

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2014**

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Robert Wright (Chair), Mark Dempsey, Toby Elliott, Colin Lovell, Mary Martin (Vice-Chair), Kevin Parry, Maureen Penny, Stan Pajak, James Robbins, Steve Weisinger, Robert Wright (Chair), Nick Martin and Peter Watts

Councillors David Renard, Leader of the Council and Chair of Cabinet, Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member of Children's Services and Richard Hurley, Cabinet Member for Public Protection, Housing and Streetsmart (Delivery)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cindy Matthews, Vera Tomlinson and John Ballman.

### **34. Declarations of Interest**

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

### **35. Public Question Time**

Mr Terry Reynolds, a local resident, asked a number of questions relating to the recent check/safety audit on the new road markings etc on Regents Circus. The Chair indicated that a written answer would be provided and invited the Leader to pass the question onto the appropriate officer to respond to.

Richard Symonds, a local resident, asked a number of questions relating to the Western Flyer cycleway and walkway. The Chair indicated that a written answer would be provided by officers.

### **36. Minutes**

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> October 2014, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

### **37. Leaders Half-Year Update to Scrutiny**

Councillor David Renard, the Leader of the Council, submitted his half-yearly report on the Council's performance in delivering its service priorities and targets for 2014/15 and beyond and also his level of success in delivering the specific leadership priorities he had identified in his report to the Scrutiny Committee in June 2014.

The report reviewed the Council's actions using the framework of the agreed Corporate Priorities, as detailed below:

- The need for the right skills, the right jobs in the right places, referring to economic growth being a key priority;

- the need to work with residents to create well cared for neighbourhoods, referring to disposal of litter, recycling, Sussex Square redevelopment and regeneration of Cavendish Square;
- Making the best use of Swindon's resources inside and outside the Council
- Finding new ways to reduce vulnerability and improve health for all
- Working with people and families to help them fulfil their potential

Following Councillor Renard's introduction of his report, members were given the opportunity to put questions to him on the subject matter of his report. Issues raised by members included:

- The Council's priorities to be funded by the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership allocation over the next 5 years.
- The reasons why there was no adequate economic case for funding the Thamesdown Drive Extension
- The marketing of the Kimmerfields site and the proposals for office space within the development
- The work of the Forward Swindon Commissioning Panel to evaluate the commercially sensitive elements of the Kimmerfields development
- Concerns about pothole repairs and the resulting congestion especially in the run up to Christmas
- The Heritage Lottery funding bid for the relocation of the Museum and Arts Gallery and the potential impact on a funding request for the Mechanics Institute. A suggestion that both bids should be submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund as the Mechanics Institute was at such a stage that a bid could now be made
- The numbers of students currently attending the UTC and future projections of attendance capacity
- Details about a potential bid in September 2016 for a second Swindon UTC, with an IT and mobile communications speciality run in partnership with the University of Buckingham, possibly opening in 2018
- The possibility of a transfer of Swindon Libraries to GLL
- Moirai achieving the timescales for the Oasis development
- Details about updated unemployment figures
- Clarification sought in relation to the numbers of troubled families helped through the LIFE initiative
- Up to date financial details in relation to the back log of repairs at schools
- Future decisions to be made by the Council about the allocation of budgets, the amount of flexibility in the financial allocations and the need to secure private investment, in the context of ever decreasing budgets

**Resolved:**

1. That Councillor Renard be thanked for attending the meeting to present the partnership report and for his full and open responses to members questions and observations on the issues raised.
2. That information requested by members during the course of the Committee's consideration of this item be forwarded to members via the Committee Clerk.

**38. Partnerships**

Councillor David Renard, Leader of the Council, presented a report focussing on One Swindon and outlined its development and performance since its inception in 2010.

The Committee was informed that One Swindon was both a statement of strategic intent, in that it sets the tone and focus of partnership working in Swindon, and a programme of work, which was steered by the One Swindon Partnership Board, to maintain and improve priority shared outcomes.

The Leader explained that the One Swindon project was proving to be very successful and that currently there were twelve schemes at various stages of work. Following the presentation of the report, the Leader responded to members' specific questions and observations on the following issues:

- A request for more information about the twelve Schemes and the work of One Swindon to be circulated more widely to Councillors
- Confirmation of leadership and accountability of One Swindon within the Council
- The future of One Swindon after April 2015, the continuation of the twelve schemes and budgetary implications
- Recent examples of good partnership working
- Noted that the report used projects that were achieved by the council and not One Swindon and there was no way of judging progress as there were no milestones to help accountability and progress
- Details of the projects providing new delivery models to be confirmed at the next One Swindon Board meeting

**Resolved:**

1. That Councillor Renard be thanked for attending the meeting to present the partnership report and for his full and open responses to members questions and observations on the issues raised.
2. That information requested by members during the course of the Committee's consideration of this item be forwarded to members via the Committee Clerk.
3. That James Griffin, Head of Strategy and Research be thanked for his input in the preparation of the report.