0	2	2	0	100.0%	8
Elmbridge BC	0	7	1	17	2	3	40.0%	30
Enfield LB	7	36	5	66	23	16	59.0%	153
Epping Forest DC	4	5	2	10	0	1	0.0%	22
Epsom & Ewell BC	0	8	1	6	3	3	50.0%	21
Erewash BC	1	1	0	5	3	2	60.0%	12
Essex CC	1	53	7	60	30	16	65.2%	167
Exeter City C	3	6	1	8	3	3	50.0%	24
Fareham BC	0	6	0	4	0	3	0.0%	13
Fenland DC	1	7	1	7	4	1	80.0%	21
Forest Heath DC	0	2	0	1	1	1	50.0%	5
Forest of Dean DC	0	2	0	8	0	2	0.0%	12
Fylde BC	0	6	1	6	0	2	0.0%	15
Gateshead MBC	10	14	3	24	9	9	50.0%	69
Gedling BC	0	11	1	5	0	2	0.0%	19
Gloucester City C	0	1	0	4	0	0		5
Gloucestershire CC	0	18	0	30	7	15	31.8%	70
Gosport BC	0	4	0	8	0	1	0.0%	13
Gravesham BC	3	4	1	12	1	1	50.0%	22
Great Yarmouth BC	2	1	0	9	1	1	50.0%	14
Greenwich LB	16	33	6	45	14	11	56.0%	125
Guildford BC	3	7	0	8	2	2	50.0%	22
Hackney LB	24	47	9	67	31	6	83.8%	184
Halton C	0	10	0	10	3	6	33.3%	29

Authority	Closed after initial		Referred back for local					% upheld*	Total
	Advice given	enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	resolution	Upheld	Not upheld			
Hambleton DC	1		5	0	7	1	1	50.0%	15
Hammersmith & Fulham	11		57	4	40	11	12	47.8%	135
Hampshire CC	3		32	3	27	10	15	40.0%	90
Harborough DC	0		4	0	5	4	5	44.4%	18
Haringey LB	17		72	3	83	32	23	58.2%	230
Harlow DC	2		4	0	7	1	2	33.3%	16
Harrogate BC	1		6	0	8	3	0	100.0%	18
Harrow LB	5		56	4	61	21	17	55.3%	164
Hart DC	0		1	1	3	0	0		5
Hartlepool BC	0		10	2	9	1	3	25.0%	25
Hastings BC	0		9	1	8	1	2	33.3%	21
Havant BC	0		2	0	5	1	1	50.0%	9
Havering LB	6		30	4	60	11	10	52.4%	121
Herefordshire C	0		33	3	25	13	9	59.1%	83
Hertfordshire CC	1		42	5	44	11	5	68.8%	108
Hertsmere BC	1		6	1	13	0	4	0.0%	25
High Peak BC	2		5	0	7	2	3	40.0%	19
Hillingdon LB	4		26	2	44	5	4	55.6%	85
Hinckley & Bosworth BC	0		3	1	5	4	2	66.7%	15
Horsham DC	0		7	1	8	5	1	83.3%	22
Hounslow LB	8		48	3	100	19	15	55.9%	193
Huntingdonshire DC	2		2	0	4	3	4	42.9%	15
Hyndburn BC	0		3	0	5	0	8	0.0%	16
Ipswich BC	2		7	1	7	0	0		17
Isle of Wight C	0		25	1	22	8	5	61.5%	61
Isles of Scilly	0		1	0	2	0	0		3
Islington LB	24		41	4	39	18	20	47.4%	146
Kensington & Chelsea	1		18	4	33	4	14	22.2%	74
Kent CC	1		57	12	44	36	41	46.8%	191
Kettering BC	2		6	1	8	3	1	75.0%	21
Kings Lynn & W Nor	1		4	0	6	1	0	100.0%	12
Kingston upon Hull	3		29	2	36	7	11	38.9%	88
Kingston upon Thames	5		21	2	26	8	6	57.1%	68
Kirklees MBC	2		41	9	37	13	23	36.1%	125
Knowsley MBC	1		12	0	10	4	5	44.4%	32
Lake Distict NPA			3		2	5	3	62.5%	13
Lambeth LB	41		95	13	104	51	34	60.0%	338
Lancashire CC	1		31	8	63	19	41	31.7%	163
Lancaster City C	1		9	0	7	3	3	50.0%	23
Leeds City C	21		65	5	70	29	42	40.8%	232
Leicester City C	6		49	8	25	15	15	50.0%	118
Leicestershire CC	1		19	3	36	10	11	47.6%	80
Lewes DC	1		3	0	9	1	0	100.0%	14

Authority	Closed after initial		Referred back for local				Total	
	Advice given	enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	resolution	Upheld	Not upheld	% upheld*	
Lewisham LB	8	32	7	62	15	10	60.0%	
Lichfield DC	1	2	1	4	0	2	0.0%	
Lincoln City C	2	5	1	4	2	1	66.7%	
Lincolnshire CC	1	31	3	28	11	18	37.9%	
Liverpool City C	2	50	4	92	21	13	61.8%	
Luton BC	2	31	5	32	6	3	66.7%	
Maidstone BC	0	10	1	5	3	0	100.0%	
Maldon DC	0	6	0	5	2	1	66.7%	
Malvern Hills DC	0	4	0	4	2	2	50.0%	
Manchester City C	8	83	11	78	16	23	41.0%	
Mansfield DC	3	8	0	6	0	3	0.0%	
Medway C	2	44	7	31	6	20	23.1%	
Melton BC	0	2	1	0	0	1	0.0%	
Mendip DC	0	11	4	27	4	3	57.1%	
Merton LB	1	27	4	49	18	11	62.1%	
Mid Devon DC	2	9	1	8	1	2	33.3%	
Mid Suffolk DC	3	5	1	9	1	4	20.0%	
Mid Sussex DC	0	7	0	11	3	1	75.0%	
Middlesbrough BC	0	8	0	18	1	6	14.3%	
Milton Keynes C	5	19	3	32	6	6	50.0%	
Mole Valley DC	0	4	0	5	1	7	12.5%	
NE Derbyshire DC	0	7	0	5	1	3	25.0%	
New Forest DC	2	10	0	6	2	1	66.7%	
New Forest NPA		1	1	0	1	5	16.7%	
Newark & Sherwood DC	1	11	0	9	3	0	100.0%	
Newcastle City C	4	28	4	13	3	10	23.1%	
Newcastle-under-Lyme	2	8	1	5	5	3	62.5%	
Newham LB	19	90	8	133	28	21	57.1%	
Norfolk CC	1	29	2	23	6	10	37.5%	
North Devon DC	0	11	0	7	2	5	28.6%	
North Dorset DC	0	4	0	8	0	2	0.0%	
North East Lincs DC	1	15	1	24	2	8	20.0%	
North Herts DC	0	8	1	11	2	1	66.7%	
North Kesteven DC	0	5	0	9	1	0	100.0%	
North Lincolnshire C	1	11	3	17	5	4	55.6%	
North Norfolk DC	0	8	2	5	3	2	60.0%	
North Somerset C	0	23	2	16	9	13	40.9%	
North Tyneside MBC	6	21	1	23	3	6	33.3%	
North Warwick BC	0	3	1	4	0	2	0.0%	
North York Moors NPA	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.0%	
North Yorks CC	0	24	4	24	22	13	62.9%	
Northampton BC	6	13	3	18	5	8	38.5%	
Northants CC	1	22	5	40	12	11	52.2%	

Authority	Advice given	Closed after initial enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Upheld	Not upheld	% upheld*	Total
Northumberland C	2	20	0	25	8	8	50.0%	63
Northumberland NPA	0	1	0	0	0	0		1
Norwich City C	11	11	0	15	2	10	16.7%	49
Nottingham City C	7	29	4	40	14	30	31.8%	124
Notts CC	0	33	2	33	15	15	50.0%	98
Nuneaton & Bedworth BC	5	9	0	6	1	4	20.0%	25
NW Leics DC	2	7	0	9	3	5	37.5%	26
Oadby & Wigston BC	1	2	0	1	1	0	100.0%	5
Oldham MBC	3	24	2	29	7	12	36.8%	77
Oxford City C	3	9	2	8	1	4	20.0%	27
Oxfordshire CC	2	22	1	14	7	14	33.3%	60
Peak District NPA		3	1	2	2	1	66.7%	9
Pendle BC	1	10	1	13	1	2	33.3%	28
Peterborough City C	0	16	1	20	10	4	71.4%	51
Plymouth City C	2	25	1	33	10	11	47.6%	82
Poole BC	1	20	5	14	4	10	28.6%	54
Portsmouth City C	7	20	1	24	3	12	20.0%	67
Preston City C	2	6	0	6	1	1	50.0%	16
Purbeck DC	0	1	0	2	0	2	0.0%	5
Reading BC	2	18	0	17	6	6	50.0%	49
Redbridge LB	5	52	7	63	30	25	54.5%	182
Redcar & Cleveland C	1	9	1	22	1	4	20.0%	38
Redditch BC	2	3	2	11	0	1	0.0%	19
Reigate & Banstead	0	11	0	13	3	6	33.3%	33
Ribble Valley BC	0	2	1	5	4	3	57.1%	15
Richmond upon Thames	0	21	3	21	11	10	52.4%	66
Richmondshire DC	0	1	0	3	0	0		4
Rochdale MBC	1	16	5	26	5	4	55.6%	57
Rochford DC	1	6	0	13	0	3	0.0%	23
Rossendale BC	0	5	0	8	1	4	20.0%	18
Rother DC	0	8	1	5	0	4	0.0%	18
Rotherham MBC	1	18	3	28	5	13	27.8%	68
Rugby BC	0	3	0	7	2	1	66.7%	13
Runnymede BC	3	1	1	5	1	1	50.0%	12
Rushcliffe BC	0	4	0	1	3	0	100.0%	8
Rushmoor BC	0	3	0	9	0	0		12
Rutland CC	0	9	1	6	1	1	50.0%	18
Ryedale DC	0	4	0	1	1	1	50.0%	7
Salford City C	3	11	1	25	13	10	56.5%	63
Sandwell MBC	12	32	3	61	20	10	66.7%	138
Scarborough BC	0	7	0	11	1	6	14.3%	25
Sedgemoor DC	2	7	0	7	2	6	25.0%	24
Sefton MBC	1	24	2	26	6	15	28.6%	74

Authority	Closed after initial		Referred back for local				Total	
	Advice given	enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	resolution	Upheld	Not upheld	% upheld*	
Selby DC	0	3	0	5	5	5	50.0%	
Sevenoaks DC	0	8	1	8	0	3	0.0%	
Sheffield City C	9	48	6	69	16	26	38.1%	
Shepway DC	1	5	1	10	3	4	42.9%	
Shropshire Council	0	28	2	44	19	12	61.3%	
Slough BC	2	12	3	26	4	9	30.8%	
Solihull MBC	3	16	1	25	6	5	54.5%	
Somerset CC	2	12	3	26	6	9	40.0%	
South Bucks DC	0	4	1	4	1	1	50.0%	
South Cambs DC	2	6	1	4	2	2	50.0%	
South Derbyshire DC	1	4	0	2	1	0	100.0%	
South Downs NPA	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	
South Glos C	5	15	3	23	7	7	50.0%	
South Hams DC	0	11	2	6	15	10	60.0%	
South Holland DC	0	4	2	2	0	1	0.0%	
South Kesteven DC	1	4	1	7	0	3	0.0%	
South Lakeland DC	0	9	1	2	0	2	0.0%	
South Norfolk DC	1	5	0	2	0	1	0.0%	
South Northants DC	0	3	0	5	2	5	28.6%	
South Oxfordshire DC	1	2	0	4	0	4	0.0%	
South Ribble BC	0	5	1	6	0	2	0.0%	
South Somerset DC	0	13	3	4	2	3	40.0%	
South Staffs DC	1	3	0	4	0	1	0.0%	
South Tyneside MBC	5	23	0	10	1	15	6.3%	
Southampton City C	2	11	1	13	8	10	44.4%	
Southend-on-Sea BC	2	16	1	19	1	7	12.5%	
Southwark LB	47	57	7	69	44	18	71.0%	
Spelthorne BC	1	1	0	7	0	1	0.0%	
St Albans City C	1	11	2	9	3	5	37.5%	
St Edmundsbury BC	1	9	1	4	0	4	0.0%	
St Helens MBC	0	11	0	18	5	8	38.5%	
Stafford BC	0	5	1	6	3	3	50.0%	
Staffordshire CC	1	35	7	35	21	15	58.3%	
Staffs Moorlands DC	1	4	0	2	2	4	33.3%	
Stevenage BC	3	4	1	6	1	3	25.0%	
Stockport MBC	1	20	2	25	3	20	13.0%	
Stockton-on-Tees BC	1	10	1	23	5	5	50.0%	
Stoke-on-Trent City	2	34	6	25	17	11	60.7%	
Stratford-on-Avon DC	1	4	2	1	4	2	66.7%	
Stroud DC	2	7	1	6	0	0	16	
Suffolk CC	7	25	3	29	14	11	56.0%	
Suffolk Coastal DC	1	4	2	5	1	3	25.0%	
Sunderland City C	2	22	4	20	9	10	47.4%	

Authority	Closed after initial		Referred back for local				Upheld		Not upheld		% upheld*	Total
	Advice given	enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	resolution								
Surrey CC	0	45	6		52	17	13			56.7%	133	
Surrey Heath BC	0	8	0		7	2	0			100.0%	17	
Sutton LB	3	19	4		30	4	6			40.0%	66	
Swale BC	0	11	0		10	2	2			50.0%	25	
Swindon BC	3	21	4		28	2	9			18.2%	67	
Tameside MBC	1	17	2		33	13	12			52.0%	78	
Tamworth BC	7	3	2		11	3	2			60.0%	28	
Tandridge DC	0	6	2		4	2	4			33.3%	18	
Taunton Deane BC	2	4	0		6	5	7			41.7%	24	
Teignbridge DC	1	10	1		11	4	7			36.4%	34	
Telford & Wrekin BC	3	11	4		14	3	7			30.0%	42	
Tending DC	0	8	2		20	0	5			0.0%	35	
Test Valley BC	0	4	3		4	0	0				11	
Tewkesbury BC	0	2	1		8	1	1			50.0%	13	
Thanet DC	3	3	0		13	0	3			0.0%	22	
Three Rivers DC	1	9	0		7	2	3			40.0%	22	
Thurrock C	15	21	3		40	18	10			64.3%	107	
Tonbridge & Malling	0	1	0		6	0	1			0.0%	8	
Torbay C	0	17	3		26	11	12			47.8%	69	
Torridge DC	0	14	2		10	9	6			60.0%	41	
Tower Hamlets LB	11	40	3		51	10	3			76.9%	118	
Trafford MBC	3	25	1		34	11	16			40.7%	90	
Tunbridge Wells BC	1	5	1		5	4	4			50.0%	20	
Uttlesford DC	1	7	1		6	4	3			57.1%	22	
Vale of White Horse	2	4	0		7	2	2			50.0%	17	
Wakefield City C	2	40	5		18	7	7			50.0%	79	
Walsall MBC	2	14	3		28	9	17			34.6%	73	
Waltham Forest LB	7	52	4		62	27	20			57.4%	172	
Wandsworth LB	9	37	2		37	6	13			31.6%	104	
Warrington C	0	19	4		22	12	8			60.0%	65	
Warwick DC	0	13	1		11	4	2			66.7%	31	
Warwickshire CC	2	9	3		26	19	13			59.4%	72	
Watford BC	0	11	1		7	1	0			100.0%	20	
Waveney DC	3	5	0		14	1	3			25.0%	26	
Waverley BC	0	11	1		4	1	4			20.0%	21	
Wealden DC	3	7	1		16	1	6			14.3%	34	
Wellingborough BC	0	6	0		3	1	1			50.0%	11	
Welwyn Hatfield BC	2	8	2		15	2	2			50.0%	31	
West Berkshire C	0	26	1		15	3	8			27.3%	53	
West Devon BC	0	4	0		4	0	3			0.0%	11	
West Dorset DC	0	16	0		4	1	3			25.0%	24	
West Lancs BC	2	5	0		6	0	6			0.0%	19	
West Lindsey DC	0	8	1		3	2	4			33.3%	18	

Authority	Advice given	Closed after initial enquiries	Incomplete/invalid	Referred back for local resolution	Upheld	Not upheld	% upheld*	Total
West Oxfordshire DC	0	4	0	6	1	3	25.0%	14
West Somerset DC	0	0	0	3	0	2	0.0%	5
West Sussex CC	3	43	4	38	17	25	40.5%	130
Westminster City C	9	53	7	77	18	57	24.0%	221
Weymouth & Portland	0	2	1	9	2	1	66.7%	15
Wigan MBC	5	30	2	37	15	11	57.7%	100
Wiltshire Council	3	29	6	40	17	16	51.5%	111
Winchester City C	0	6	1	6	1	2	33.3%	16
Windsor & Maidenhead	1	8	2	14	8	5	61.5%	38
Wirral MBC	2	22	4	41	8	14	36.4%	91
Woking BC	0	7	0	6	0	3	0.0%	16
Wokingham BC	2	14	4	21	3	5	37.5%	49
Wolverhampton City C	8	27	1	32	5	23	17.9%	96
Worcester City C	1	2	1	3	1	0	100.0%	8
Worcestershire CC	0	17	2	18	14	13	51.9%	64
Worthing BC	0	9	0	8	0	1	0.0%	18
Wycharon DC	1	6	1	5	2	1	66.7%	16
Wycombe DC	0	11	2	19	3	8	27.3%	43
Wyre BC	0	3	0	10	3	0	100.0%	16
Wyre Forest DC	0	1	0	3	0	1	0.0%	5
York City C	4	23	3	19	6	14	30.0%	69
Yorkshire Dales NPA	0	1	0	0	0	0		1

Notes

Number of complaints and enquiries received: a number of cases will have been received and decided in different business years, this means the number of complaints and enquiries received will not always match the number of decisions made.

* Percentage of complaints that are investigated in more detail.

For further information on interpreting the statistics click

[Local Government Ombudsman • Note on interpretation of local authority statistics](#)

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References from Other Council Bodies: Town Twinning Network

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

Author:	Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance and Director of Law and Democratic Services
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To consider references and recommendations arising from meeting of the Town Twinning Network held on 8th October 2014.
- 1.2 In particular, Cabinet is asked to consider making funding available to support activities to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Swindon/Salzgitter Town Twinning.
- 1.3 There are no specific links to One Swindon and to Corporate Plans and Policies associated with Stronger Together.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Consider the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Town Twinning Network, as set out in Minute 51 (Appendix 1a and 1b).

3. Detail

- 3.1 The Town Twinning Network met on 8th October 2014 and considered a report concerning proposed arrangements to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Swindon/Salzgitter Town Twinning.
- 3.2 Following its consideration of the report and discussion of issues arising, the Network made recommendations for the Cabinet to consider (Minute 51). The Minute and recommendations are set out in Appendix 1A to the report. Appendix 1B sets out a revised appendix to the report submitted to the Network. This second appendix sets out details of the possible events that could be undertaken by the Council in support of the commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of the Swindon/Salzgitter Town Twinning and the approximate costs of those events where known.
- 3.3 The original report considered by the Network is attached as a related report as Appendix 2.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Willcox, Direct Dial Telephone Number – 01793 463601, email - iwillcox@swindon.gov.uk.

References from Other Council Bodies: Town Twinning Network

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 It is a matter for Cabinet as to whether the recommendations of the Town Twinning Network are supported or not.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The financial implications associated with the recommendations from the Committee are set out in the report and Appendix to that body.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.2 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 This report has no other specific implications.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.4 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has not been undertaken at this stage as this report does not make any recommendations or have implications that affect services. Although felt unlikely, it is possible that a DIA may be required at a later stage if the proposals within the report are supported by the Council and are to be implemented. If so an Assessment will be completed at that time.

Risk Management

- 5.5 There are no identified risks.

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director, Resources (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 Appendix 1A – Minute of Town Twinning Network – 8th October 2014.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Willcox, Direct Dial Telephone Number – 01793 463601, email - iwillcox@swindon.gov.uk.

References from Other Council Bodies: Town Twinning Network

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

-
- 8.2 Appendix 1B – Related Report Revised Appendix indicating Event and Estimated Cost.
 - 8.3 Appendix 2 – Related Reports
 - 9. Key Decision/Decision in Cabinet Work Programme/Forward Plan**
 - 9.1 This is not a Key Decision and is included in the Cabinet Work Programme / Forward Plan for October 2014.

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TOWN TWINNING NETWORK

WEDNESDAY, 8 OCTOBER 2014

51. Swindon Salzgitter Twinning - 40th Anniversary Celebrations

The Network considered an update report of the Director of Law and Democratic Services about arrangements to mark the 40th anniversary of the Swindon/Salzgitter Town Twinning link in 2015.

Members were informed that the previous request for a 'one-off' budget to support the 40th Anniversary was declined by Cabinet at its meeting held on 25 June 2014 as there was a lack of detailed financial information on which the Cabinet could base a decision.

The report highlighted the discussions held with various Heads of Service Areas within the Council and the possible options open to the Council to become involved with the celebrations. Appendix A of the report detailed the proposed events with costings where appropriate which would complement the events planned by the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association as detailed at Appendix B of the report.

The Network was informed that since the report was prepared a number of events and new ideas had been included in the proposals, which included revised and updated costs.

It was proposed that the Twinning celebrations and the Swindon 175 celebrations taking place in 2015 could be linked, especially as Salzgitter had a similar railway heritage as Swindon.

Resolved:

1. That the proposed events and ideas, detailed at Appendix A to these minutes be supported.
2. That additional events, once evaluated, be added to those identified in Appendix A.
3. **That the Cabinet be asked to approve a 'one-off' budget up to £10,000 to fund the Council promoted events detailed at Appendix A to these minutes to ensure that Swindon Borough Council has the capacity of marking the 40th anniversary celebrations during 2015 of the Swindon/Salzgitter Town Twinning link and to continue promoting healthy international links.**
4. That the Town Twinning Network continues to explore funding streams to offset the 'one-off' budget requested at 3 above.

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Appendix A

<u>Event</u>	<u>Indicative cost</u> <u>£</u>
German Style Market – Initial discussions held with inSwindon about the type of markets available including German food, Arts and craft and seasonal.	Potentially cost neutral
Display's in various town centre locations of material already available and held by the Council and Twinning Association, promoting the history and international links with Salzgitter. Locations could include - Brunel Plaza/Library/Museum/Civic Offices.	Potentially cost neutral – Officer time
Schools event – Concert and raising the awareness of the international link – Waiting for responses	500.00
Youth Service led exchange – Waiting for a response	1500.00
Visit of Salzgitter delegation to Swindon to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a celebration dinner with an invite to the German Ambassador – 30 invites at £30 a head to present a commemorative gift, New Coat of Arms for Salzgitter Council 	900.00 200.00 500.00
Members visit to Salzgitter - To be funded from the Mayoral Town Twinning budget	2700.00
Media awareness campaign provided by Comms	Officer time only
Salzgitter visit to Swindon (Civic visit)	2800.00
12 months of German themed food events at Council offices – Possible ideas – throughout the coming year In House Catering would add a theme to the catering area (Hut 8) with some striking decoration to act as continual visual reminder of this significant year, linked in with German themed menu items running each month supported with events such as Cheese tasting with German regional cheeses, Cake tasting (superb chocolate) and bringing in some German branded soft drinks and snacks as a point of difference. Picking a good week in the summer In House Catering could host a German themed BBQ outside for the staff and invited guests. This can all be building up to a larger Oktoberfest event. Costs to the Council would include décor and point of sale	500.00

over 52 weeks. Investment would be matched by In House Catering.	
Support for Swindon/Salzgitter Link Association awareness, promotion and exchange	900.00
Swindon Salzgitter Website	100.00
New bench plaque in the Town Gardens, Old Town	300.00
GWR 175 Celebration (rail link) and joint celebrations at STEAM	To be identified
Oktoberfest as a German awareness event	To be identified
Total	10900.00

Swindon Salzgitter Town Twinning 40th Anniversary Arrangements

Town Twinning Network

Date: 8 October 2014

Author:	Director of Law and Democratic Services
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To consider an update on the arrangements to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Swindon/Salzgitter Town Twinning.

2. Recommendations

The Town Twinning Network is recommended to:

- 2.1 To note the report and support the proposed events detailed at Appendix A of the report.
- 2.2 To suggest additional events to the Council to complement those proposed and supported by Swindon Borough Council and the Swindon/Salzgitter Town Twinning Association.
- 2.3 To request that Cabinet consider a one-off budget of xxxx to fund the Council promoted events detailed at Appendix A to ensure that Swindon Borough Council has the capability of marking the 40th Anniversary celebrations of the Swindon/Salzgitter Town Twinning link and to continue promoting healthy international links.

3. Detail

- 3.1 The Town Twinning Network (TTN), at a previous meeting was reminded that the Swindon/Salzgitter Twinning Association would be celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 2015. The TTN agreed at that meeting that the Council should consider a number of events to commemorate the Anniversary of the twinning link. This report details initial thoughts about possible options to commemorate the Anniversary and seeks further consideration about likely events. These events would be in addition to any events organised by the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association.
- 3.2 The Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association was set up in 1975 with the principle aim of furthering and expanding the knowledge of culture, education, industrial and political interests between the two towns. Visits are arranged for representatives from Swindon to Salzgitter every other year and in between visits are arranged to Swindon from representatives of Salzgitter.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon Salzgitter Town Twinning 40th Anniversary Arrangements

Town Twinning Network

Date: 8 October 2014

- 3.3 Over the years, in addition to the regular organised Town Twinning visits, a number of other visits have been made between the towns as a direct result of the twinning link. These include brass bands, squash clubs, football team exchanges, private holidays for towns residents, private group visits to other parts of the UK and Germany and Swindon hosting a German graduate student for the past 3 months following discussions with a Salzgitter contact. It is understood that there are other visits that take place outside of the formal arrangements.
- 3.4 Initial contact has been made with a number of the Heads of Service Areas including Leisure, Libraries, Traded Services and Culture, Communications and Facilities Management about the possible options open to the Council to help with the celebrations. Suggestions, with associated costs, where available, are detailed at Appendix A.
- 3.5 The current programme for Civic Twinning events with Salzgitter is as follows:
- 2014-2015 - The Mayor and 8 others will be visiting Salzgitter in November 2014. Swindon Council will be funding the flights only, all other costs will be funded by Salzgitter
 - 2015/16 – A delegation from Salzgitter will visit Swindon as part of the normal twinning visit arrangement. They will fund their own flights and Swindon Council fund all the remaining costs including the hotel. During this visit a number of events will be arranged to cover the 40th anniversary – as yet this programme has not been arranged.
 - 2015/16 - The Mayor and 8 others will be visiting Salzgitter during 2015. Swindon Council will be funding the flights only, all other costs will be funded by Salzgitter
- 3.6 The events detailed in Appendix A would be held alongside and complement those events being organised by the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association attached at Appendix B to this report. Updates on the progress being made with the events would be presented to the TTN on a regular basis.
- 3.7 The TTN is asked to consider the above options along with any additional suggestions and ideas, especially from the Swindon Salzgitter Twinning Association, that would contribute towards making the 40th Anniversary commemorations a success.
-

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon Salzgitter Town Twinning 40th Anniversary Arrangements

Town Twinning Network

Date: 8 October 2014

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 That the Council does not commemorate the 40th Anniversary celebrations and loses the opportunity to raise awareness of this important international link.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The indicative costs of holding the proposed events are detailed in Appendix A of this report. It is anticipated that the requested funding arrangements would contribute towards activities that would highlight the links between Swindon and Salzgitter. They would also enhance the reputation of Swindon as one of the fastest growing towns in the UK and benefit the tourist trade generated from the town's international links.
- 5.2 The Council has a budget of £3,000 for Mayoral twinning activities for 2014/15. It is anticipated that the budget for 2015/16 would be of a similar amount.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.3 Legal and human rights implications were fully taken into account in the preparation of this report and its recommendations are compatible with Convention rights..

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

- 5.4 This report has no specific implications relating to staff, sustainability, health, rural, crime and disorder.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.5 There are no specific links between Town Twinning and One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.6 The requirement for a Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been taken into account in the preparation of this report. It is not considered that there is a need to produce a full DIA in this case as the decision has no effect on any service provision.

Risk Management

- 5.7 A risk assessment has not been undertaken.
-

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon Salzgitter Town Twinning 40th Anniversary Arrangements

Town Twinning Network

Date: 8 October 2014

6. Consultees

- 6.1 The Board Director Resources (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

Swindon Salzgitter Town Twinning 40th Anniversary Arrangements

Town Twinning Network

Date: 8 October 2014

Appendix A

<u>Event</u>	<u>Indicative cost</u> <u>£</u>
German Style Market – Initial discussions held with inSwindon about the type of markets available including German food, Arts and craft and seasonal.	Potentially cost neutral
Display's in various town centre locations of material already available and held by the Council and Twinning Association, promoting the history and international links with Salzgitter. Locations could include - Brunel Plaza/Library/Museum/Civic Offices.	Potentially cost neutral – Officer time
Schools event – Concert and raising the awareness of the international link – Waiting for responses	
Youth Service led exchange – Waiting for a response	
Visit of Salzgitter delegation to Swindon to include a celebration dinner with an invite to the German Ambassador	330.00
to present a commemorative gift, such as a framed embroidered Coat of Arms.	250.00
Members visit to Salzgitter - To be funded from the Mayoral Town Twinning budget	1690.00
Media awareness campaign provided by Comms	Officer time only
12 months of German themed food events at Council offices – Possible ideas – throughout the coming year In House Catering would add a theme to the catering area (Hut 8) with some striking decoration to act as continual visual reminder of this significant year, linked in with German themed menu items running each month supported with events such as Cheese tasting with German regional cheeses, Cake tasting (superb chocolate) and bringing in	500.00

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon Salzgitter Town Twinning 40th Anniversary Arrangements

Town Twinning Network

Date: 8 October 2014

<p>some German branded soft drinks and snacks as a point of difference.</p> <p>Picking a good week in the summer In House Catering could host a German themed BBQ outside for the staff and invited guests.</p> <p>This can all be building up to a larger Oktoberfest event.</p> <p>Costs to the Council would include décor and point of sale over 52 weeks. Investment would be matched by In House Catering.</p>	
Support for Swindon/Salzgitter Link Association awareness, promotion and exchange	
Replacement plaque, currently commemorating the 20 th anniversary, on a wooden bench in the Town Gardens, Old Town.	160.00
Total funding required for Council promoted events	1240.00
Total Including Mayoral budget items	2930.00

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon Salzgitter Town Twinning 40th Anniversary Arrangements

Town Twinning Network

Date: 8 October 2014

DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR SALZGITTER VISIT – 2015

Appendix B

DATE	MORNING	LUNCH	AFTERNOON	EVENING
Wednesday			Guests arrive at airport; transfer from airport. Pick-up from West Swindon,	Free time with hosts
Thursday	Reception with Mayor(?) Exhibition at Central Library Unveil plaque on Library wall	Lunch with hosts	Visit Old Town Gardens Afternoon picnic with brass band concert Attach plaque to seat in gardens alongside the one commemorating 20 th anniversary	Welcome Meal at a local pub
Friday	Visit to Arkells Brewery with Mayor(?)	Lunch with hosts	Visit to local fire station	Free time with hosts
Saturday	Visit to Buscott Park and Coleshill with talk included	Lunch or picnic with hosts.	Free time with hosts	

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon Salzgitter Town Twinning 40th Anniversary Arrangements

Town Twinning Network

Date: 8 October 2014

	MORNING		AFTERNOON	EVENING
Sunday	Visit local place of interest		Afternoon tea with entertainment at V&R's house	Free time with hosts
Monday	Hosts take guests to pick-up in Swindon. Travel by coach to Tyntesfield. Lunch Travel to Bristol and then back to Swindon Hosts take guests home			Free time with hosts
Tuesday	Visit Nova Hreod School for entertainment in German by pupils.	Lunch with hosts	Visit local club to take part in croquet or petanque	Free time with hosts
Wednesday	Talk by DEG to Thamesdown PROBUS about twinning with Swindon	Farewell lunch with PROBUS	Hosts drop guests off in West Swindon; transfer to airport. guests travel home to Salzgitter	

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Stuart Figini, Direct Dial 463612, sfigini@swindon.gov.uk.

Appendix A

<u>Event</u>	<u>Indicative cost</u> <u>£</u>
German Style Market – Initial discussions held with inSwindon about the type of markets available including German food, Arts and craft and seasonal.	Potentially cost neutral
Display's in various town centre locations of material already available and held by the Council and Twinning Association, promoting the history and international links with Salzgitter. Locations could include - Brunel Plaza/Library/Museum/Civic Offices.	Potentially cost neutral – Officer time
Schools event – Concert and raising the awareness of the international link – Waiting for responses	500.00
Youth Service led exchange – Waiting for a response	1500.00
Visit of Salzgitter delegation to Swindon to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a celebration dinner with an invite to the German Ambassador – 30 invites at £30 a head to present a commemorative gift, New Coat of Arms for Salzgitter Council 	900.00 200.00 500.00
Members visit to Salzgitter - To be funded from the Mayoral Town Twinning budget	2700.00
Media awareness campaign provided by Comms	Officer time only
Salzgitter visit to Swindon (Civic visit)	2800.00
12 months of German themed food events at Council offices – Possible ideas – throughout the coming year In House Catering would add a theme to the catering area (Hut 8) with some striking decoration to act as continual visual reminder of this significant year, linked in with German themed menu items running each month supported with events such as Cheese tasting with German regional cheeses, Cake tasting (superb chocolate) and bringing in some German branded soft drinks and snacks as a point of difference. Picking a good week in the summer In House Catering could host a German themed BBQ outside for the staff and invited guests. This can all be building up to a larger Oktoberfest event. Costs to the Council would include décor and point of sale over 52 weeks. Investment would be matched by In House Catering.	500.00
Support for Swindon/Salzgitter Link Association awareness, promotion and exchange	900.00

Swindon Salzgitter Website	100.00
New bench plaque in the Town Gardens, Old Town	300.00
GWR 175 Celebration (rail link) and joint celebrations at STEAM	To be identified
Oktoberfest as a German awareness event	To be identified
Total	10900.00

Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances - Recommendations 2015/16

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

Author:	Leader of the Council and Director of Law and Democratic Services
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To consider recommendations arising from a meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances.
- 1.2 The Cabinet is required to consider recommendations arising from a meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances and to make appropriate recommendations to the Council.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note and refer to the Council for determination the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances held on 6th October 2014, as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Note that the proposal of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances is that the -
 - 2.2.1 level of Councillors' Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2015/16 be indexed linked to the percentage increase in pay awarded to local authority staff nationally in the 2014/15 Pay Round, it being recognised that this is still to be agreed.
 - 2.2.2 Note that index linking can apply for three municipal years before any further review is undertaken of such linkage by an independent remuneration panel.

3. Detail

- 3.1 The Council is required by the Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 to consider the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel when making decisions relating to its Scheme of Councillors' Allowances. The Panel is recommending that there is a small increase in the level of Councillors Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for the next Municipal Year to reflect the % increase in pay awarded nationally to

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Willcox, Direct Dial Telephone Number (01793) 463601, Email: iwillcox@swindon.gov.uk.

Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances - Recommendations 2015/16

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

local authority staff for the 2014/15 Pay Round. It being recognised that this is still subject to determination at the national level.

- 3.2 The Panel wished to recommend this small increase as whilst it believed a full review of all Councillors' Allowances could not be justified at this time, it had concerns that the Council was increasingly falling behind in the terms of the value of its allowances as a result of year-on-year inflation and increases in allowances by other local authorities. It noted that there had been no increase in Swindon's Basic Allowance for five years.
- 3.3 The Council is not required to adopt all or any of the Panel's recommendations.
- 3.4 Decisions on the Scheme of Councillors' Allowances require the approval of the full Council.
- 3.5 The Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances was established in late 2001. Since that time the independent panel members have met regularly to consider various issues relating to Councillors' Allowances. The Panel is made up of six members independent of the Council. One each nominated by the Education, Business and Voluntary / Community sectors and three members appointed following public advertisement. There is currently one vacancy on the Panel.
- 3.6 The current membership of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councilors' Allowances is Revd. John Railton (Chair), Mr John Dernie, Ms Wendy Hall, Ms Jenny Newlyn, Mr Keith Strickland and Mr David Wilkie.
- 3.7 The Independent Remuneration Panel at its meeting on 6th October 2013 considered and made recommendations to the Cabinet and Council on a number of issues relating to Councillors' Allowances. These recommendations are set out in Appendix 1.
- 3.8 The Independent Remuneration Panel received a report providing an update on recent developments impacting on Council decision-making and on Councillors' and co-opted members roles and responsibilities. It in particular highlighted –
 - 3.8.1 The impact of changes to the roles and responsibilities of Councillors over the past twelve months.
 - 3.8.2 Government changes and proposed changes effecting Councillors access to the Local Government Pension Scheme and the taxation of Councillors' expenses.
 - 3.8.3 Issues to be taken into account in reviewing Councillors Allowances for 2015/16, including Council decision-making arrangements, the Council's financial position, the views of political group leaders, the progress of

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Willcox, Direct Dial Telephone Number (01793) 463601, Email: iwillcox@swindon.gov.uk.

Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances - Recommendations 2015/16

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

negotiations on the national pay award to local authority staff for the 2014/15 Financial Year and issues raised at the South West Independent Remuneration Panel Chairs and Advisors Meeting held in June 2014.

- 3.9 A copy of the report considered by the Independent Remuneration Panel is available on the Council's website. The minutes of the Panel's meeting and its recommendations are set out in Appendix 1.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 No alternative options are proposed. The Cabinet could decide not to support the Panel's recommendations or to put forward revised recommendations to the Council.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report at this stage.
- 5.2 The total allocation for Councillors' Allowances and support for 2014/15 is £658,000 (was £678,300 in 2013/14). From this, £439,480 is currently set aside for the payment of Councillors' Basic Allowances (£7,710.17x 57) with £219,200 (was £238,820 in 2013/14), made available for Mayoral Allowances, Special Responsibility Allowances, other Allowances (e.g. Travelling and Subsistence) as specified in the Scheme.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.3 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)

- 5.4 There are no specific other implications arising from this report at this stage.

Links to One Swindon, Strategic Objectives, Plans and Policies

- 5.5 There are no specific links.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.6 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has not been undertaken as the report does not make any recommendations or have implications that affect services.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Ian Willcox, Direct Dial Telephone Number (01793) 463601, Email: iwillcox@swindon.gov.uk.

Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillors' Allowances - Recommendations 2015/16

Cabinet

Date: 22nd October 2014

Risk Management

- 5.7 There are no specific risk implications. Decisions on Councillors' Allowances are often controversial in media terms and thus decisions may have a reputational risk for the Council.

6. Consultees

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

7. Background Papers

Report considered by the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillor Allowances at its meeting on 6th October 2014 This is available to all Councillors on the Council's Intranet and is available on request from the Report Author.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 –Recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Councillor Allowances held on 6th October 2014.

9. Key Decision/Decision in Forward Plan

- 9.1 This is not a Key Decision (as the Council is required to determine the Scheme of Councillors' Allowances) and is included in the Cabinet Forward Plan / work programme for October 2014.

INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL

MONDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2014

PRESENT:- Revd John Railton (Chair), Mr John Dernie, Ms Wendy Hall, Ms Jenny Newlyn, and Mr Keith Strickland

An apology for absence was received from Mr David Wilkie.

14. Minutes

Resolved – That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 October 2013 be confirmed.

15. Review of Members Allowances 2014

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report inviting the Panel to review the existing Scheme of Councillor's Allowances for Swindon and to recommend any changes for the 2015/16 Municipal Year.

Councillors Allowances 2014/15

The Panel noted that as a result of the national and local economic situation the Council had decided that there should be no increase in the level of Councillor's Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2014/15. This was the fifth year in which there had been no change in the level of Basic Allowance. The Council had also thanked the Panel for its diligent work.

Council Structure and Governance

The Panel noted that there had been no significant changes made to the structure and governance of the Council over the last twelve months. A new Overview and Scrutiny structure had been implemented with effect from June 2014 but this had had no impact on the number of Committees in place.

The Panel discussed the evolution of the Locality Panels and noted that, as each Panel operates uniquely, there is not enough standardisation across them to determine at this time if a special responsibility allowance would be appropriate for councillors serving on these bodies.

Review of Councillors Allowances for 2015/16

Mr Keith Strickland asked the Panel Members to note that he is in receipt of a Special Responsibility Allowance as an Independent Person of the Standards Committee. It was agreed that should this Allowance be discussed, Mr Strickland would vacate the room.

The Panel considered whether or not to undertake a full review of the Scheme of Allowances for 2015/16. It was noted that there were still significant budget constraints on Council spending, and that no re-structure had taken place which directly affected the role and responsibilities of councillors over the last year. The Panel expressed the view that it would be inappropriate to undertake a full review of all allowances at this time.

The Panel raised concerns that the Council was increasingly falling behind in terms of the value of its Allowances as a result of year-on-year inflation and increases in

Allowances by other Local Authorities. As such, the Panel expressed the view that they wished to recommend to Cabinet and Council that there be a small increase in the level of Councillors Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for the next Municipal Year to reflect the % increase in pay awarded nationally to local authority staff for the 2014/15 Pay Round. It being recognised that this is still subject to determination at the national level.

Other Allowances

The Panel noted that the level of claims for Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Care Allowances had remained constant over the last twelve months and that there has been no change in the Inland Revenue Tax Thresholds for reimbursement. The Panel expressed the view that it was not necessary to undertake a full review of Councillors Travel, Subsistence and Dependent Care Allowances at this time.

Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Panel – Allowances

The Panel noted that it had not been possible to arrange a joint meeting with the Wiltshire Independent Remuneration Panel as agreed at the last meeting, and that no feedback had been received from them with regards to this Panel's recommendations for the level of Special Responsibility Allowances to be payable to Police and Crime Panel members. It was agreed not to pursue this point further at this time.

Councillor Pensions

The Panel noted that from 1 April 2014 the Regulations governing councillor's membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme had changed and that there was now no access to the Scheme for councillors. Councillors who were a member on 31 March 2014 may continue to accrue rights until the end of the term of office that the member was serving on 1 April 2014.

Councillors and the Taxation of Expenses

The Panel noted that the Government announced in July 2014 that councillors were no longer going to be taxed for their travel expenses. The HM Revenues and Customs Service was collecting information from local authorities to allow it to develop a proposed new policy as swiftly as possible, and this Panel would be updated as to what this would mean in practice for councillors as further information became available.

South West Independent Remuneration Panel Chairs Meeting

The Panel noted the topics discussed at the Annual Meeting of the South West Independent Remuneration Chairs and Advisors held on 3 June 2014 covering issues such as:

- How far the definition of what constitutes an 'Approved Duty' was stretched when a councillor attended a meeting that they were not a member of, and associated travel / subsistence / dependent care costs they could claim as a result.
- How reimbursement / allowances for IT was calculated and approved.
- The proposed new role to be given to Independent Remuneration Panels in relation to any action by a local authority to dismiss any of its Statutory Officers (Monitoring Officer, Head of Paid Service and Chief Financial Officer).
- Carers' Allowances, with particular reference to whether a councillor/member had or should be required to use/used a registered childminder.

- How Basic Allowances could be calculated.
- The recruitment of Independent Remuneration Panel Members.

The Panel expressed concern at the suggestion to involve Independent Remuneration Panels in the dismissal of Statutory Officers. It was agreed that this view be fed back to Graham Russell, the Chair of the South West Independent Remuneration Chairs and Advisors Group.

The Panel noted that Revd John Railton had decided to stand down as Chair and retire from the Panel. It also noted the recent recruitment process for a Panel vacancy that had taken place and that two excellent candidates had been interviewed. The Chair suggested that the Panel and the Council might wish to approach the recent interviewee for the vacant position, Mr Ram Thagarajah, with an invitation to join the Panel rather than for the Council to go through a further recruitment process.

It was agreed – That the Cabinet and the Council be recommended:

- i. That the level of Councillors' Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances for 2015/16 be indexed linked to the percentage increase in pay awarded to local authority staff nationally in the 2014/15 Pay Round, it being recognised that this is still to be agreed.
- ii. To note that index linking can apply for three Municipal Years before any further review is undertaken of such linkage by an Independent Remuneration Panel.

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