

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 24 JULY 2013

PRESENT:- Councillors David Renard (Chair), Brian Mattock (Vice-Chair), Russell Holland, Claire Ellis, Dale Heenan, Richard Hurley, Garry Perkins and Keith Williams.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mike Bawden and Fionuala Foley.

Councillor Mark Dempsey attended the meeting in respect of Minutes 33 and 34.
Councillor Jim Grant attended the meeting in respect of Minutes 27, 28 and 30.
Councillor Bob (Robert) Wright attended the meeting in respect of Minutes 28, 31, 33 and 34.

23. 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 Keith Williams made a personal declaration of interest in respect of Agenda Item 6 (Budget Management 2013/14) as he was a Council appointed Non-Executive Director of Thamesdown Transport Ltd.

24. Minutes

Resolved –That, subject to their amendment to reflect that Councillor Des Moffatt is a Rodbourne Cheney and not a Western Ward Councillor, the minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

25. Public Question Time

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

Questioner

Mr Brian Cockbill, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon

Question

(1) In relation to the recent temporary closure of Oxford Road, Stratton St Margaret, Swindon –

- (a) What formula do Highways officers use to determine whether a road is overloaded or not by the volume of traffic?
- (b) What phasing of the current works was considered to avoid disruption to (a) local residents and (b) bus services?
- (c) Who was consulted?
- (d) Whilst recognising that Stratton St Margaret Parish Council might not be required to be consulted, in hindsight does the Cabinet Member(s) accept that local knowledge and input could have been useful?
- (e) What alternatives were considered and why were they dismissed?
- (f) Will the Cabinet consider the alternative route I propose that would, maintain

safe working, ease congestion and inconvenience for local residents and private cars, and would allow the No. 21 bus service to be re-diverted to serve the bulk of the Coleview area?

(g) Will the Cabinet consider the suggested alternative phasing of the work?

(2) In relation to the Council's decision on the Council Tax Base for parish and town councils

(a) Would the Leader of the Council like a copy of a letter from the Minister to our MP concerning the funding of Local Council Tax?

(b) Why is this Conservative run Council failing to abide by the Conservative-led coalition Government's policy in this matter, thereby penalising the Leader's fellow residents in Haydon Wick and throughout the parished area of the Borough?

Response

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

The Chair and Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for Highways, Strategic Transport and Leisure, responded at the meeting to the questions and comments.

Mr Cockbill asked a supplementary question regarding why the Council believed it could not afford to pass on the Government funding made available to support the changes to the Council Tax base to parish and town councils in the Borough, and why there had not been dialogue with the parishes on the potential impact of this decision for their budgets and the services they provided.

The Chair, Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Culture, and Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability responded at the meeting to the supplementary questions and comments.

Mr Cockbill referred to the response he had received to an earlier question regarding drainage issues in Stratton Road, Stratton St Margaret, and indicated on-going issues in the areas affected.

The Chair asked Mr Cockbill to write to the Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery) with details of the locations and continuing problems identified and he would then arrange for these matters to be investigated.

The Chair advised that a public question had been received from Mr Chris Hext, Fleet Street, Swindon concerning Town Centre Car Parking and the John Street Car Park. Unfortunately, Mr Hext was unable to attend the meeting to ask his question and therefore a written response would be sent.

26. Education Matters - School Transport

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, the Board Director

Commissioning and the Head of Commissioning, Economy and Attainment submitted a joint report concerning (a) the outcome of a public consultation exercise on a proposal to change the current Education Transport Policy to reflect schools converting to Academy status and the growth of Swindon, and (b) a proposed revised Education Transport Policy for Swindon 2014/15.

Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Culture, in the absence of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, presented the report and explained the reasons why it was felt necessary at this time to make changes to the Council's Education Transport Policy. This was to reflect both the movement of schools to Academy status and the continuing growth of Swindon. He commented on the findings of the consultation that had taken place and on the subsequent changes to the proposed policy to reflect the views expressed. He believed the proposed new Designated Transport Areas would be beneficial to parents and schools, particularly, in the rural areas of the Borough and would do so without further increasing costs for the Council.

Resolved – (1) That the Education Transport Policy 2014/15, as set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report, including the creation of Primary and Secondary Designated Transport Areas from September 2014, be approved.

(2) That the Board Director, Commissioning, be authorised to implement the Education Transport Policy 2014/15.

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

27. Swindon Borough Council Housing Tenancy Strategy (Minute for Confirmation)

The Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery) and the Head of Housing submitted a joint report concerning a proposed Housing Tenancy Strategy that would set out the principles on which social housing in Swindon should be allocated in future, and that would be used to inform the development of a new Housing Allocations Policy for the Borough.

Councillor Richard Hurley, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery), referred to the necessity for the Council to adopt a Housing Tenancy Strategy at this time. He advised on the discussions that had taken place with tenants' representatives on the principles included within the proposed strategy, and on how the strategy would be used to guide the preparation of a new Housing Allocations Policy for the Council. He explained that the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 gave local authorities more freedom with regard to types of tenancies and how this would enable the Council to get the best use of its Housing stock and ensure that it served those most in Housing need. He emphasised that the proposed changes to tenancies would not apply to existing tenants or those seeking supported housing.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition, asked why the Council was seeking to adopt a Tenancy Strategy at this time when it had yet to adopt a Housing Strategy. Why also was there no mention of affordable rents in the Strategy and what were the benefits of fixed term tenancies?

Councillor Hurley explained that that the first two issues involved wider

aspects of Housing and would be the subject of forthcoming reports to the Cabinet. He believed that the principles established in the proposed Tenancy Strategy would inform those subsequent reports. The most significant advantage of fixed term tenancies was that they enabled the Council to better target its limited social housing stock to those most in housing need. Currently there was no limitation on who could apply to go onto the Council's Housing Waiting List. This strategy aimed to help those who most needed social housing.

Councillor Grant referred to the Council's record of building social housing. He asked how the Council would determine who could afford to buy their own home. Councillor Hurley referred to the contents of the Strategy document itself and that the wider issues of housing provision would be addressed in the forthcoming Housing Strategy.

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability, referred to the Council's long standing policy of seeking 30% of affordable housing in developments. He also commented on the reduction in house building that had occurred as a result of the recession.

Councillor Brian Mattock, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, highlighted the consultation that had already taken place and that to be carried out on a new Housing Allocations Policy. This provided the opportunity for the Council to be aware of the views of its tenants.

Resolved – (1) That the Council adopt the Swindon Housing Tenancy Strategy, as set out in Appendix 1 to the joint report.

(2) That, subject to Council approval, the Head of Housing be authorised to prepare a Housing Allocations Policy based on it.

(3) That it be noted that the existing Housing Allocations Policy will remain in place until such time as the new Housing Allocations Policy is agreed.

(4) That the Head of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery), be authorised to undertake a consultation to inform the proposed Housing Allocations Policy and the proposed revised policy be presented to the Cabinet and Council in October and November 2013.

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

28. Sussex Square Regeneration

The Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery) and the Head of Housing submitted a joint report concerning proposals for the proposed regeneration of the Sussex Square area of Walcot, Swindon, and the results of a recent public consultation exercise on the planned development.

Councillor Richard Hurley, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery), explained that Sussex Square was the latest in a number of regeneration schemes for district centres. He referred to the outcome of the wide-ranging consultation that had taken place on the proposals and to the challenges of a development of this type, particularly, given the current economic climate. He highlighted the benefits that regeneration of the area would bring for local residents.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition, expressed his concern at the proposal for the social housing provision to be based on “affordable rents” rather than the standard or “target” Council rent. He referred to the implications of this for Council tenants. He queried what tenants paying the greater affordable rents in this scheme would gain over other tenants in schemes elsewhere.

Councillor Bob Wright expressed his concern over the proposal to charge “affordable rents” and the wider implications of this for tenants and for benefit payments and debts.

Councillor Hurley drew attention to the contents of the report and to the favourable feedback from the public consultation to the scheme. He believed that the report made it clear that the only financially viable solution to enable the scheme to proceed at this time and to provide the social housing required was to charge an affordable rent. The tenants would benefit from new homes in a regenerated environment.

The Chair referred to the Council’s record in regenerating district centres in traditional housing areas and to the challenges it had faced in identifying a financially viable scheme for Sussex Square. That was why this scheme had taken so long to progress. He felt to do nothing was not an option that the local community would wish to see.

Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, referred to the role of the Housing Revenue Account in funding the scheme. He emphasised the importance of the Council investing in its stock to ensure both adequate maintenance and improvements for its tenants. He fully supported the scheme.

Councillor Brain Mattock, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, reiterated the challenges associated with regenerating Sussex Square. However, it was clear that regeneration was both required and desired by the local community. He noted the comments regarding affordable rents and referred to the many thousands of Housing Association tenants who were already paying affordable rents across the Borough.

Resolved – (1) That the feedback from the consultation events held, and the widespread support for the Sussex Square regeneration proposals, be noted and welcomed.

(2) That the Head of Housing be authorised to deliver the Sussex Square Regeneration Scheme based on the principles set out in the body of the joint report.

(3) That the Head of Property Assets be authorised to undertake a marketing exercise to identify the best retail partner to deliver the objectives of the Sussex Square Regeneration Scheme, as referred to in the joint report.

(4) That the Director of Law and Democratic Services, be authorised to serve all necessary notices and complete all necessary and ancillary documentation on such detailed terms and conditions to be determined by the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Head of Property Assets and the Head of Housing, in order to progress the Sussex Square Regeneration Scheme and protect the Council’s interests.

(5) That the Head of Housing be authorised to grant “Band A” status to existing residents of Sussex Square, Walcot, when necessary to facilitate the decanting of the residential properties and to pay Home Loss and Disturbance

Payments, as referred to in the Sussex Square Regeneration Scheme proposals set out in the joint report.

(6) That the Head of Housing be authorised to direct match tenants who at the time of their initial decant indicate that they wish to forgo their Home Loss and Disturbance Payments in order to have priority to return to Sussex Square as tenants of the new Council dwellings there, subject to qualifying for the homes and, furthermore, to allow such tenants to remain on target rent levels in their new homes.

(7) That an increase of £6.7m be approved to the Capital budget available for the Sussex Square Regeneration Scheme, from £3m to £9.7m, funded through a combination of Section106 Planning Agreement monies, £2.5m of Capital receipts and £2.9m from Housing Revenue Account Capital Reserves.

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

29. Budget Management 2013/14

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 2013, (b) issues impacting on the Council's finances including (i) the reprioritisation of resources, (ii) emerging issues and Three-Year Financial Planning, (iii) Thamesdown Transport Ltd. pension liabilities, and (iv) virements, and (c) the current position of the Housing Revenue Account and Dedicated Schools Grant.

The Board Director, Resources commented on the projected position for the outturn of the Council's Budget and highlighted issues impacting on the Council's future finances. He drew attention to the retention of Business Rates and to the implications for the Council of a decision of the Valuation Tribunal in respect of a major Swindon business that could potentially have a negative impact on such income. He would continue to monitor the situation and report back to the Cabinet as appropriate.

Resolved – (1) That the current projected Revenue Budget Outturn for 2013/14, as set out in Table 1 and Appendices 1 and 2 of the joint report, be noted.

(2) That the on-going re-profiling of in-year resources to create additional one-off capacity to drive forward work on the Council's six Change Programmes and to bolster the Children's Social Care system during the 2013/14 Financial Year, with the objective of identifying savings towards future year's Budget gaps, be approved.

(3) That, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 10.01 to 10.8 of the joint report, the increase in the pension deficit repayments to be made by Thamesdown Transport Limited to the Council of £113,675 per annum be delayed from an effective date of 31st March 2013 to 31st March 2015.

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

(Councillor Keith Williams made a personal declaration of interest in respect of the above item as he was a Council appointed Non-Executive Director of Thamesdown Transport Ltd.)

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

30. Capital Programme Monitoring - Fourth Quarter 2012/13

The Cabinet Member for Finance and the Board Director, Resources submitted a joint report concerning (a) the out-turn position of the Council's Capital Programme as at the end of the 2012/13 Financial Year, and (b) proposed changes to the list of schemes and funding sources within the Capital Programme 2013/14.

Councillor Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, referred to the contents and purpose of the report and in particular to the out-turn position, Council Borrowing levels, and the proposed changes to the Capital Programme for 2013/14.

Councillor Jim Grant, Leader of the Opposition, noted that there was no reference in the Capital Programme of the suggested supported living scheme on the former "Hawthorns" site. This had been the subject of a Council motion and he sought clarification on the latest position.

Councillor Brian Mattock, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, advised that he had requested that officers undertake a wider review to identify possible sites and opportunities to develop supported living schemes across the Borough. This would be the subject of a report to the Cabinet later in the year and would include reference to the Hawthorns site.

Resolved – (1) That the 2012/13 Capital Programme position, as detailed in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.11 of the joint report, be noted.

(2) That the changes to the Council's Capital Programme 2013/14, as detailed in paragraphs 3.12 to 3.24, and summarised in Appendix 2 of the joint report, be approved.

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

31. Investing in a Families Contact Point, Clarence House, Swindon

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, the Cabinet Member for Finance, the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care and the Board Director Commissioning submitted a joint report concerning (a) proposals to establish a children and families contact point at Clarence House on the Civic Campus in Swindon Town Centre, and (b) associated moves of staff to ensure more effective working and service delivery associated with the implementation of the Council's Stronger Together Programme.

Councillor Brian Mattock, Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, explained the proposals and how they would directly benefit service users as well as the Council in the delivery of its Stronger Together objectives and its agreed Change Programmes.

Councillor Bob Wright referred to public access to the facility. He drew particular attention to the issue of domestic violence and that it would be inappropriate for perpetrator and victims, for example, to attend the offices at the same time or to meet in a corridor of the building or at the same bus stop on the way to or from an interview.

Councillor Mattock noted Councillor Wright's concerns. He was confident that such issues had been taken into account in the planning for the facility. However, he would raise the matter with the relevant officers.

Resolved – (1) That the Board Director, Resources be authorised to undertake the works referred to within the joint report to enable the establishment of a children and families contact point at Clarence House on the Civic Campus, Swindon Town Centre, including the relocation of remaining SEQOL staff from Clarence House to the Seqol Headquarters, and the co-location of Children's Services staff in Clarence House, at a total expected cost of £1.405m, funded from existing budgets of £1.271m, and a new Borrowing requirement of £134,000, to be repaid from revenue savings over a period of approximately two years (This will be on the basis that this would enable revenue savings to be achieved of at least £451,000).

(2) That the Director of Law and Democratic Services be authorised to complete the necessary agreements and documentation to enable the Head of Property Assets to dispose of The Limes and Palm Tree Lodge, and to use the receipt to help off-set the cost of the works to establish a children and families contact point at Clarence House on the Civic Campus, Swindon Town Centre, as referred to in (1) above, on such terms and conditions as are required by the Director of Law and Democratic Services, Board Director Resources and Head of Property Assets to protect the Council's interests.

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

32. Public Sector Transformation

The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive submitted a joint report concerning the Government's Public Sector Transformation Programme (formerly Community Budgets), and advising (a) that Swindon had been selected as one of a handful of local authorities to take part in the latest phase of the Programme, and (b) details of the next steps to be undertaken to develop a One Swindon approach to Public Sector Transformation.

The Chair welcomed the Government's announcement and the inclusion of Swindon in the list of authorities to be involved in delivering the Public Sector Transformation Programme and its associated Public Sector Transformation Networks. It provided the opportunity to develop with the Council's partners a One Swindon approach to transforming services across the Borough. One Swindon partners had discussed the announcement at the One Swindon Partnership Board meeting on 23rd July 2013 and had expressed excitement at what could be achieved by working together.

Resolved – (1) That the Head of Strategy and Research, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be authorised, on behalf of the Council, to engage in negotiations with civil servants of Government departments and One Swindon partners to develop a Joint Working Agreement for a One Swindon approach to Public Sector Transformation Networks.

(2) That the Leader of the Council and the Head of Strategy and Research be requested to report back to the Cabinet, no later than its meeting on the 23rd October 2013, on the proposed Joint Working Agreement for a One Swindon approach to Public Sector Transformation, including the governance and resource implications of a Swindon Public Sector Transformation Network.

(3) That the work to be undertaken to develop an approach to the design and approval of business cases associated with a One Swindon approach to a Swindon Public Sector Transformation Network, as referred to in the joint report, be noted.

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

33. Swindon Town Centre Car Parking Rationalisation - Phase 2

The Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Culture, the Cabinet Member for Highways, Strategic Transport and Leisure Services, the Cabinet Member for Customer Support and Corporate Services, and the Board Director, Commissioning submitted a joint report concerning proposed second phase options for managing the future over supply of Swindon Town Centre car parking spaces and the resulting budget pressure, following the opening of the new Whalebridge Multi Storey Car Park, built as part of the Union Square, soon to be known as the Kimmerfields development.

Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Culture, referred to the necessity to remove surplus and no longer “fit for purpose” car parking spaces from Swindon Town Centre. He explained how the Council’s on-going financial pressures and the forthcoming opening of the new Whalebridge Multi Storey Car Park provided the opportunity to examine the options available to the Council to address these issues. He commented on the proposals and what the impact would be for users of the car parks and for the Council’s budget.

Councillor Mark Dempsey asked what the contribution had been from the developer to the works undertaken so far as part of the Kimmerfields development, and what was the basis of the funding identified to support the new car park and to remove the surplus spaces and time expired facilities.

Councillor Perkins advised that he did not have figures relating to the developer’s contribution to Kimmerfields available as that was not the subject of the report before Cabinet. However, he would be happy to make these figures available to Councillor Dempsey. He explained that the report was concerned about the regeneration of the Borough and the provision of 21st Century facilities for people wishing to park in Swindon Town Centre. It addressed the removal of time expired car parks and surplus spaces that either currently or in the future would negatively impact the Council’s Budget. He stated that the cost of the works was to be met from the Regeneration Reserve and it was hoped that the “pay-back” time of the investment and changes would be four years.

Councillor Bob Wright, Central Ward Councillor, referred to the cost of the works associated with the new car park and proposed landscaping works to former car parks. He commented on the proposed parking provision for the new University Technical College and on how Town Centre car parking facilities could be used to support this and avoid problems for nearby streets. He was opposed to expensive landscaping schemes for car parks that could be used to generate income through private leasing schemes with Town Centre businesses, such as that already in place with Zurich Finance. He referred to the possibility of using different parking tariffs for less used floors of car parks and the possibly extending access for

Mosque users and / or Football “match-day” parking.

Councillor Perkins noted Councillor Wright’s comments and advised that he welcomed any suggestions that sought to make Town Centre car parking more attractive and accessible whilst delivering good value for the Council and for residents.

Resolved – (1) That the Head of Highways and Transport be authorised to take all necessary steps to:

- (a) implement the closure of the Carlton and Wyvern Multi Storey Car Parks after consulting and informing Theatre Management on alternative provision;
- (b) commission the demolition of the Carlton and Wyvern Multi Storey Car Parks;
- (c) implement the relocation of Shopmobility from the Wyvern Multi Storey Car Park to the new facility being established by the Council at Sanford House, Sanford Street, Swindon;
- (d) implement changes to parking provision at Princes Street (surface) Car Park to a mix of “Pay and Display” and “Blue Badge” (Disabled) spaces, the ratio of which to be determined in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Culture.

(2) That the Board Director Resources be authorised to make available:

- a budget of up to £900,000 from the Council’s Regeneration Reserve for the full demolition of the Wyvern Multi Storey Car Park and gap funding of Carlton Street Multi Storey Car Park, as set out in paragraph 3.15 and 3.25 of the joint report.
- a budget of £145,000 from the Regeneration Reserve for the relocation of Shopmobility, with this funding being released by the Board Director, Resources in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance; and
- a budget of up to £300,000, funded from Prudential Borrowing, for a medium term “public realm” scheme on the site of the Wyvern Multi Storey Car Park, with this funding being released by the Board Director, Resources, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, when a detailed scheme is designed and agreed by the relevant Cabinet Member.

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

34. Options Appraisal - Leisure and Culture Commissioning

The Cabinet Member for Highways, Strategic Transport and Leisure, the Cabinet Member for Economy, Regeneration and Culture and the Board Director, Service Delivery submitted a joint report concerning proposals to implement the next stage of the Leisure and Culture Commissioning change programme (Minute 114, 2012/13 refers) in respect of the Council’s leisure and golf facilities, that would ensure the most viable option for the continued delivery of sustainable leisure provision within the Borough.

Councillor Keith Williams, Cabinet Member for Highways, Strategic Transport and Leisure, referred to the contents of the report and explained the background

and reasons for the suggested approach to the future of leisure and golf provision within the Borough. He emphasised that the report sought to identify solutions that would not only be best for the Council, given the financial constraints it faced, but also the best for local residents, particularly for those involved in sport and leisure activities. He emphasised that solutions sought to ensure provision that would encourage healthy lifestyles and greater involvement from all communities in sport and leisure activities. He reminded colleagues of the Council “subsidy” associated with the provision of many activities and the on-going investment that was required in facilities to make sure they remained fit for purpose and were developed to remain attractive to users.

Councillor Garry Perkins, Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Culture, explained that the issues of Theatre provision, the Museum and Art Gallery and Museum storage would now be considered at subsequent Cabinet meetings in a change to the agreed timetable. This was to enable further time for discussions with interested parties.

Councillor Mark Dempsey referred to Swindon’s reputation for providing quality leisure provision and activities. He believed it was important that this was safeguarded for the future. He asked that if a transfer of facilities happened what safeguarding would the Council put in place to ensure facilities were retained for the future, and how it would seek to protect the affordability of access to those facilities? He enquired whether there had been discussions with local Health partners on the possibility of developing joint initiatives in the area of leisure provision to deliver healthier lifestyles.

Councillor Williams commented that safeguards would be included to protect both the Council’s and residents interests. In his view these should not be too prescriptive as demand for facilities and provision changed over time and it was important that this was reflected to ensure that residents’ changing aspirations could be met. He referred to the competitive nature of the leisure market and that for this reason he did not believe “affordability” would be an issue. Health aspects did form part of the consultations that had taken place with interested parties and the Leisure team already had very close links with Health partners.

Councillor Bob Wright referred to the difficulties of identifying what was leisure provision and what was not. He referred to facilities that were also used as open space by residents. He noted that not all facilities had been identified in the report. He referred specifically to bowls provision and the golf facility at Coate Water Country Park.

The Head of Commercial Services explained that in the Options Appraisal report submitted to the Cabinet in March 2013 it had been proposed, and Cabinet had endorsed, that facilities such as those at Steam, Coate Water and Stanton Park would be the subject of a separate report later in the year.

Councillor Garry Perkins referred to the importance of investment in leisure and cultural facilities in Swindon in order that it could be seen as a regional centre and hub for such provision. He commented on the impact of achieving such a status for tourism and for the Swindon economy generally.

Councillor Bob Wright commented on the provision at Milton Road and

recognised the challenges at maintaining this important facility. He drew attention to the Council's commitment to Swindon's heritage and the importance of Milton Road to Swindon's Railway heritage, the Railway Village and the history of GWR.

Councillor Williams confirmed that the importance of Swindon's heritage had been recognised by the Council and all options would be considered.

Councillor Heenan referred to recent public speculation regarding the futures of the Haydon and Dorcan Recreation Centres.

Councillor Keith Williams commented that was surprised by any speculation regarding these popular and well run centres.

Resolved – (1) That the Board Director Service Delivery, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways, Strategic Transport and Leisure, be authorised to

(a) Invite expressions of interest from the market for leisure and golf packages as set out in paragraph 3.22 of the joint report, noting the availability of up to £3M of one-off resources to enable provision of the continued delivery of sustainable leisure provision in the Borough at a significantly reduced cost, and

(b) Review the expressions of interest based on the considerations set out in paragraphs 3.28 to 3.29 of the joint report.

(2) That the Board Director, Service Delivery be authorised to continue discussions with Highworth Town Council and the Highworth Recreation Trust to determine whether there is an agreement to include or exclude the Highworth Leisure Centre within the market exercise referred to in (1) above.

(3) That the Board Director, Service Delivery report back to the Cabinet with detailed findings and recommendations in respect of the leisure and golf facilities at the earliest opportunity with proposals for savings delivery in the Financial Year, 2014/15.

(4) That the Board Director, Service Delivery be requested to continue with the wide ranging consultation and engagement process that has accompanied the Leisure and Culture Change Programme to date.

(5) That it be noted that the report on the future of Theatre provision will be presented to the Cabinet at its meeting on 11th September 2013.

(6) That the Cabinet notes and approves a further allocation of up to £75,000 of 'one off' resources, previously authorised by the Cabinet, to reflect the latest estimates of the costs of the necessary financial, legal and /or technical advice relating to developing and/or progressing the proposals highlighted in the joint report.

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