

MINUTES FOR CONFIRMATION

CABINET

5TH SEPTEMBER 2012

**32. Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2011/12
(Minute for Confirmation)**

The Leader of the Council and the Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a joint report setting out the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter and Summary of Statistics for Swindon for 2011/12.

The Chair welcomed the contents of the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review and noted that there had been no cases of maladministration involving the Council in 2011/12. He highlighted that there had again been a reduction in the total number of complaints investigated and in the Council's response times to Ombudsman enquiries.

Resolved – **That the Council be recommended to –**

(a) Welcome and note the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review for Swindon for the year ending 31st March 2012, that stated that the Local Government Ombudsman had no concern regarding the Council's response times and that there were no issues arising from the complaints investigated that she wished to bring to the attention of the Council;

(b) Note that

- **the Annual Statistics indicate that the total number of enquiries and complaints received by the Local Government Ombudsman reduced slightly in the year ending 31st March 2012;**
- **the average time taken by the Council to respond to the Local Government Ombudsman's initial inquiry has also reduced for the year ended 31st March 2012;**

(c) Request that the Board Director, Transformation and Strategic Projects and all relevant Heads of Service take further steps to continue the trend identified in paragraphs 2.3 and 2.4 of the joint report;

(d) Request that the Induction process for staff (both SBC and partners) should include information on the role of the Local Government Ombudsman and emphasise the importance for all staff to adhere to set procedures.

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

36. Military Covenant - Motion at Council (Minute for Confirmation)

The Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council submitted a joint report responding to a Motion arising from the Council meeting on 29th March 2012 that called on the adoption by the Council of a Military Covenant.

The Chair advised that a Military Covenant, or an Armed Forces Community

Covenant, as it was more formally known, was a statement of mutual support between a civilian community and the serving members, veterans and families of the armed forces community. The joint report explained how the Council was able to work with its partners to support the principles of the Covenant and to support serving and former members of the military and their families. It also set out the proposed arrangements for the formal signing of the covenant. He hoped that all Councillors, the Council's partners and the local community would all support this covenant and its aims.

Councillor Steve Wakefield welcomed the proposal. He advised that the Council had long sought to support the Armed Forces and provided the example of a Council motion that he had proposed in January 2007 in support of access to Housing and that the Council had approved (Minute 103 2006/07).

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition, advised that he and his political group fully supported the entering into of the proposed covenant.

Resolved – That the Council be recommended that –

- (a) Swindon Borough Council enters into an Armed Forces Community Covenant by way of the signing of a covenant agreement at the Royal Yeomanry Freedom event to be held on Sunday 21st October 2012 at the Civic Offices, Swindon.**
- (b) The Council's participation in the Armed Forces Community Covenant reflects the commitments set out in paragraph 3.6 of the joint report.**
- (c) The Director of Law and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, Board Directors and other partner organisations be authorised to prepare and finalise the detail of the Armed Forces Community Covenant to be signed on 21st October 2012.**
- (d) The Mayor, the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition and Minority Group be authorised to sign the Covenant on behalf of the Council.**

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

11. Introduction of a Licensing regime for Sexual Entertainment Venues

The Council's Interim Licensing Manager submitted a report setting out the proposed introduction of a licensing regime for "sexual entertainment venues" through the adoption of the amendment to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Schedule 3, by Section 27 of the Policing and Crimes Act 2009.

Resolved – That, subject to the agreement of the Council, the amendment to the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Schedule 3, by Section 27 of the Policing and Crimes Act 2009, be adopted.

**43. Street Lighting and Traffic Signals Review
(Minute for Confirmation)**

The Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport and the Head of Highways and Transport submitted a joint report that responded to Council motions regarding street lighting and traffic signalled junctions (Minute 113 of the Council 2011/12, Minute 96 of the Council 2011/12 and Minute 73 of the Council 2010/11) and provided an update on the progress of outcomes of the Traffic Signal Review approved by the Cabinet in April 2011 (Minute 109 2010/11 refers).

Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport, referred to the background to the joint report and highlighted the outcomes of the trials conducted to date. He commented on how proposals for schemes identified from the outcomes of the Swindon Traffic Signal Review would be progressed.

Councillor Steve Wakefield commented that there had been a mixed reaction from local residents to the changes made to the Mannington Roundabout, but there was overall support for the new arrangements. He was supportive of completing the trial and analysing the results. He wondered if the review could be extended to include neighbouring roundabouts such as that at Meads.

Resolved – (1) That it be reaffirmed that there are no plans to conduct street light switch-off trials in the future.

(2) That, in recognition of the benefits of the reduced off-peak delays to traffic and public support for the scheme, the part-time operation of the traffic signals at Mannington, Swindon, continues but it remain on a trial basis until a full 12 month review of driver behaviour is available for analysis in March 2013.

(3) That it be noted that the Traffic Signal Review Stage 1 of all roundabouts, junctions and pedestrian crossings controlled by traffic signals in Swindon is now complete and that future decisions on individual signal installations arising from the Review will be undertaken through the agreed Local Transport Plan (LTP3) Implementation Plan process.

(4) That, subject to approval by the Department for Transport, the Head of Highways and Transport be authorised to undertake a trial of Pedestrian Countdown Timers in Swindon.

(5) That it be noted that work on Bruce Street Bridges and the Meads Roundabouts, Swindon, to improve junction efficiency and reduce delays has been prioritised within the Local Transport Plan (LTP3).

(6) That the Council be advised of the recommendations set out above in response to the Council Motion of the 23rd February 2012.

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