

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2013

PRESENT:- Councillors Kevin Small (Chair), John Ballman, Michael Dickinson (Vice-Chair), Brian Ford, Mary Friend, Maureen Penny, Stan Pajak, Robert Wright, Vera Tomlinson, Michael Bray, James Robbins and Steve Weisinger

Councillors David Renard, Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet, Claire Ellis, Cabinet Member for Customer Support and Corporate Services, Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, and Richard Hurley, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery), were also in attendance.

Chief Constable Pat Geenty (Wiltshire Police), Paul Bearman, Executive Director of Commissioning (Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group), and Jill Annal (Department of Work and Pensions) were in attendance in relation to Agenda Item No. 5 ("One Swindon").

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Andrew Bennett, Emma Faramarzi and Cindy Matthews

31. Declarations of Interest

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

32. Public Question Time

Mr Brian Cockbill, a resident of Stratton St. Margaret, put questions regarding:

1. postal delivery arrangements
2. the lack of any demarcation between pedestrian rights of way and cycle pathways in the vicinity of the reinstated crossing facility in Regent Square
3. the comparative proposed reduction in net cost of service at the Arts Centre and the Wyvern Theatre
4. issues raised in the report to the Cabinet meeting on 11 September regarding the Wichelstowe Development

The Chair responded at the meeting to Mr Cockbill's question nos 1 and 4 and asked that written responses be provided in respect of his questions nos 2 and 3.

In response to comments by Mr Cockbill that he had not yet received written answers to questions put to the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14th October, the Chair apologised to Mr Cockbill and asked that these should be provided as soon as possible.

Ms Kareen Boyd, a resident of Hesketh Crescent, Old Town, Swindon, put questions regarding the funding of the University Technical College Design and Build contract, penalties for delays and the authorisation of that contract. The Chair commented that Ms Boyd had put these questions to the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 20th September 2013 and that answers had been provided at that time, however, at his

request, the Leader of the Council, and his support officers, provided Ms Boyd with an updated position statement. With regard to Ms Boyd's specific request for information regarding the authorisation of the contract and penalties for delay, the Leader of the Council commented that the point was moot, since the contractor was already on site. He agreed to provide Ms Boyd with the Council minute reference authorising the contract.

James Boyd, a resident of Hesketh Crescent, Old Town, Swindon, put questions regarding the role of the Mayor of the Borough. The Chair responded to Mr Boyd's questions at the meeting. In response to comments by Mr Boyd regarding a particular answer given, the Chair suggested that he submit the specific question in writing to the Director of Law and Democratic Services for a more detailed response.

33. Consideration of Cabinet Decisions

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report introducing decisions arising from the Cabinet meeting held on 23rd October 2013.

53. *Unlocking Swindon's Economic Potential - Progressing the Economic Strategy*

Councillor David Renard, the Leader of the Council, responded to a question put by Councillor Bob Wright regarding Council representation on the Local Enterprise Partnership Board.

Resolved - That Minute 53 of the Cabinet be noted.

54. *Budget Management 2013/14*

Councillor David Renard, the Leader of the Council, Councillors Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Richard Hurley Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery), and Russell Holland, Cabinet Member for Finance, responded to a questions put by the Chair and Councillors Vera Tomlinson, Des Moffatt and Bob Wright regarding:

- the level of subsidy previously paid by the Council in maintaining Bus Service 47
- the feasibility of further joint working with neighbouring authorities to both maintain and reduce the cost of bus services
- the total cost of providing green waste bins as part of the proposed changes to the green waste collection
- the cost of associated staffing changes and the replacement of the vehicle fleet
- the Council's subscription to the GRANTfinder software
- the effectiveness of the Bus Service 47 replacement arrangements in facilitating the bus travel requirements of students
- the position regarding the Dedicated Schools Grant settlement
- joint working between authorities and the sharing of financial and other information

Resolved - That Minute 54 of the Cabinet be noted.

55. *Implementing the Corporate Strategy - Making the Best Use of Resources*

Councillor David Renard, the Leader of the Council, Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, and Councillor Richard Hurley, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery), supported by the Council's Board Director Service Delivery, responded to questions put by Councillors John Ballman, Des Moffatt, Stan Pajak and Bob Wright regarding:

- funding for children and families with the highest needs
- potential problems associated with the proposed changes in green waste collection and consultation with SCS on these proposals in order to minimise possible impacts on the proposed RDF operation
- proposals in relation to the library service and consultation on these proposals
- the impact of cost reductions associated with the proposed integration of Council and Public Health services
- public consultation on the proposed changes to green waste collection and flexibility within any revised arrangements to accommodate the collection of waste where the local community maintains green areas
- the proposed reduction in the libraries' budget and consultation in support of a revised library strategy
- the likelihood that the revised green waste collection proposals will evidence an increase in the incidence of localised fly tipping

Resolved - That Minute 55 of the Cabinet be noted.

56. *Swindon's Energy Future*

Councillor David Renard, the Leader of the Council, supported by the Council's Board Director Service Delivery, responded to questions put by Councillors Brian Ford, Jim Robbins, Des Moffatt and Bob Wright regarding:

- the contribution of the Wroughton solar development to the attainment of future energy objectives and the benefit of the local community
- Swindon's target of generating sufficient low carbon energy by 2020 to power all residential properties
- working with developers to ensure low carbon usage in new residential properties
- the range of alternative energy sources and the incentives for companies to provide alternative energy sources and the knowledge
- the contribution of local communities to meeting their own energy requirements
 - "Whole Swindon approach"
- the identification of possible sites for solar energy farming and the encouragement of a Swindon scheme

Resolved - That Minute 56 of the Cabinet be noted.

57. *Swindon Commercial Services Ltd. Update*

Resolved - That Minute 57 of the Cabinet be noted.

58. *References from Other Council Bodies: Corporate Parenting Advisory Board /Health and Wellbeing Board*

Resolved - That Minute 58 of the Cabinet be noted.

59. *Public Service (Social Value) Act (Minute for Confirmation)*

Resolved - That Minute 59 of the Cabinet be noted.

34. One Swindon

The Committee received a report and presentation on the One Swindon public services transformation and the Council's working with partners to make best use of available local public spending resources. James Griffin, the Council's Head of Strategy and Research, presented the report, placing it in the context of (i) the current economic climate, and the challenge facing the Council and its public sector partners to maintain and improve outcomes whilst achieving significant savings, and (ii) and the detail of the Joint Statement of Intent (JSI) between the Council, its One Swindon partners and the Government setting the objectives, focus and milestones for One Swindon in 2013/14 and beyond and the resource implications of realising the strategy. *(A copy of Mr Griffin's presentation material as appended to the minutes of the meeting).*

Following his presentation, Mr Griffin, with the Leader of the Council and One Swindon partners, Chief Constable Pat Geenty (Wiltshire Police), Paul Bearman, Executive Director of Commissioning (Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group), and Jill Annal (Department of Work and Pensions), responded to members' questions and observations on issues raised, including:

- member and public engagement in the One Swindon project and the apparent transfer of the Council's democratic mandate to non-elected partner organisations
- member and public engagement in the development of the One Swindon priorities (4) and proposals (12) and the ambition of those priorities and proposals
- the longevity of One Swindon and the robustness of One Swindon service integration proposals and innovations to resist future changes in Government and its priorities
- community capacity and the localities teams' engagement with One Swindon
- Government and legislative constraints to the achievement of joint working objectives and the barrier of partners' differing working behaviours and cultures
- the continuation of multi-agency working arrangements after December and in the event of a negative Government response to the Council's One Swindon proposals
- the equality of the Police relationship between Swindon and Wiltshire

Resolved – (1) That the progress being made through the One Swindon partnership approach be noted.

(2) That the opportunity for member engagement through the planning process, as outlined in the presentation of the report, be welcomed.

(3) That the need for greater public awareness of the work, goals and aims of One Swindon be noted.

(4) That a further report on One Swindon and the implementation of the corporate strategy be made to the Scrutiny Committee in summer 2014.

(5) That the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee and the Leader of the Council be authorised to write to the Government, making representation regarding legislative changes that might be introduced to better support the concept of inter-agency working.

(6) That the Leader of the Council, the Head of Strategy and Research, and the representatives of the Council's One Swindon partners be thanked for attending the meeting to present the report and for their full and open responses to members' questions and observations.