

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2013**

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Kevin Small (Chair), Peter Heaton-Jones (Vice-Chair), John Ballman, Toby Elliott, Claire Ellis, Brian Ford, Richard Hurley, Des Moffatt, Maureen Penny, Robert Wright, Mary Friend, Cindy Matthews and Stan Pajak.

Councillors Roderick Bluh, Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet, Mark Edwards, Cabinet Member for Finance, Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Services, Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability, Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for One Swindon, Localities and Housing, Brian Mattock, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Vera Tomlinson, Cabinet Member for a Safer and Stronger Borough, and Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport, were also in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Colin Lovell, James Robbins and David Wood and from Councillor David Renard, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

### **53. Declarations of Interest**

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

### **54. Public Question Time**

Mr Richard Symonds asked for an update on questions put by him to the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013. Mr Symonds was advised that responses had been received in respect of his questions regarding (i) the incorporation of elements of the Council's previous electronic voting system into the current UK Broadband scheme and (ii) the treatment of roads during the recent poor weather conditions, and that these would be forwarded to him at the earliest opportunity. The outstanding answers, to his questions regarding the Digital City (UK) accounts, would be pursued and forwarded when available.

The Chair apologised to Mr Symonds for the delay and expressed a concern that, perhaps, responses to public questions were not being given an appropriate level of importance. The Leader of the Council assured him, and the meeting, that that was not the case and that questions put through the Cabinet Office were being responded to within the agreed time frame.

Mr Jim Boyd asked questions regarding (i) apparently contradictory information, reported in the local press and given to a recent locality meeting, about the status of building work at the Croft School, and (ii) the role of this Committee in relation to the scrutiny of the accuracy of press statements attributed to members of the Council. The Chair and Councillor Rod Bluh, the Leader of the Council, responded to Mr Boyd's questions.

### **55. Minutes**

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013 be confirmed and signed.

## **56. Consideration of Cabinet Decisions**

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report introducing decisions arising from the Cabinet meeting held on 6 February 2013.

### **88. *Community Governance Review***

Resolved – That Minute 88 of the Cabinet be noted.

### **91. *Outcome of Ofsted Inspection - Swindon's Fostering Service***

Resolved – That Minute 91 of the Cabinet be noted.

### **92. *Budget Management 2012/13***

Councillor Mark Edwards, Cabinet Member for Finance, responded to questions put by Councillors Des Moffatt and Bob Wright concerning the financial management arrangements between SCS and the Council.

Resolved – That Minute 92 of the Cabinet be noted.

### **93. *Special Expenses 2013/14 (Minute for Confirmation)***

Resolved – That Minute 93 of the Cabinet be noted.

### **94. *Budget 2013/14 and Beyond (Minute for Confirmation)***

Councillor Rod Bluh, the Leader of the Council, and Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for One Swindon, Localities and Housing, responded to member's comments regarding the consultation to be undertaken in relation to the implications of proposals for the future support of locality working.

Resolved – That Minute 94 of the Cabinet be noted.

### **95. *Capital Programme and Treasury Strategy Statement 2013/14 (Minute for Confirmation)***

Resolved – That Minute 95 of the Cabinet be noted.

### **96. *Housing Revenue Account - Revenue and Capital Investment Budget 2013/14 (Minute for Confirmation)***

Resolved – That Minute 96 of the Cabinet be noted.

### **97. *A Community Infrastructure Levy for Swindon***

Resolved – That Minute 97 of the Cabinet be noted.

## *98. City Deal Round 2*

Resolved – That Minute 98 of the Cabinet be noted.

## *99. Devolved Major Transport Scheme Funding - Establishment of the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Transport Body*

Councillor Rod Bluh, the Leader of the Council, and Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport, responded to members' remarks regarding the balance of representation on the proposed new Swindon and Wiltshire Transport body.

Resolved – That Minute 99 of the Cabinet be noted.

## *100. Swindon Borough Neighbourhood Planning Protocol*

Resolved – That Minute 100 of the Cabinet be noted.

## *101. Pay Policy Statement 2013/14 (Minute for Confirmation)*

Resolved – That Minute 101 of the Cabinet be noted.

## *102. Events in Parks and Open Space Guidance*

Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Affairs, responded to questions from Councillors Stan Pajak and Bob Wright regarding (i) the regulation of future events in parks and the discretionary level of bonds that might be applied to events on behalf of charities and similar bodies, and (ii) the regulation of events in parks not listed in the report.

Resolved – That Minute 102 of the Cabinet be noted.

## *103. Motion at Council - Green Waste Collections*

In response to a question by Councillor Bob Wright, Councillor Foley, Cabinet Member for Streetsmart and Corporate Affairs, commented on the limitations of the current green waste collection arrangement to reduce or expand the scope of the contract according to season-led demand.

Councillor Foley also responded to members' questions regarding:

- the management of demand for garden waste collections and, in particular, the enforcement of the proposed limitation on the amount of green waste that can be presented from each household
- the feasibility of introducing the use of bio-degradable paper sacks for green waste
- the cost of green waste collection and the promotion of the composting alternative
- the future review of any increase in the incidence of green waste fly tipping
- the reliability of waste collection service.

Resolved – That Minute 103 of the Cabinet be noted.

#### *104. Wichelstowe Development Delivery Strategy*

In response to a question by Councillor Brian Ford, Councillor Mark Edwards, the Cabinet Member for Finance, assured Councillor Ford, and the meeting, that all options for providing pedestrian access to the Wichelstowe development would be investigated.

Resolved – That Minute 104 of the Cabinet be noted.

#### *105. University Technical College Swindon - Building Contract and Use of Contributory Council Funding*

At the request of the Chair, the Council's Head of Commissioning - Economy /Attainment, responded to points made by Councillor Bob Wright regarding the delivery of the project in a way that would benefit the local community, making particular reference to residents' parking in the Railway Village and the potential detrimental impact on that area of existing and increased bus services and the need to engineer traffic solutions as part of project. The Chair emphasised the importance to the success of the project of detailed consultation with Ward Members.

Resolved – That Minute 105 of the Cabinet be noted.

### **57. One Swindon Report**

The Committee received a joint report of the Leader of the Council and the Board Director, Localities, providing members with an update on the progress of the One Swindon programme, and the key achievements for 2012, and presenting the One Swindon Annual Report (Appendix 1 to the report).

Councillor Rod Bluh, the Leader of the Council, and Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for One Swindon, Localities and Housing, introduced the report, placing it in the context of localities as the Council's new way of working under the Stronger Together organisation structure and highlighting particular successes in relation to the achievement of One Swindon priorities.

Following their opening remarks, Councillor Bluh and Councillor Holland responded to members' questions on the following related topics:

- attendance at the most recent One Swindon Board meeting
- the outcomes from the "away day" held on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2013
- parish and rural representation on the One Swindon Board
- representation of the two opposition groups on the Council on the One Swindon Board
- community engagement with One Swindon and Stronger Together
- the future of the Esprit Gymnastics Academy
- the measurement of achievement of One Swindon priorities
- representation of the new Ambulance Trust on the One Swindon Board

Resolved – That the report be noted.

### **58. Question and Answer - Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic**

## Transport

Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport, was in attendance to introduce this report. Following a position statement in which he summarised performance in respect of the various service areas within his portfolio of responsibility, including his assessment of what he felt had been done well, what might have been done better or differently and what challenges his portfolio would face over the next year, Councillor Williams, supported by his officer team, responded to members' specific questions and observations on the following topics:

- the provision of a cycle track between Highworth and Swindon
- the impact on the road network of the refurbishment of the Oasis and the development of the surrounding area into a regional leisure destination
- the reasons for the apparently limited effect of the Olympic year on municipal leisure facility usage and measures to enhance both the promotion and usage of these facilities
- the council's successful lottery bid for support of the Youth Sport Swindon Project and investment to enhance the level of community engagement and facilitate communities' public transport access to leisure services
- the development of the Council's leisure strategy and the level of supported leisure provision across the borough
- health and exercise and the implications for the Council's sport and leisure offer of recent evidence suggesting that the common approach to a healthy exercise regime is incorrect
- the effectiveness of traffic light systems as a means of traffic flow management and facilitating safe pedestrian routes across highways
- the impact of changed bus routes on Fleet Street and the need to ensure public transport schemes are organised according to the needs of public transport users
- the launch of the "co-wheels scheme"
- outreach work with local communities and the provision of leisure and sporting opportunities for children and individuals from deprived areas
- the establishment of the new marketing and sales team and its intended approach to improve marketing activities across the range of leisure services on offer
- the availability and promotion of primary and pre-school leisure activities
- the composition of the new marketing and sales team
- the data relating to killed and seriously injured casualties on Swindon's roads
- the detrimental impact on traffic flow of the temporary lights on Highworth Road
- the logic of the "split" of the Cabinet Member's sport-related responsibilities, specifically in relation to the delivery of football and the management of recreation grounds
- the possibility that the sum of money available to localities to address local highways issues might be increased

Resolved – That Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Strategic Transport, and his officer support team, be thanked for attending the meeting and for their full and open responses to members' questions on service areas and issues within the Cabinet Member's portfolio of responsibility.