



SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
Municipal Year 2014/15

Thursday, 18 September 2014

**COUNCIL CHAMBER
CIVIC OFFICES
SWINDON**

10 September 2014

Dear Councillor,

Summons to attend Council Meeting

A MEETING of the **Council**, which you are requested to attend, is to be held at the CIVIC OFFICES, SWINDON, on **Thursday, 18 September 2014 at 7.00 p.m.**

The business to be transacted will be as follows:-

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Communications**
To receive any communications or letters which the Mayor or Chief Executive may have to bring before the Council.
- 3. Minutes** (Pages 1 - 6)
To receive the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 4. Declarations of Interest**
Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

5. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below.

6. Minutes for Confirmation (Pages 7 - 10)

(1) To consider Minutes for Confirmation from Cabinet:

- Minute 18(6) – Budget Management 2014/15.
- Minutes for Confirmation arising from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 10th September 2014. (Minutes to follow under separate cover.)

(2) To consider Minutes for Confirmation from the Licensing Committee:

- Minute 15 – Revision of Street Trading Policy.
- Minute 17 – Adoption of Consolidated Skin-Piercing Byelaws.

(3) To consider a Minute for Confirmation from the Audit Committee:

- Minute 9(2) – Terms of Reference and Work Plan.

7. Motions

(a) Motion - Averies Waste Site

(i) Councillor John Haines will move and Councillor Dale Heenan will second:

“This Council requests that:

(1) The Leader of the Council, with the Director of Law and Democratic Services, investigates all additional legal and regulatory avenues that might enable the Averies site to be closed down and for the principle of the polluter pays to apply.

(2) The Leader of the Council, with the Director of Law and Democratic Services, and the Borough’s two Members of Parliament, to examine all legislative means to allow the Council to assume the regulatory function of such sites. This will allow better coordination with local planning, environmental health, and new regulatory powers on scrap metals.”

(ii) Councillor Mark Dempsey will move and Councillor Joe Tray will second:

“This Council resolves to organise a special scrutiny led inquiry into the Averies Waste Fire. This inquiry will be undertaken by the Council’s Scrutiny Committee. Representatives of the Council, the Environment Agency, Health authorities and the Fire Service should be called to provide evidence. The inquiry should commence immediately and provide a report to be debated at Council in January 2014. The inquiry should investigate:

- How the Averies site was allowed to get into the state it did.
- How the emergency was handled.
- Why the Groundwell Park and Ride site was proposed and why the powers to force Averies to move waste to a proper waste management facility were not used earlier.

- Lessons for communicating and providing accurate information to the public and ward members.
- Whether there are lessons for national policy including the planning system and Environment Agency Permitting System.
- Whether there was any damage caused to the health of residents and workers in the affected area.
- Lessons for the Fire Service's Code of Practice in managing fires at waste facilities.
- What actions are needed to make sure a problem like this should not happen again in Swindon."

(b) **Motion - Police Community Support Officers**
Councillor Carol Shelley will move and Councillor Peter Watts will second:

"This Council notes the car parking issues that have arisen around some of the Borough's schools. This has led to at times it being unsafe for pedestrians and also problems for residents living near to the schools who find they are not able to move their own vehicles during these times.

This Council recognises that there is no simple solutions to the problem of parking in and around some schools and recognises the strategies and work that schools have already done to alleviate the problem. This Council further recognises that schools need support from the Council in solving the on-going parking issues through Traffic Regulation Orders and an increased ability to enforce existing Traffic Regulation Orders.

This Council recognises it does not have enough traffic enforcement officers to make a meaningful impact in enforcing existing parking regulations. This Council believes that granting Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) the powers to enforce Council parking regulations would enable more visibility and more flexibility to respond quickly to the needs of residents living in neighbourhoods near to schools.

The Council requests that the Leader of the Council write to the Wiltshire Police and Crime Commissioner communicating the Council's interest in granting PCSOs the powers to enforce parking regulations. Council also requests the Cabinet Member for Highways to bring a report to Cabinet with further detail on how PCSOs can be granted new powers to enforce council parking regulations and how PCSOs could work with existing council parking enforcement officers."

(c) **Motion - Children's Centres**
Councillor Cindy Matthews will move:

"Council notes the concerns of some parents over the proposed closure of some of Swindon's Children's Centres and it believes that these centres should remain open for many reasons, including:

- Children's Centres have been working energetically to engage vulnerable groups, and many of these families will not be amenable to other mainstream services.
- The Council's figures show that there will be virtually as many

vulnerable children unable to access a Children's Centre in the future than able to access them in the Children's Centres being retained, with 1759 vulnerable children not having access to a Children's Centre.

- Referrals to Children's Social Care have increased by 38% in the past year, with 45% more children subject to child protection plans. This suggests a need to keep as much early intervention assistance as possible, which Children's Centres offer.
- Children's Centres act as a tool for the Council to prevent at an early stage families finding themselves in a situation where the Council needs to take Children in to Care. It costs the Council on average between £23,000 and £56,000 per annum for every child brought in to care.

Council notes that the Children's Centres consultation runs until the 3rd October. Council urges the Cabinet to take full account of the views of those responding and to show that consultations are meaningful by reviewing its proposals accordingly."

8. Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Governance (Pages 11 - 34)

The Cabinet Minute relating to this report will be circulated under separate cover.

9. Minutes of Cabinet and Decisions Delegated to Cabinet Members (Pages 35 - 48)

Members have the opportunity to raise questions with the relevant Cabinet Member in respect of Cabinet minutes (which are not reserved for Council for decision) and in respect of individual Cabinet Member delegated decisions.

10. Minutes of other Council Bodies

Members have the opportunity to raise questions with the relevant Chair in respect of all other Committee minutes (not reserved to Council for decision), as set out in the Minute Book circulated separately.

11. Councillors Question Time

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

Yours faithfully

Director of Law and Democratic Services

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

Swindon Borough Council 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://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

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.

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COUNCIL

THURSDAY, 17 JULY 2014

PRESENT:- The Worshipful The Mayor in the Chair; Councillors Junab Ali, Steve Allsopp, Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Ray Ballman, Andrew Bennett, Alan Bishop, Michael Bray, Wayne Crabbe, Mark Dempsey, Oliver Donachie, Mark Edwards, Toby Elliott, Emma Faramarzi, Fionuala Foley, Brian Ford, Mary Friend, Jim Grant, John Haines, Neil Heavens, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Richard Hurley, Colin Lovell, Mary Martin, Nick Martin, Cindy Matthews, Brian Mattock, Gemma McCracken, Des Moffatt, Derique Montaut, Stan Pajak, Maureen Penny, Garry Perkins, David Renard, Ann Richards, James Robbins, Eric Shaw, Kevin Small, Timothy Swinyard, Vera Tomlinson, Joe Tray, Steve Wakefield, Nadine Watts, Peter Watts, Steve Weisinger, Keith Williams, Robert Wright and Julie Wright.

23. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Baker, Roderick Bluh, Kevin Parry, Nicky Sewell, Carol Shelley and Dave Wood.

24. Communications

The Chief Executive reported that no communications had been received.

25. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd July 2014, be confirmed and signed.

26. Declarations of Interest

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

In accordance with the Code of Conduct Councillor Steve Wakefield made a personal declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item 6 (Options Appraisal – Leisure Commissioning) as he was a Haydon Wick Parish Councillor.)

27. Public Question Time

Mr Barrie Thompson submitted written questions regarding dementia awareness and staff training for dealing with dementia problems. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Mr Barrie Thompson asked a supplementary question regarding making Swindon a dementia friendly community. The Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care responded at the meeting.

Ms Linda Kasmaty submitted written questions concerning the Croft Sports Centre Car Park. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Mr Neil Hopkins submitted written questions regarding Twigmarket's finances and its operation of Council leisure facilities. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Mr Neil Hopkins asked a supplementary question regarding access to Twigmarket's accounts prior to it being added to the shortlist for leisure facilities operators. The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services responded at the meeting.

Mrs Kareen Boyd submitted written questions regarding leisure facility lease variations. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Mrs Kareen Boyd asked a supplemental question seeking clarification as to whether all Councillors saw the variation to the Oasis Leisure Centre lease to Moirai prior to changes being agreed. The Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills responded at the meeting.

Ms Susanne Webb submitted written questions concerning the Croft Sports Centre Car Park. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Ms Susanne Webb asked a supplementary question seeking clarification on responsibility for the maintenance of the Croft Sports Centre Car Park under the proposed contract. The Cabinet member for Corporate and Leisure Services responded at the meeting.

Mrs Margaret Cooney submitted written questions regarding the variations to the Oasis Leisure Centre lease to Moirai. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Mrs Jane Milner-Barry submitted written questions regarding the Options Appraisal Report for Leisure Services and the purchase of land at Broome Manor Golf Course. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Mrs Jane Milner-Barry asked a supplemental question on the relocation of leisure facilities. The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services responded at the meeting.

Mr Christopher Hawkins submitted written questions regarding variations to the proposed Croft Sports Centre lease. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Mr Christopher Hawkins asked a supplemental question regarding variations to the proposed Croft Sports Centre lease. The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services responded at the meeting.

Mr Des Morgan submitted written questions regarding Broome Manor Golf Course actual full year expenditure and income. A written response was tabled at the meeting.

Dr Chris Barry submitted a written question regarding a Cabinet Member Briefing Note on the Council's website. The Leader of the Council responded at the meeting.

Mr Colin Doubleday asked a public question regarding the Croft Sports Centre Car Park. The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services responded at the meeting.

Mr Colin Doubleday asked a supplemental question regarding the future use of the Croft Sports Centre Car Park. The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services responded at the meeting.

Mr Richard Symmonds asked a public question regarding comments from the previous Leader of the Council in respect of income generation and how this tied in with the Leisure Services Options Appraisal. The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services responded at the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services answered a public question regarding local opposition to the inclusion of Croft Fields in any lease agreed under the Leisure Services Options Appraisal.

28. Options Appraisal - Leisure Commissioning

The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Leisure Services and the Board Director, Service Delivery submitted a joint report concerning the implementation of the next stage of the Leisure and Culture Commissioning Change Programme in respect of the Council's leisure and golf facilities, that would ensure the most viable option for continued delivery of a sustainable provision within the Borough, and the results of additional consultation and engagement.

The Mayor drew Members' attention to Minute 21 of Council (Petition on the future of the Croft Playing Fields) set out on pages 2 and 3 of the agenda papers.

Councillor Keith Williams moved and Councillor David Renard seconded:

"That Minutes 5(2) to (10) of the Cabinet (Options Appraisal – Leisure Commissioning) be confirmed and adopted."

Councillor Jim Grant moved and Councillor Jim Robbins seconded that the Motion be amended to read:

"This Council notes the recommendations of Cabinet to grant to external operators a lease of specified leisure and golf facilities and resolves to exclude from any lease the following:

- Broome Manor and Highworth Golf Courses.
- Croft Playing Fields and the Croft Sports Centre Car Park.
- The Haydon Centre.

Council instructs the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Leisure to work with Haydon Wick Parish Council on a detailed business plan for the Haydon Centre to be leased to the Parish Council to enable them to take over the operations of that facility."

The amendment was put to the vote and declared lost.

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

A formal division was requested in accordance with Standing Order 14(2).

Members voting for the motion were Councillors Andrew Bennett, Alan Bishop, Mick Bray, Wayne Crabbe, Oliver Donachie, Mark Edwards, Toby Elliot, Emma Faramarzi, Fionuala Foley, Brian Ford, Mary Friend, Brian Ford, John Haines, Dale Heenan, Russell Holland, Richard Hurley, Colin Lovell, Mary Martin, Nick Martin, Brian Mattock, Gemma McCracken, Maureen Penny, Garry Perkins, David Renard, Eric Shaw, Tim Swinyard, Vera Tomlinson Steve Weisinger and Keith Williams.

Members voting against the motion were Councillors Junab Ali, Steve Allsopp, Abdul Amin, John Ballman, Ray Ballman, Mark Dempsey, Jim Grant, Neil Heavens, Fay Howard, Cindy Matthews, Des Moffatt, Derique Montaut, Teresa Page, Stan Pajak, Ann Richards, Jim Robbins, Kevin Small, Joe Tray, Steve Wakefield, Nadine Watts, Peter Watts, Bob Wright and Julie Wright.

(Councillor Steve Wakefield made a personal declaration of interest in respect of the above item as he was a Haydon Wick Parish Councillor.)

29. Minutes for Confirmation

Councillor Vera Tomlinson moved and Councillor Eric Shaw seconded:

“That Minute 11 of the Licensing Committee (Scheme of Delegations – Amendments and Updates) be confirmed and adopted.”

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

30. Motion - Motor Neurone Disease Charter

Councillor Ray Ballman moved and Councillor Brian Mattock seconded:

“This Council recognises that some people in the Borough suffer from the rapidly progressive, disabling and terminal Motor Neurone Disease (MND).

This Council notes that the national Motor Neurone Disease Charter led by the Motor Neurone Disease Association has received more than 16,000 signatures and it is intended to be presented to the Government before the 2015 General Election. The 5 points of the Charter are:

1. People with MND have the right to an early diagnosis and information.
2. People with MND have the right to access quality care and treatments.
3. People with MND have the right to be treated as individuals and with dignity and respect.
4. People with MND have the right to maximise their quality of life.
5. Carers of people with MND have the right to be valued, respected, listened to and

well supported.

This Council recognises that it has a role to play in supporting sufferers of this condition whether it be from its adult social care services, housing adaptations or support for carers and believes that by supporting and signing this charter, it shows Council's commitments to supporting sufferers of this disease.

This Council requests the Leader of the Council to sign the charter on behalf of Swindon Borough Council."

The Motion was put to the vote and unanimously agreed.

31. Motion - Houses in Multiple Occupation

Councillor Bob Wright moved and Councillor Steve Allsopp seconded:

"This Council notes that in some areas of the Borough, a reliance on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) as low cost housing has led to safety issues in many of those homes and squalid living conditions. On top of this many of the HMOs in the Borough can be poorly managed and maintained.

Council believes it should have greater powers to ensure that all HMOs provide decent living conditions for tenants living within them. This Council notes the HMO licensing scheme administered by Oxford City Council which aims to protect the health, safety and welfare of all tenants in HMOs as well as improving the quality of the HMO housing rental stock.

This Council requests the Cabinet Member for Housing to bring a report to Cabinet detailing how the Council can apply the HMO licensing model run by Oxford City Council for the Swindon Borough."

With the agreement of the mover and seconder the amendment was amended to read:

"This Council requests the Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety to include consideration of the HMO licensing module run by Oxford city council in the draft Housing Strategy."

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

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

32. Appointments to Committees and Appointment of Chairs

Councillor David Renard moved and Councillor Brian Mattock seconded:

"(1) That Councillor Kevin Parry replace Councillor Maureen Penny as a Member serving on the Streetsmart and Highways Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(2) That Councillor Kevin Parry replace Councillor Maureen Penny as Chair of the Streetsmart and Highways Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(3) That Councillor Alan Bishop replace Councillor Kevin Parry as a Member serving on the Health, Adults and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(4) That Councillor Maureen Penny replace Councillor Kevin Parry as Chair of the Health, Adults and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee."

The Motion was put to the vote and declared carried.

33. Minutes of Cabinet and Decisions Delegated to Cabinet Members

The Council considered (a) the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 19th March, 23rd April and 25th June 2014, and (b) questions to the Cabinet Members regarding their portfolio responsibilities and answers received.

34. Minutes of other Council Bodies

The Council (a) received the minutes set out in the "Minutes of Other Council Bodies" circulated with the Agenda together with the tabled minutes of the meeting of the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority dated 12th June 2014, and (b) considered questions to Chairs relating to the work of their Committees and other bodies and answers received.

35. Councillors Question Time

The Director of Law and Democratic Services reported that Standing Order 15 questions had been received from Councillors Junab Ali and Steve Allsopp.

Councillor Steve Allsopp asked a supplementary question regarding issues relating to parking at Primary schools when parents collected their children. The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport responded at the meeting.

COUNCIL

18th SEPTEMBER 2014

MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY 2014

18. Budget Management 2014/15 (Minute (18(6)) for Confirmation)

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 May 2014, (b) issues impacting on the Council's finances, including (i) a loan request from Swindon Commercial Services (SCS) to enable the acquisition of a Can Baler, (ii) a proposed reduction in the maximum limit of the cashflow loan facility to Swindon Commercial Services Ltd. following the reintegration of Swindon Commercial Services (SCS) into the Council, and (iii) the funding of required works in Swindon Town Centre from available "one-off" resources, (c) a proposed change to the Council's Scheme of Delegations to enable the Board Director, Resources to submit external funding bids, (d) progress of the preparation of a revised Library Strategy, and (e) 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 success of the work being undertaken to deliver budget savings early for the next Financial Year and how this both strengthened the Council's financial position and provided capacity to fund the Council's on-going transformation.

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 a loan of £280,000 be made to Swindon Commercial Services Ltd to finance the purchase and installation of a can baler for its Recycling facility as referred to in paragraph 6 of the joint report.

(4) That the maximum limit of the cashflow loan facility to Swindon Commercial Services Ltd be reduced from £2.25m to £1.25m as referred to in paragraph 6 of the joint report.

(5) That the sum of £88,000 be approved for the deep clean and seal of surfacing in Swindon Town Centre, as referred to in paragraph 7 of the joint report, to be funded from one-off resources.

(6) That the Council be recommended that –

(a) the Board Director, Resources be authorised to

(i) submit applications for external funding which would further the Council's strategic objectives, and

- (ii) **accept the award of external funding which further the Council's strategic objectives, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member,**

- (b) **the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised to amend the Scheme of Delegation accordingly.**

(7) That the proposed work to be undertaken on a detailed needs assessment of the Library service following recent consultation feedback associated with the preparation of a revised Library Strategy, as referred to in paragraph 9 of the joint report, be noted.

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

LICENSING COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 13 AUGUST 2014

15. Revision of Street Trading Policy

The Council's Licensing Officer submitted a report setting out proposed revisions to the Council's Street Trading Policy and in particular permitting music to be played during street markets organised by InSwindon on behalf of this Council.

Resolved – That Council be recommended to approve and adopt the revised Street Trading Policy, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report of the Council's Licensing Manager.

17. Adoption of Consolidated Skin-piercing Byelaws

The Council's Licensing Manager submitted a report setting out proposals to revoke existing Swindon Borough Council Byelaws relating to Acupuncture and Tattooing and to replace them with the Department of Health's model consolidated Byelaw relating to Acupuncture, Tattooing, Semi-Permanent Skin Colouring, Cosmetic Piercing and Electrolysis.

Resolved – (1) That Council be recommended to:

- (a) subject to (b) below, approve that it revokes the existing Swindon Borough Council Byelaws relating to Acupuncture and Tattooing (Appendices A and B of the Licensing Manager's report);**
- (b) approve, adopt and affix the Council's common seal to the Byelaw on Acupuncture, Tattooing, Semi-Permanent Skin Colouring, Cosmetic Piercing and Electrolysis set out in Appendix C to the Licensing Manager's report; and**
- (c) authorise the Director of Law and Democratic Services to carry out the necessary procedure to apply to the Secretary of State for the confirming of the Byelaw.**

AUDIT COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 15 JULY 2014

9. Audit Committee: Terms of Reference and Work Plan (Minute For Confirmation)

The Committee received a report of the Head of Internal Audit on the Audit Committee's terms of reference, revised to accommodate changes necessitated by updated CIPFA guidance regarding local authority audit committees, set out in their publication *Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police*, and details of the Committee's draft work programme for 2014/15.

Resolved – (1) That the revised terms of reference and work programme, appended to the report, be approved.

(2) That the Council be recommended that the Constitution be amended to accommodate any specific changes resulting from the revisions to the Audit Committee's terms of reference.

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Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Governance

Cabinet

Date: 10th September 2014

Council

Date: 18th September 2014

Author:	Leader of the Council Head of Economy & Skills
Wards:	All
Locality Affected:	All
Parishes Affected:	All

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to introduce a proposed governance structure within the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) which will provide a robust platform on which to develop, assess and deliver the projects outlined in the Growth Deal and funded by the Local Growth Fund (LGF).
- 1.2 The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (the SWLEP) has secured £12m for 2015/16 from the LGF and indicatively a further £117m up to 2020/21 for delivery of capital projects subject to further LGF bidding rounds. As allocations have been made to the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) rather than to the individual authorities, a governance mechanism is required to ensure accountability and robust reporting; a proposal has been developed by the SWLEP Secretariat for agreement by the SWLEP Board.
- 1.3 The proposals in this report will contribute to three of Swindon Borough Council's corporate objectives, namely: Work with residents to create well cared for neighbourhoods; Right skills, right jobs, in the right places; and Make best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council.
- 1.4 The report sets out the governance structure which will strengthen the democratic accountability of the SWLEP by demonstrating transparency supported by a robust joint scrutiny function which will be managed by Swindon Borough Council.
- 1.5 At the time of writing this report, Swindon Borough Council has requested an amendment to the draft terms of reference of the JSEC to the effect that as the terms of reference are guided by the Constitution of Wiltshire Council, if Wiltshire Council proposes to change its Constitution, then Swindon Borough Council will be consulted. A verbal update will be provided at the Cabinet meeting

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Philippa Venables, Telephone: 07824 550469, PVenables@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Governance

Cabinet
Council

Date: 10th September 2014

Date: 18th September 2014

2. Recommendations

Council and Cabinet are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note and agree 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.
- 2.2 Approve the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Governance Structure as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Authorise the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Head of Economy and Skills 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.
- 2.4 Note that the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise partnership (SWLEP) is proposing the creation of three new posts but that there will be no financial implications for Swindon Borough Council (SBC).

3. Detail

Background

- 3.1 Building on the approach set out in the Local Growth White Paper (October 2010), LEPs have been central to the vision to give local leaders the resources to stimulate growth. This includes local retention of business rates, establishing Enterprise Zones and introducing the Regional Growth Fund and Growing Places Fund. Since 2011 the Government has also been negotiating City Deals with LEPs to unlock growth further. The Government's response to Lord Heseltine's review ("No Stone Unturned in Pursuit of Growth") was to negotiate a Growth Deal with every LEP to build on the success of the City Deals.
- 3.2 Through Growth Deals, LEPs were expected to show commitment to the growth agenda through the development of multi-year Strategic Economic Plans. This would include a bid for a Local Growth Fund allocation for the period 2015 to 2021. Alongside the Local Growth Fund, every LEP was given responsibility for drawing up investment plans for over £5 billion of European Structural and Investment Funds for England for the period 2014-2020.
- 3.3 The Governance and Delivery paper outlines the content of a submission made in response to government feedback on the SWLEP Strategic Economic Plan

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Philippa Venables, Telephone: 07824 550469, PVenables@swindon.gov.uk.

Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Governance

Cabinet

Date: 10th September 2014

Council

Date: 18th September 2014

(SEP)¹. This additional submission (Appendix 1) forms part of the Growth Deal and confirms the steps that the SWLEP will take to put effective governance and delivery arrangements in place. It is presented to the LEP Board for approval on 9th September 2014.

Overview

- 3.4 The arrangements will provide the decision making process with support, scrutiny and partnership development between the two Unitary Authorities. They will bring together the knowledge and experience of democratically elected Councillors and executive officers to carry out the functions of a Joint Strategic Economic Committee (JSEC). (See Fig 1, Appendix 1).
- 3.5 The arrangements have been developed by the Secretariat which continues to be the key source of advice to the LEP; this comprises the SWLEP Director and the two Directors responsible for economic development in each of the two Unitary Authorities.

Joint Strategic Economic Committee (JSEC)

- 3.6 The JSEC will comprise Elected Members from each Authority plus member of the SWLEP Board. The primary tasks of the JSEC will be to:
- 3.6.1 Act as a single voice for Local Government in Swindon and Wiltshire in relation to the delivery of the SEP and Local Growth Deals
- 3.6.2 Facilitate and enable collaboration between the two Unitary Authorities on economic development and related matters
- 3.6.3 Provide local democratic accountability for the delivery of the SEP and the use of public resources to fund the implementation of the SEP and Local Growth Deals
- 3.6.4 Act as a formal link between Local Government and the LEP.
- 3.7 Appendix 1 sets out full details of membership and more detail on this and other groups within the structure.
- 3.8 Except as otherwise provided, meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of procedure in Part 4 of Wiltshire Council's Constitution. As this is a joint committee, Swindon Borough Council would expect to be consulted in the

¹ <http://www.swlep.biz/resources/document635349836561033846.pdf>

Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Governance

Cabinet

Date: 10th September 2014

Council

Date: 18th September 2014

event of any changes to Wiltshire Council's constitution as it affects the operation of this committee.

SWLEP Commissioning Group

- 3.9 The Commissioning Group will comprise LEP Board Members and Chief Executive and Corporate Director of Swindon and Wiltshire respectively. This group will be accountable to both the JSEC and the SWLEP Board and will have responsibility for advising the SWLEP Board on future Growth Deal propositions. The group will also receive bi-monthly reports on the status of each project from the relevant programme managers. The Commissioning Group will ensure that:
- 3.9.1 The arrangements put in place conform to legal requirements with regard to freedom of information, equalities, the environment and other matters.
 - 3.9.2 Public funds are used appropriately
 - 3.9.3 There is independence between the scheme promoter and the decision making body in order to avoid conflict of interest
 - 3.9.4 Official records of proceedings relating to the investment decisions are maintained
 - 3.9.5 Regular progress reports and updates are scheduled with appropriate Government teams.
- 3.10 The Commissioning Group will use best practice to establish a common performance management framework for the Local Growth Fund projects and ensure it operates across both Unitary Authorities.

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task Group

- 3.11 This Group will act as a critical friend, developing an overview of strategies and plans and providing independent scrutiny of the work of the SWLEP Board and JSEC and comprises four elected Councillors from each of the two Unitary Authorities. In order to maintain appropriate separation of responsibilities, it is proposed that Swindon Borough Council will assume the management of the joint scrutiny process, whilst Wiltshire Council acts as the accountable body for the LEP.

SWLEP Joint Planning Working Party

- 3.12 The existing Joint Planning Working Party will be strengthened and will develop a collaborative approach to spatial planning for the two Councils, in particular

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Philippa Venables, Telephone: 07824 550469, PVenables@swindon.gov.uk.

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addressing planning for the longer term growth of Swindon and its environs. In addition, the two Unitary Authorities will adopt a joint approach to the duty to cooperate with neighbouring councils.

Subgroups and the Local Transport Body

- 3.13 It is proposed that the Local Transport Body (LTB) should become a Local Transport Subgroup of the SWLEP Board. Its role would be to advise the SWLEP on transport issues, including proposed schemes and relative priority and progress with the delivery of existing schemes. Responsibility for the final sign-off of transport schemes would sit with the SWLEP Board on the basis of recommendations from the Subgroup. The Department for Transport (DfT) will be consulted on this and it is proposed that the existing LTB assurance framework is used.

SWLEP Delivery and Performance Team

- 3.14 This has been established to lead the programme management activities of the Growth Deal. It forms the key reporting mechanism on progress, risks, issues and benefits and will provide bi-monthly highlight reports to the Commissioning Group. The team will also provide the SWLEP Board with information and detail relating to future schemes and negotiations.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 As the SEP and bid for Local Growth Fund was agreed by the Council's Special Committee on behalf of the Council on 24th March 2014 (Minuten26, 2013/14) then this is the only agreed route to this funding source.
- 4.2 Robust and accountable delivery and governance arrangements between the two Councils and the SWLEP are a condition of continued receipt of these funds and as such there are no alternative options.

5. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The cost of implementing this governance structure is essentially existing officer and Member time spent preparing for and attending meetings and can therefore be met from existing budgets. There will be minor increases to transport costs recognising that some meetings will be outside Swindon.
- 5.2 The Growth Deal sets out a clear framework for investment which is necessary in order to enable economic growth in Swindon and Wiltshire. In developing propositions brought forward to the SWLEP Board for review, a cycle of project

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development and benefits assessment will be carried out to ensure value for money. This process will be carried out in line with the processes and methodology for appraising and evaluating projects as set out in HM Treasury's "The Green Book".

- 5.3 Where possible existing Council staff and other resources will be deployed to support the delivery of the SEP and Local Growth Deal. Currently the SWLEP has three existing and funded posts employed by SWLEP through Wiltshire Council. In addition the SWLEP Board is asked on 9th September 2014 to approve a structure which includes three further posts covering business engagement, communications and policy. Precise details of the employment arrangements for these posts are to be clarified by the Secretariat and SWLEP Board. It is anticipated that these posts will be employed via Wiltshire Council on fixed term contracts and will not be based at Swindon Borough Council offices. There will be no financial implications for Swindon Borough Council.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.4 Legal and Human Rights considerations have been taken fully into account when 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)

- 5.5 No other implications – this report details governance arrangements for LEP funding. Programmes utilising these funds will be subject to individual approvals.

Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA)

- 5.6 A Diversity Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report as it details governance arrangements for LEP funding. Programmes utilising these funds will be subject to individual assessment.

Risk Management

- 5.7 Each programme manager will maintain a risk and issues register for ongoing monitoring of process and progress. A traffic light system reporting mechanism will be aligned to this register to identify serious issues and risks at the earliest possible stage. Risks will be duly escalated through the reporting structure.

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.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Philippa Venables, Telephone: 07824 550469, PVenables@swindon.gov.uk.

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7. Background Papers

7.1 None

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 - Growth Deal and Local Growth Fund Governance and Delivery Arrangements

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

9.1 This is not a Key Decision for the Cabinet as the governance structure requires Council approval. The item is included in the Cabinet Work Programme and Forward Plan for September 2014,

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Introduction

This paper outlines for the Board the content of a submission made to Government in response to feedback on our proposed governance arrangements as submitted in Section 6 of the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) in March 2014. This additional submission forms part of the Growth Deal and confirms the steps the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) will take to put effective governance and delivery arrangements in place. It was set out to demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that we are able to make difficult, robust, transparent value for money decisions and implement them. The note is structured around the headings in the Government's request for clarification and addresses the questions posed in that request but will be kept under review to ensure best practice is implemented.

Context

The draft Swindon and Wiltshire SEP submitted in December 2013, summarily described the approach to governance and delivery, with a commitment to further development of the proposals. The final version of our submitted SEP in March 2014 did contain more detail, including plans to develop the Joint Strategic Economic Committee and associated scrutiny arrangements and address the resourcing of the LEP.

While this progress was recognised by Central Government, both the formal and informal feedback from BIS has been that we need to further strengthen our arrangements. Our Growth Deal document states that:

“As part of the deal, the LEP will:

- ***Strengthen governance*** by ensuring appropriate governance structures, ensuring that investment decisions are robust and represent good value for money, ensuring delivery of agreed actions, clarifying how the Local Transport Body (LTB) role will be delivered within the LEP structure, and increasing collaboration and joint work between the Unitary Authorities.”

Clarifying and strengthening our arrangements will also help the Secretariat to take forward the further negotiations with Central Government to which the Board agreed at its July meeting. SWLEP awaits Central Government guidance on the expected role of the LTB and will ensure compliance with required arrangements.

Overview

We are working on arrangements that will provide a robust platform on which to develop, assess and deliver the projects outlined in our Growth Deal and funded by the Local Growth Fund (LGF). Collectively they provide the decision making process with support, scrutiny and partnership development between our two Unitary Authorities, bringing together the knowledge and experience of our democratically elected executive colleagues to carry out the functions of a Joint Strategic Economic Committee (JSEC). In addition, we are also

developing a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task Group formed of non-executive Councillors from both of our two Unitary Authorities. This will afford SWLEP the support of the elected Councillors and ensure democratic accountability.

These functions strengthen and support the abilities of the SWLEP Board who will remain the senior decision making body. The Chair, Vice Chair of SWLEP, Chief Executive Swindon Borough Council and Corporate Director Wiltshire Council will form a Commissioning Group supported by the SWLEP Secretariat who will be responsible for overseeing the delivery of the Growth Deal. The Commissioning Group will report directly to the SWLEP Board and the Joint Strategic Economic Committee on progress, issues and risks as well as present progress reports and recommendations to the SWLEP Board members.

In recognition of the advantages of joint working on spatial planning across the two Unitary Authorities, Swindon and Wiltshire Councils will strengthen further an existing Joint Working Party to take forward a collaborative approach to the development of strategic planning in the SWLEP area. This group will provide strategic analysis of spatial requirements to the SWLEP Board, based on the economic strategy of the LEP.

Structures and membership

Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board

The appointment of Barry Dennington to lead the Board of 14 members reflects HM Government's desire to ensure that business leaders are engaged and involved in setting local economic priorities. The SWLEP Board will remain the primary decision making body in taking the Growth Deal programme forward and will be supported by the SWLEP Secretariat and SWLEP staff described in more detail below.

The LEP Board has primary responsibility for:

- The development, review and refreshing of the Strategic Economic Plan;
- The successful and effective delivery of the SEP and the Local Growth Deal.

The Board will also have final responsibility for signing off transport schemes, on the basis of recommendations from the Local Transport Subgroup (please see section below on 'Subgroups and the Local Transport Body' for background detail).

The LEP Secretariat will develop the practical arrangements for this and suggest an amendment to the LEP Board's Terms of Reference as appropriate.

The SWLEP Board is constituted in such a way as to ensure that this process is business-led, with the active involvement of Local Government through the role of the Leaders of the two Unitary Authorities as Board members, the role of the Joint Strategic Economic Committee and the composition of the LEP Secretariat.

Joint Strategic Economic Committee

The formal Joint Strategic Economic Committee (JSEC) is set up under sections 101(5), 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and

Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions (England) Regulations 2012. The draft terms of reference that were included in our SEP are attached at Appendix 1. The latest version is attached at Appendix 2. We submitted to Government that this work would be completed by the end of June and thereafter, each Unitary Authority would take a formal decision to establish the JSEC. Government had noted that prior to these formal decisions, the JSEC had hoped to meet for the first time in shadow form in June 2014.

The membership of the JSEC will comprise six voting members, including the Elected Leader, Deputy Leader and the Cabinet Member holding the Economic Development Portfolio of each Unitary Authority. In addition, the Chair of the SWLEP and two other SWLEP Board members shall attend as non-voting members. In the event of any circumstance where the JSEC cannot reach agreement on an issue pertaining to the SEP, the issue in hand will be referred back to the SWLEP Board for review.

The JSEC will be Chaired by the Elected Leader of one of the Unitary Authorities and will rotate annually between Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council. The first Chair role will be held by Wiltshire Council.

The SWLEP Board were asked to formally welcome the establishment of the JSEC at its July meeting.

The primary tasks of the Joint Strategic Economic Committee will be to:

- Act as a single voice for Local Government in Swindon and Wiltshire in relation to the delivery of the SEP and local Growth Deals;
- Facilitate and enable collaboration between the two Unitary Authorities on economic development and related matters;
- Provide local democratic accountability for the delivery of the SEP and the use of public resources to fund the implementation of the Strategic Economic Plan and Local Growth Deals (including supporting Wiltshire Council's role as the accountable body);
- Provide political oversight of the marshalling and co-ordination of Local Government's contribution to the delivery of the SEP and Local Growth Deals;
- Act as formal link between Local Government and the LEP.

The draft Terms of Reference have been amended to reflect these functions, as set out in Appendix 2.

The JSEC will operate as an open and transparent body and will be serviced by [Wiltshire Council's Democratic Services department] alongside Wiltshire Council as the delegated Accountable Body for the SWLEP. A key role of the JSEC will be to formally agree and sign off key decisions and actions within the agreed terms of reference in an open, transparent and publically accessible environment, subject to the statutory provisions on access to information in relation to confidential or exempt items of business. The JSEC will operate alongside the SWLEP Board. The papers of the JSEC will be made public in the same way

as many other Council Committee. This will again strengthen the public accountability element of the Growth Deal governance arrangements.

SWLEP Commissioning Group

We are creating a new Commissioning Group which will be tasked to ensure the effective delivery of the Growth Deal projects supported by the Local Growth Fund. The Commissioning Group will have a strategic oversight in ensuring the efficient delivery of the projects funded by the LGF and will be comprised of SWLEP Chair, Vice Chair, Chief Executive Swindon Borough Council and Corporate Director Wiltshire Council supported by the SWLEP Secretariat.

From time to time the Commissioning Group may co-opt other subject specialists into the Group to support and advise on specific areas of work.

This Commissioning Group will be accountable to both the JSEC and the SWLEP Board and will have responsibility for advising the SWLEP Board on future Local Growth Deal propositions supported by material provided through the officer support functions described below. We will further explore how this Commissioning Group aligns with governance arrangements being developed for the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) requirements.

The Commissioning Group will receive bi-monthly reports on the status of each project from the relevant Programme Managers. This mechanism will provide both timely updates to the governing structures of the Growth Deal whilst also ensuring information is distributed between the Commissioning Group, the JSEC and the SWLEP Board where relevant. The Commissioning Group will report to the SWLEP Board and JSEC, whose papers will be available to the public, providing a vehicle for transparency and wider public accountability. The Commissioning Group will ensure that:

- The arrangements put in place conform to legal requirements with regard to freedom of information, equalities, the environment and other matters;
- Public funds are used appropriately;
- There is independence between scheme promoter and the decision making body in order to avoid conflict of interest;
- Official records of proceedings relating to the investment decisions are maintained;
- Regular progress reports and updates are scheduled with appropriate Government teams.

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task Group

We have recently established a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Task Group comprised of elected members from the two Unitary Authority overview and scrutiny functions. The Task Group will act as a critical friend, developing an overview of strategies and plans and providing independent scrutiny of the work of the SWLEP Board and JSEC, evaluating their activities from the perspectives of effectiveness, efficiency and efficacy.

The Task Group comprises four elected Councillors from each of the two Unitary Authorities, giving a full membership of eight. Terms of Reference for the group are currently being

developed and are due to be finalised at the Group's still to be scheduled first meeting (likely to be September 2014). In order to maintain appropriate separation of responsibilities, [Swindon Borough Council] will assume the management of the joint scrutiny process, whilst Wiltshire Council acts as the accountable body for the SWLEP.

SWLEP Joint Planning Working Party

Swindon and Wiltshire Councils are committed to further collaboration where it can add value to the businesses and residents of the area. This is particularly relevant to the joint approach to spatial planning between the two Unitary Authorities. The existing Joint Planning Working Party will be strengthened and will develop a collaborative approach to spatial planning for the two Councils, and address in particular, planning for the longer term growth of Swindon and its hinterland. In addition, the two Unitary Authorities will adopt a joint approach to the duty to cooperate with neighbouring councils in order to provide greater certainty for businesses and, as a consequence, confidence in the businesses to invest in the area.

The SWLEP Joint Planning Working Party will consider and advise the JSEC on cross-boundary issues related to the development and implementation of planning policy matters. It will undertake a joint study to inform the long term planning of West Swindon/North Wiltshire in the context of cross boundary issues, both within SWLEP and with adjacent LEPs. Further opportunities for collaboration will also be explored.

Subgroups and the Local Transport Body

The SWLEP Board has developed a number of functioning Subgroups that advise on specific areas of the business and plan to continue to utilise this resource where we can to develop further our existing programmes and to support any future programmes.

Subject to guidance and agreement from Department for Transport (DfT), we are proposing that the Local Transport Body should become a Local Transport Subgroup of the SWLEP Board. Its role would be to advise the SWLEP Board on transport issues, including proposed schemes and relative priority and progress with the delivery of approved/funded schemes. Responsibility for the final sign off of transport schemes would sit with the SWLEP Board on the basis of recommendations from the Subgroup. Public transparency of these projects would be through the JSEC. We are happy to confirm that:

- We will consult DfT on this proposal;
- We are committed to using the existing LTB assurance framework.

SWLEP Secretariat

The key source of advice to the SWLEP will continue to be the SWLEP Secretariat which comprises the SWLEP Director and the two Directors responsible for economic development in each of the two Unitary Authorities. Recognising the importance of this role, we previously commissioned a short development programme to enhance the effectiveness of the Secretariat and build capacity to support the SWLEP Board. Building on the process adopted during the SEP development, we will continue to convene a wider Officer Group

comprising staff from the two Unitary Authorities responsible for leading on different elements of the SEP.

Shared Intelligence, the consultants appointed to support the development and implementation of the Growth Deal, are providing support to the Secretariat and strengthening their joint working.

SWLEP Delivery and Performance Team

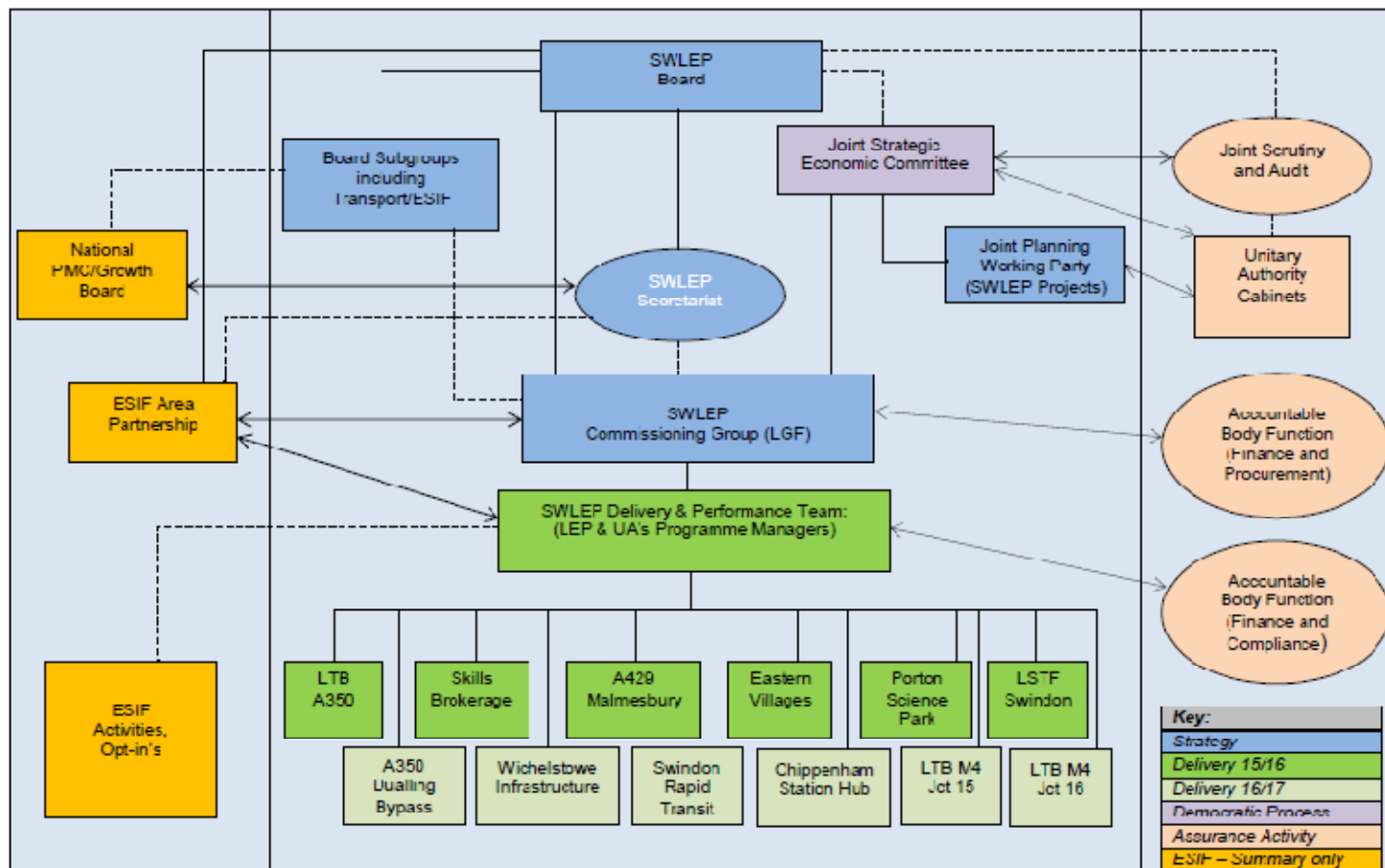
A Delivery and Performance Team has now been established to lead the Programme Management activities of the Growth Deal. It will be chaired by the SWLEP Director and will comprise a delegated Growth Deal Programme Manager from each of the Unitary Authorities and the SWLEP Programme Manager. In addition, relevant transport and economic development service leads or their nominees will attend the Team meetings held monthly. This Team forms the key reporting mechanism on progress, risks, issues and benefits realisation and will provide bi-monthly highlight reports to the Commissioning Group. The Team will also provide the SWLEP Board with information and detail relating to future schemes and negotiations.

The Commissioning Group will use best practice to establish a common performance management framework for the Local Growth Fund projects and ensure it operates across both Unitary Authorities.

Growth Deal and Local Growth Fund Governance and Delivery Arrangements



NB. Fig.1 below shows the full governance structure in diagrammatic form.



Ensuring value for money

Our Growth Deal sets out a clear framework for investment which is necessary in order to enable economic growth in Swindon and Wiltshire. We are putting in place arrangements to ensure that investment decisions are robust, evidence-based and transparent and represent good value for money.

In developing propositions brought forward to the SWLEP Board for review, an annual cycle of project development and benefits assessment will be carried out to ensure value for money is achieved. This process will be carried out in line with the processes and methodology for appraising and evaluating projects as set out in HM Treasury's 'The Green Book'. This will ensure that decisions taken by the SWLEP Board members are made in the knowledge of a well researched and developed evidence base and alongside robust quantified benefits appraisal, including benefit cost ratios.

For appraisal of future projects being brought forward through the Local Growth Deal process, the relevant Unitary Authority Growth Deal Programme Manager will oversee the development of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for each proposed project in the autumn prior to renewed negotiation the following spring. Each SOC will contain detail on each of the five cases proposed by the Green Book method, including:

- Overview and description of the project;
- Alignment to national, local and SWLEP policy, strategy and objectives;
- Thorough options analysis and development of the 'prioritised list';
- Economic assessment of benefits of each option;
- Development of a benefit cost ratio for the preferred option;
- Detail regarding procurement, partner commitment and thorough risk assessment;
- Breakdown of costs, committed funds (both private and public) and funding timescales;
- Detail regarding Project Management, communications strategy, project tolerances and governance recommendations.

The SOC will establish a sound platform on which strategic decisions can be made by the SWLEP Board members as recommended by the Commissioning Group, based on value for money, deliverability, strategic fit and benefits realisation. Once a decision has been made by SWLEP Board members each SOC will then be further developed into an Outline Business Case prepared for submission to HM Government as part of renewed negotiations.

We will continue to benefit from external assessment before submitting projects for funding from the Local Growth Fund in 2016-17 and beyond. In developing our SEP we convened a Star Chamber to review our draft set of projects. It included an independent appraisal expert, a transport adviser and colleagues from the HCA and SFA. We will convene a similar group at least once a year to act as an independent appraisal panel which will assess projects proposed for inclusion in our programme for future years.

All SWLEP programmes will be subject to the audit procedures of the two Unitary Authorities.

Resourcing the SWLEP

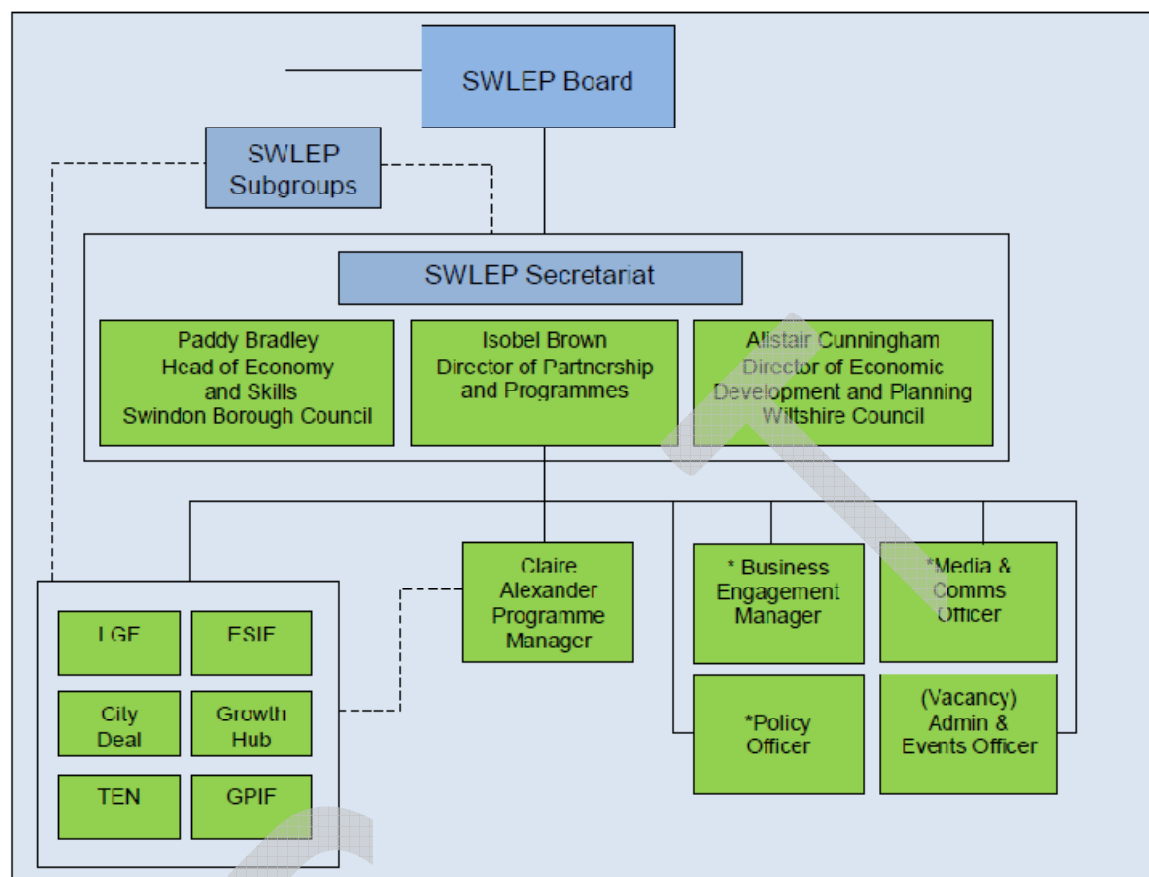
A key feature of our approach is the deployment of Council resources to support the delivery of the SEP and Local Growth Deal. We are also exploring the scope for private sector contributions but recognise the need to consolidate and extend the dedicated support available to the SWLEP in order to ensure the business of the SWLEP is well managed, that it receives appropriate advice and guidance, has the capacity to engage with business and is supported in its role as promoter of the Growth Deal and other economic development programmes.

Currently the LEP has three approved and funded posts but in order to deliver the full extent of the Growth Deal, the SWLEP Board will be asked at its September meeting to approve a structure which includes:

- A SWLEP Director;
- A Programme Manager (to be responsible for the delivery of the work programme as a whole and any projects which are not the responsibility of the two Unitary Authorities). Projects such as City Deal and BD-Net will have dedicated Project Managers appointed;
- A Business Engagement Officer (new post);
- A Communications Officer (new post);
- A Policy Officer (new post);
- An Executive Administrator/Events Officer.

Further information, including job descriptions and options for funding the additional three posts will be an addendum to this paper ahead of a subset of the Board meeting on 1st August.

NB. Fig.2 below shows the proposed LEP structure



Delivery, risk and accountability arrangements

The primary responsibility for ensuring effective delivery of the projects funded by the Local Growth Fund will lie with the two Unitary Authorities. Each project will have an identified Project Manager and each Council will appoint a Programme Manager with overall responsibility for the delivery of the projects for which the Council is responsible. The SWLEP's Programme Manager will have overall reporting responsibility for the Growth Deal and be responsible for projects where a particular Local Authority has not taken responsibility and agreement has been established by the Secretariat. A Project Manager will be identified for each of these projects.

A programme of project and programme management is currently being established and will be modelled on the robust programme management processes in place at the Unitary Authorities, using PRINCE2 programme management methodology.

Included within this structure are the following programme management functions:

- An overall project planner will be maintained by the SWLEP Programme Manager and this will cover the key reporting dates to the SWLEP Board and JSEC, as well as recording all major milestones relating to overall and specific project mobilisation.
- Regular programme meetings – carried out through the functions of the SWLEP Delivery and Performance Team. Monthly meeting.
- Highlight reports – highlight reports will be forwarded by each Programme Manager for the projects and programmes that they are responsible for. These will be made available bi-monthly and will be distributed to the SWLEP Commissioning Group. The Highlight reports will include updated risk register, issues register, budget performance, period progress and next period workload.
- Risk Register – each Programme Manager will maintain a weekly risk and issues register for ongoing monitoring of process and progress. A traffic light system reporting mechanism will be aligned to this register to identify serious issues and risks early.
- Each Project Manager will develop a project initiation document available to all stakeholders with a clearly articulated brief, outline business case, communications strategy and agreed project tolerances.
- Each Programme Manager will keep a monthly record of expenditure on each project and will report to the SWLEP Commissioning Group when tolerances are breached.
- The SWLEP Programme Manager will be responsible for collating bi-monthly performance information to provide assurance to the SWLEP Board using a series of consistent templates and records that will underpin the overall risk register.

ANNEX 1: JOINT STRATEGIC ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Swindon and Wiltshire Joint Strategic Economic Committee - Constitution: *revised terms of reference, membership and procedure rules.*

1. Purpose

To provide local democratic and financial accountability for the Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), the use of the Local Growth Fund (LGF) and other related funding streams.

2. Governance

- 2.1 The Swindon and Wiltshire Joint Strategic Economic Committee (JSEC) is established as a joint committee under sections 101(5), 102 of the Local Government Act 1972, section 9EB of the Local Government Act 2000 and Regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Arrangements for the Discharge of Functions (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 The JSEC comprises Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council as the two Unitary Authorities in the area covered by the Swindon and Wiltshire SEP.
- 2.3 Political proportionality rules do not apply to the JSEC as so constituted.

3. Functions

- 3.1 The functions delegated to the JSEC by the Unitary Authorities are as follows:
 - To act as a single voice for local government in Swindon and Wiltshire in relation to the delivery of the SEP and local Growth Deals;
 - To facilitate and enable collaboration between the two Authorities on economic development and related matters;
 - Provide local democratic accountability for the delivery of the SEP and the use of public resources to fund the implementation of the Strategic Economic Plan and Local Growth Deals (including supporting Wiltshire's Council's role as the accountable body);
 - Provide political oversight of the marshalling and co-ordination of Local Government's contribution to the delivery of the SEP and Local Growth Deals;
 - Act as formal link between Local Government and the LEP.

4. Membership

4.1 Membership of the JSEC shall comprise:

Voting:

a. 3 Executive members of each council to include;

- i. The Leader
- ii. Deputy Leader
- iii. Cabinet Member holding the portfolio which includes Economic Development

Non-voting

b. Chairman of the SWLEP plus two other SWLEP Board Members who are from the Business community.

4.2 Each Unitary Authority shall appoint a named substitute for each of the above voting members. The substitute member shall be a Cabinet Member of the Authority and shall have the same rights of speaking and voting at meetings as the member for whom the substitution is made.

4.3 Each member of the JSEC shall remain in office until removed or replaced by their appointing local Authority, the Leader of their Council or the SWLEP Board, as the case may be.

5. Voting

5.1 One member one vote for each Unitary Authority member.

5.2 Except as otherwise provided, any matter shall be decided by a majority of the votes of the voting members present.

However, In the event of any circumstance where the JSEC cannot reach agreement on an issue pertaining to the SEP, the issue in hand will be referred back to the SWLEP Board for review.

6. Quorum

6.1 The quorum for a meeting shall be four voting members, including at least one member from each council. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is

present. If a quorum ceases to be present during a meeting the meeting shall be adjourned to a date to be agreed or determined by the Chair.

7. Chair and Vice-Chair

- 7.1 The Chairmanship and Vice Chairmanship of the JSEC shall rotate annually between the Elected Leaders of each Council. If the Chair is not present at any meeting the Vice Chair will preside. If neither Leader is present the JSEC will elect a Chair for that meeting from those present.

8. Meetings

- 8.1 The JSEC shall meet quarterly and at such other times as may be agreed.
- 8.2 A meeting of the JSEC shall be convened by the Chair within twenty-eight days of the receipt of a written request of any two voting members addressed to the secretary to the JSEC. No business other than that specified in the request shall be transacted at that meeting.
- 8.3 The agenda and supporting papers shall be circulated electronically to the members of the JSEC at least 5 clear days before the meeting.
- 8.4 The agenda for any meeting shall be settled by the secretary in consultation with the Leaders of both Councils.
- 8.5 Where a member of the JSEC is unable to attend any meeting they shall arrange for their substitute to attend and inform the secretary of this as soon as possible before the meeting.
- 8.6 Except as otherwise provided, meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of procedure in Part 4 of Wiltshire Council's Constitution.

9. Access to Meetings and Information

- 9.1 The Access to information rules in Part 5 of Wiltshire Council's Constitution shall apply to proceedings of the JSEC.
- 9.2 Any Freedom of Information requests received by the JSEC shall be directed to the relevant Council to deal with in accordance with the relevant legislation. Where the request relates to both Councils they shall liaise with each other before responding to the request.

10. Hosting and Administration

- 10.1 Hosting of the JSEC shall be rotated between Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council. The secretary to the JSEC shall be from Wiltshire Council who will also provide support through the services of the Council's Director of Finance / Section 151 Officer and the monitoring officer/director of legal and governance.
- 10.2 The secretary shall keep a proper account of money received and expended on the administration of the JSEC and the costs incurred shall be shared equally between the two Councils.
- 10.3 Wiltshire Council shall be the Accountable Body for the purposes of the Growth Fund and other funding relating to the Swindon and Wiltshire SEP.

11. Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests

- 11.1 Members of the JSEC shall be subject to their own Council's Code of Conduct, including the rules on declaration of interests.

12. Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements

- 12.1 The decisions and business of the JSEC shall be subject to the overview and scrutiny functions of each Council and any joint overview and scrutiny arrangements agreed between the Councils.

13. Variation and Dissolution

- 13.1 The constitution of the JSEC may be varied or dissolved by the unanimous agreement of the voting members.

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CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY 2014

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

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Keith Williams.

Councillors Mark Dempsey, Cindy Matthews and Stan Pajak attended the meeting in respect of Minutes 17 and 23.

14. Declarations of Interest

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

Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills made a personal and prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of Agenda item 9 (Swindon Local Flood Risk Management Strategy) as he was the owner of a property within Swindon that had been subject to flooding.

15. Minutes

Resolved –That the minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

16. Public Question Time

The following questions were asked in accordance with Standing Order 28 –

Questioner

Mr Bob Buckley, Abbey Meads Primary School / Butterflies Children's Centre

Questions

Mr Buckley asked questions regarding the Council's proposals for the future of Children's Centres in Swindon, particularly concerning the definition of Multi-Generational Centres and how they would operate and the Council's advance knowledge earlier in the year of the likelihood that it would be required to make savings with the subsequent implications of this for staff employed in Children's Centres.

Response

The Chair thanked Mr Buckley for his questions and comments and advised that a response had been prepared and circulated at the meeting.

The Chair and Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, responded at the meeting to the questions.

Mr Buckley asked a supplementary question regarding the response provided and asked whether the recruitment that the Council was currently undertaking to a post associated with the monitoring of Children's Centres, could be

“ring fenced” to staff at risk of redundancy from Children’s Centres if the Council’s proposals were to proceed.

The Chair and Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, responded at the meeting to the supplementary question and comments.

Questioner

Mr Tim French, Cassan Road, Swindon

Question

Mr French asked a question regarding the possibility of the Council producing a calendar of events taking place across the Borough, as he had noticed that recently a number of different community and voluntary sector events were taking place on the same day across the Borough.

Response

The Chair thanked Mr French for his question. The Chair and Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport, responded at the meeting to the questions.

Questioner

Mr Terry Reynolds, Wheeler Avenue, Swindon

Questions

Mr Reynolds asked questions relating to outstanding responses to public questions he had asked the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Leisure, and regarding outstanding responses to a request for a copy of a report on a complaint made to the Standards Committee, and for a meeting with the Council’s Chief Executive.

Response

The Chair thanked Mr Reynolds for his questions and comments. The Chair, the Director of Law and Democratic Services and the Chief Executive responded at the meeting.

Questioner

Ms Hayley Jackson

Response

The Chair advised that as Ms Jackson was not present at the meeting to ask her questions he would arrange for a written response to be sent to the questions that she had provided advanced notice of concerning proposals for Children’s Centres.

17. Children's Centres Consultation

The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, the Board Director, Commissioning and the Head of Commissioning, Children and Adults submitted a joint report concerning proposed changes to the Children’s Centre service to focus better the service in the areas of the Borough with the highest number of vulnerable children and to contribute to required budget savings.

Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children’s Service, explained the background to the proposal to review Children’s Centre provision in Swindon.

She commented on the budget pressures the Council faced and the need for it to focus its limited resources in the most effective way to support the most vulnerable children. She referred to the implications of the proposals for children and their families and the Council's wish to explore innovative ways to build self-supporting communities and improve children's lives. She indicated her intention to add a further recommendation in support of this to consult on providing assistance to those Children's Centres that wished to explore other approaches to enable a continuation of their work. The Council was required to make difficult decisions and she believed that it was important for the Council to concentrate its limited resources in ways that directly supported the most vulnerable children and families in need of help. She highlighted the recruitment of additional Health Visitors and their important role in supporting children and their families. She commented on the role of Family Centres in supporting both children and families and how these could be expanded to provide wider and more specialised activities. She drew attention to the consultation process and the opportunity that this provided for communities and stakeholders to give their views on the proposals and the future approach. She noted that even before the consultation had begun she had been contacted by organisations with suggestions for future ways of providing a service.

Councillor Cindy Matthews, Opposition Group Spokesperson for Children's Services, explained her Group's opposition to the proposed closure of Children's Centres. She believed that although savings on Children's Centres would be achieved there was likely to be a far greater increase in social care costs overall as a result of the loss of provision. She asked whether the proposed consultation exercise would be meaningful and whether the Cabinet would act on the outcomes.

Councillor Foley responded and confirmed that she believed that the consultation on the proposals was both worthwhile and meaningful and she hoped that innovative solutions for the future of services would be identified at the end of the process.

Councillor Matthews drew attention to the success and effectiveness of Children's Centres and their establishment in every area of the Borough building on the success of the original Sure Start programme.

Councillor Foley acknowledged the excellent work being undertaken, but noted that sufficient Government and Council funding was not available to sustain the current provision. She emphasised the importance of concentrating the limited resources available on the most vulnerable children. She acknowledged that vulnerable children were located throughout the Borough and advised that the proposals sought to maintain the provision in the original Sure Start areas where concentrated demands had been identified. She highlighted the way in which targeted support would be provided to vulnerable children across the Borough.

Councillor Mark Dempsey expressed his concern at the proposals. He welcomed the intention to retain certain Children's Centres but noted that the Council had also only recently closed a number of Centres across the Borough and was now proposing to reduce provision further. He wondered if the Cabinet Member could provide a guarantee that these Centres would remain in the future and that further proposals for closure would not be forthcoming in the near future. He asked what studies and impact assessments had been undertaken on the effects of the recent closures of Children's Centres and the re-provision of services for vulnerable

children, and whether the outcome of such studies had been used to develop the proposals under consideration. What evidence had been used to develop the proposals? He noted the definition of vulnerable families in the report and wondered how the proposed closure of seven Children's Centre would assist in helping such families. He referred to the Council's spending on what he perceived as an underused Town Centre Car Park and whether funding would have been better used to support Children's Centres.

Councillor Foley reiterated that significant financial constraints the Council faced and this was unlikely to change following the next General Election whatever political party was in power. She referred to the background information within the report that highlighted the reasons why the proposals were put forward for consultation. She reiterated her personal commitment to Children's Centre and to providing services that protected Swindon's vulnerable children in a targeted way that delivered not only value for money but successful outcomes. She highlighted that capital monies could not be used to support revenue services.

Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills, referred to the building of the new Whalebridge Car Park its cost, usage, and the benefits it provided to users. He believed it provided an encouragement to regeneration and attracting new investment and businesses to Swindon Town Centre.

Councillor Stan Pajak, Leader of the Minority Group, expressed his disappointment that party political debate was distracting attention from this important consultation. He believed there was general support within the Council for Children's Centres but that the Council also faced significant financial challenges that it needed to address. He welcomed the consultation and the opportunity for solutions to be identified to support vulnerable children and to involve communities more in doing that. He welcomed the proposed amendment to encourage closer working with Localities.

Councillor Foley reiterated the significance of the consultation. It was clear that even with the current provision there were increasing numbers of children identified as vulnerable and it was important that the Council responded to this effectively by delivering the support and positive outcomes for children in the most cost effective ways it was able to.

Resolved – (1) That the approach set out in the joint report in relation to improving children's lives in those areas with the most vulnerable be endorsed.

(2) That it be noted that the following Children's Centres will remain unchanged: Penhill and Pinehurst, Moredon, Drove, Gorse Hill (referred to as Supercluster) and Parks and Walcot East.

(3) That the Board Director, Commissioning be authorised to undertake a public consultation on:

(a) 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 up to two year during which the centres are required to raise funds and work towards reducing the need for funding.

(b) Developing innovative ways to use existing community facilities at Robert Le King and Highworth (Ladybird) in order to build self-supporting communities and improve children's lives.

(c) De-commissioning the remaining facilities as Children's Centres by 1st

April 2015. This applies to Butterflies, Ladybird, Eldene, Croft, Saltway, Robert Le Kyng, and West Swindon Children's Centres and may lead to their de-registration by Ofsted.

(d) Providing support, through the Localities Team, to assist those former Children's Centres who wish to remain open and continue providing local services in setting up as social enterprises, charities, or companies.

(4) That it be noted that the buildings at Croft, Eldene, Greenmeadow and Saplings are now used by primary school or early years' education providers, and are not affected by these proposals.

(5) That it be noted that savings of £770,000 will be achieved if these proposals are implemented.

(6) That it be noted that the consultation process will run from 29th July until 3rd October 2014, as Children's Centres remain open during the summer holidays, and the findings from the consultation exercise be reported to a future meeting of the Cabinet on 22nd October 2014.

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

18. Budget Management 2014/15 (Minute (18(6)) for Confirmation)

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 May 2014, (b) issues impacting on the Council's finances, including (i) a loan request from Swindon Commercial Services (SCS) to enable the acquisition of a Can Baler, (ii) a proposed reduction in the maximum limit of the cashflow loan facility to Swindon Commercial Services Ltd. following the reintegration of Swindon Commercial Services (SCS) into the Council, and (iii) the funding of required works in Swindon Town Centre from available "one-off" resources, (c) a proposed change to the Council's Scheme of Delegations to enable the Board Director, Resources to submit external funding bids, (d) progress of the preparation of a revised Library Strategy, and (e) 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 success of the work being undertaken to deliver budget savings early for the next Financial Year and how this both strengthened the Council's financial position and provided capacity to fund the Council's on-going transformation.

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 a loan of £280,000 be made to Swindon Commercial Services Ltd to finance the purchase and installation of a can baler for its Recycling facility as referred to in paragraph 6 of the joint report.

(4) That the maximum limit of the cashflow loan facility to Swindon Commercial Services Ltd be reduced from £2.25m to £1.25m as referred to in paragraph 6 of the joint report.

(5) That the sum of £88,000 be approved for the deep clean and seal of surfacing in Swindon Town Centre, as referred to in paragraph 7 of the joint report, to be funded from one-off resources.

- (6) That the Council be recommended that –
 - (a) the Board Director, Resources be authorised to
 - (i) submit applications for external funding which would further the Council's strategic objectives, and
 - (ii) accept the award of external funding which further the Council's strategic objectives, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member,
 - (b) the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised to amend the Scheme of Delegation accordingly.

(7) That the proposed work to be undertaken on a detailed needs assessment of the Library service following recent consultation feedback associated with the preparation of a revised Library Strategy, as referred to in paragraph 9 of the joint report, be noted.

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

19. Capital Programme Monitoring Fourth Quarter 2013/14 and Treasury Management Performance 2013/14

The Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources submitted a joint report setting out (a) the 2013/14 Capital Programme position as at the end of March 2014, and (b) Treasury Management performance for 2013/14.

Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, referred to the report and explained that it addressed the outturn position of the Council's Capital Budget for 2013/14, highlighted proposed changes to the current Capital Programme, set out details of Treasury Management performance for 2013/14, and responded to the Council motion on 3rd April 2014 on Coate Water Country Park and Section 106 Planning Obligation contributions.

Resolved – (1) That the 2013/14 Capital Programme position, as set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.12 of the joint report, be noted.

(2) That the changes to the Council's Capital Programme, as set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.2 of the joint report, be approved.

(3) That the proposed response to the Council motion of April 3rd 2014 concerning Coate Water Country Park and Section 106 Planning Obligation contributions, as detailed in paragraphs 4.3 to 4.4 of the joint report, be endorsed and the Council be informed of this response.

(4) That the 2013/14 Treasury Management performance, as detailed in paragraphs 4.5 to 4.17 and the Prudential Indicators shown in Appendix 2 to the joint report, be noted.

(5) That the change to the 2014/15 Prudential Indicator for the Authorised Limit, as detailed in paragraphs 4.19 to 4.20 of the joint report, be approved.

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

20. Swindon Local Transport Plan - Implementation Plan 2014/15

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport and

the Board Director, Service Delivery, submitted a joint report concerning the proposed Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan for 2014/15.

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport, referred to the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) that had been adopted by the Council in April 2011. He explained that the LTP programme was subject to this annual report to the Cabinet to ensure transparency in the apportionment of the funding and to aid the delivery of the programme.

Resolved – (1) That the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Implementation Plan for 2014/15, as set out in Appendix 3 to the joint report, be approved.

(2) That the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme budget categories and total spend for 2014/15, as detailed in Tables 1 to 9 of the Implementation Plan attached as Appendix 3 to the joint report be approved.

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

21. Swindon Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport and the Head of Highways and Transport submitted a joint report setting out a proposed Swindon Flood Risk Management Strategy and Year One Action Plan.

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport, explained that the Council was required by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 to develop, maintain, apply, and monitor a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy for surface water, groundwater, and ordinary watercourses in its area. He referred to the problem of flooding and how the Council had worked with its partners to develop the Strategy. The draft Strategy had been prepared after extensive consultation. He highlighted the key issues in the Strategy and in the proposed first year Action Plan.

Resolved – (1) That the Swindon Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the year one Action Plan, as referred to in the joint report, be approved and adopted.

(2) That the Head of Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Sustainability, and Transport, be authorised to develop and publish annual action plans to deliver the objectives of the Swindon Local Flood Risk Management Strategy.

(Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills made a personal and prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of the above item and left the room taking no part in the discussion, as he was the owner of a property within Swindon that had been subject to flooding.)

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

22. Swindon Emergency Assistance Fund

The Cabinet Member for Finance, the Board Director, Resources and the Head of Revenues and Benefits submitted a joint report setting out details of the local welfare assistance provided to Swindon residents by the Swindon Emergency

Assistance Fund in 2013/14 and proposing changes to the way that the Fund operated to ensure that it remained effective in helping to protect vulnerable residents through periods of difficulty.

Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, referred to the background to the Council establishing the Swindon Emergency Assistance Fund and how the fund had been used in 2013/14 to help protect the most vulnerable at times of financial crisis. He explained that as a result of the experience gained it was intended to amend the scheme to ensure it remained effective. These proposed amendments had been seen and supported by the cross-party Benefits Strategy and Welfare Reform Advisory Group.

Resolved – (1) That the Swindon Emergency Assistance Fund be altered so that awards can be made to persons who are subject to suspended benefit claims or ‘sanctions’ and who are in crisis or emergency need.

(2) That the Swindon Emergency Assistance Fund be amended to allow up to four awards per person or household per annum, with individuals receiving more than two awards being asked to undertake training on how to budget.

(3) That the companies and groups from whom goods and services were purchased, as indicated in the table in Section 3 of the joint report, are used again in 2014/15 and in future years until improved arrangements can be negotiated by the Head of Revenues and Benefits.

(4) That the Head of Revenues and Benefits be authorised to use the Swindon Emergency Assistance Fund to procure services that help residents to prepare for the introduction of Universal Credits, assisting with budgeting advice, employment support and training for using online systems, and that monies should continue to be used to reduce poverty and assist in anti-poverty strategies (both national and local).

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

23. Council Tax Recovery and Debt Management

The Cabinet Member for Finance, the Board Director, Resources and the Head of Revenues and Benefits submitted a joint report setting out the current position in relation to Council Tax collection and debt management in the Council.

Councillor Russell Holland introduced the report and drew attention to its contents and appendices that in his view clearly indicated the Council’s success in maintaining the Council’s income to support services whilst also helping vulnerable households to avoid costs, hardship, and distress. He referred to the additional costs associated with the Council pursuing Council Tax debt and that this could result in it being even harder for the person in debt to meet the increasing cost. Whilst the Council remained committed to collecting all monies owed to it, he outlined the varying ways in which the Council would be seeking to encourage early repayment and preventing residents accumulating even greater debts. He referred to the effect of the Government’s Welfare Reforms on collection rates and Housing arrears and highlighted that only slight increases in debt had occurred. He advised that no Swindon Housing Tenants had been evicted as a result of the changes to Housing Benefits made as part of the Welfare Reforms.

Councillor Stan Pajak, Leader of the Minority Group, welcomed the use of

technology and direct contact with individuals by telephone to encourage payment of Council tax debt at an early stage. He believed this would benefit both the Council and the individual.

Councillor Holland advised that the approach had been supported by the Benefits Strategy and Welfare Reform Advisory Group.

The Chair welcomed the report and the efforts made to ensure that the Council's income was being maintained whilst supporting and helping those vulnerable households most likely to fall into debt.

Resolved – (1) That the Head of Revenues and Benefits be authorised to implement measures to promote payment of Council Tax prior to the commencement of further recovery action.

(2) That the Head of Revenues and Benefits be authorised to introduce a pilot scheme under which residents are telephoned or sent emails prior to receiving summonses for non-payment of Council Tax, in order to encourage prompt payment and to reduce the costs that are charged to potentially vulnerable households.

(3) That it be noted that:-

(a) Collections for Debt Management, Business Rates, Overpaid Benefits, Business Improvement District charges and Car Parking Penalty Charge Notices were improved in 2013/14;

(b) Council Tax and Housing rents collection reduced slightly following changes to welfare benefits, although the amounts collected were in excess of the levels predicted;

(c) Collection rates remain either top quartile or above average compared to other Unitary Authorities; and

(d) As shown in Appendix 2 to the joint report, over £296 million of invoiced income was collected by the Council in 2013/14.

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

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker:	Councillor Emma Faramarzi, Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety
Subject	Affordable Rent Housing Policy
Decision(s): -	That the Head of Housing Services be authorised to set Affordable Rent at 80% of Swindon's Local Housing Allowance for new build housing, and vacant properties converted to Affordable Rent to help fund new build housing, and housing acquired from Right to Buy receipts..
Consultation:	The Shadow / Group Spokespersons - Councillor Steve Allsopp (Labour) and Councillor David Wood (Liberal Democrat) were consulted on the contents of the Decision Note. No adverse comments or requests for Cabinet consideration were received.
Date of Publication:	Thursday 10 th July 2014
Date for Receipt of Requests for Call-in	Thursday 17 th July 2014

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note (report) please contact: - James Graham, Housing, Direct Dial 01793 464474 or Email: jgraham@swindon.gov.uk.

Or from Ian Willcox, Committee and Member Services Manager, Direct Dial: 01793 463601 or Email iwillcox@swindon.gov.uk

The Decision Note (report) sets out the background to, and reasons for, the decisions referred to in the Notice above. Details of the alternative options put forward for consideration (if any) are also recorded in the Decision Note (report). Any alternative options considered that did not appear in the initial report will be recorded as part of the above Notice of Decisions. The Decision Note is available via the following link on the Council's website =

<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=440&RP=285&J=3>

Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker:	Councillor Emma Faramarzi, Cabinet Member for Housing and Public Safety
Subject	Dispersal Order in Sussex Square, Walcot, Swindon
Decision(s): -	That the Board Director Service Delivery be authorised to give on behalf of Swindon Borough Council consent to Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers to use their powers to disperse groups of two or more persons from Sussex Square, Walcot, Swindon, where there is persistent anti-social behaviour.
Consultation:	The Shadow / Group Spokespersons - Councillor Fay Howard (Labour) and Councillor Ann Richards (Liberal Democrat) and Walcot and Park North Ward Councillors were consulted on the contents of the Decision Note. All supported the recommendations and no adverse comments or requests for Cabinet consideration were received.
Date of Publication:	Thursday 17 th July 2014
Date for Receipt of Requests for Call-in	Thursday 24 th July 2014

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note (report) please contact: - Cheri Fayers, 01793 466733, cfayers@swindon.gov.uk..

Or from Ian Willcox, Committee and Member Services Manager, Direct Dial: 01793 463601 or Email iwillcox@swindon.gov.uk

The Decision Note (report) sets out the background to, and reasons for, the decisions referred to in the Notice above. Details of the alternative options put forward for consideration (if any) are also recorded in the Decision Note (report). Any alternative options considered that did not appear in the initial report will be recorded as part of the above Notice of Decisions. The Decision Note is available via the following link on the Council's website =

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Notice of Decisions Made

Decision Maker:	Councillor Brian Ford, Cabinet Member for Streetsmart
Subject	Proposed Neighbourhood Skate Park for West Swindon
Decision(s): -	That the Board Director Service Delivery be authorised to enable the proposed neighbourhood skate park for West Swindon is to be provided at the Rivermead open space for the cost of £65,000, funded from the Playground Capital budget.
Consultation:	The Shadow / Group Spokespersons - Councillor Fay Howard (Labour) and Councillor Stan Pajak (Liberal Democrat) and Shaw Ward Councillors were consulted on the contents of the Decision Note. No adverse comments or requests for Cabinet consideration were received.
Date of Publication:	Thursday 14 th August 2014
Date for Receipt of Requests for Call-in	Thursday 21 st August 2014

For more details on the subject of the Decision or for a copy of the Decision Note (report) please contact: - Caroline Hunt, Direct Dial: 01793 463251 or Email carolinehunt@swindon.gov.uk.

Or from Ian Willcox, Committee and Member Services Manager, Direct Dial: 01793 463601 or Email iwillcox@swindon.gov.uk

The Decision Note (report) sets out the background to, and reasons for, the decisions referred to in the Notice above. Details of the alternative options put forward for consideration (if any) are also recorded in the Decision Note (report). Any alternative options considered that did not appear in the initial report will be recorded as part of the above Notice of Decisions. The Decision Note is available via the following link on the Council's website =

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