

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MONDAY, 10 AUGUST 2015

PRESENT:- Councillors Robert Wright (Chair), Richard Hurley, Colin Lovell, Gemma McCracken, Des Moffatt, Maureen Penny, Stan Pajak, Carol Shelley, Vera Tomlinson, Chris Watts, Ray Ballman and Alan Bishop

Councillor Brian Mattock, Deputy Leader of the Council, Vice-Chair of Cabinet, Cabinet Member for Adult Health and Social Care, and Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Transport, were in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Ballman and Kevin Parry

11. 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 Ray Ballman made a non-prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of the Committee's consideration, at agenda item no. 5, of matters pertaining to SEQOL, in her capacity as a non-voting Director of that organisation.

12. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

13. Minutes

Resolved – (1) That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July, 2015, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

(2) That the response of the Director of Law and Democratic Services to matters raised by Councillor Maureen Penny on the issue of insurance cover for council-supervised community volunteer "clean-up" days, and the intention that revised guidance should be issued to members shortly, following clarification of the requisite insurance conditions, be noted.

14. Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session - Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social care

Councillor Brian Mattock, the Deputy Leader of the Council and Vice Chair of Cabinet and Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, was in attendance and presented a detailed report summarising progress and performance in respect of each of the following service areas within his portfolio of responsibility:

- Adult Services (older people, people with a learning disability, physical disabilities, and mental health);
- Adult Voluntary Sector Contracts;
- Implementation of Care Act 2014;
- Adult Local Safeguarding Board;
- Public Health – Adults;

- Supported Housing;
- Learning Disability Partnership Board;
- Maintaining links between the Council and partner organisations in the Health Services;
- SEQOL Client Lead Member;
- Health Improvement;
- Sexual Health;
- Specific Strategic Projects (Wichelstowe).

At the request of the Chair, Councillor Mattock, in his presentation of the report, commented specifically on those elements within his portfolio which he felt had been most successful, those where a different approach might have produced better results and the lessons that might have been learned as a consequence, and the challenges he expected to be faced by the Council relation to these service areas in the coming year and beyond, particularly in relation to on-going budgetary constraints.

Following his presentation of the report, Councillor Mattock responded to members' specific questions and observations on the following topics:

- The vetting of adverts featured on the "MyCare MySupport" advice and information website and legal responsibility for the legitimacy of those adverts.
- The reasons behind the significant increase in the number of allegations of abuse made to the Local Safeguarding Adults Board and the validation of the suggestion that this is more to do with improved awareness, reporting and recording than socio-economic factors.
- The levels of support offered by the Swindon Advice and Support Centre during its first year of operation.
- The significant numbers of people using the Citizen's Advice Bureau for advice on debt and finance issues and the resultant claims for additional benefits.
- The Harbour Project and the impact of increasing numbers of asylum seekers and refugees on Adult Social Care and other services.
- The participation of General Practices in supporting the Swindon Dementia Strategy and the delivery of dementia services in Swindon.
- The composition, terms of reference and agreed objectives of the Dementia Steering Group.
- Housing and Adult Social Care joint solutions and the retention the housing allocation function within the Council's housing services' function.
 - The distinction to be made between the responsibility for meeting the cost of providing dementia care services for individuals and the cost of meeting and managing the housing need of each particular service user.
- The Council's work with its health partners and providers of residential and domiciliary care to reduce the delayed discharges from hospital and future objectives for reducing delayed discharges.
- The complex health support problems of individuals and the implications of these support issues for discharge to Adult Social Care.
 - The additional capacity allocated by the Council to SEQOL to expedite requests for service and care packages in order to facilitate quicker hospital discharges.

- The Cabinet Member's assessment of the ability of Adult Social Care to respond to any increase in the demand for services as a result of, and proposed increase in, the numbers of asylum seekers entering the country.
- The adult physical activity data in the appendices to the report and the availability of comparative data for children.
- The "Get Swindon Active Strategy 2015-20" and the possibility of promoting the strategy via the Localities.
- The details of the key priority for 2015/16 of "reshaping and development of supported housing options for older people, those with learning disabilities and young people, so people are able to live locally with appropriate support and improved access to employment".
 - The Cabinet Member's assessment of the action required to fully achieve this objective and the numbers of service users likely to be directly affected by reshaping in the current year.
- Adult Safeguarding and the LGA report that 150 cases of adult abuse are being reported every day.
- The on-going issue with the provision of the Memory Clinic Service in Swindon and the current waiting list for that service.
- The availability of health checks for people with learning disabilities.
- Support for the Learning Disability Partnership Board in co-ordinating the Joint Health and Social Care Self-Assessment Framework.
- Hospital discharges and the availability of data relating to planned operations and re-admissions.
- The pre-planning of hospital stays and care packages in order to reduce the number of delayed discharges.
 - The "shift" of resource allocation from acute hospital operation to preventative action.
 - The benefits of enhancing the Better Care Fund and the integration of health and adult social care services.
 - Swindon specific initiatives in support of preventative action.
 - "Circles of Support" provided for individual service users via the Localities Team.
- The Mental Capacity Act and the use of only registered service providers.
- The status of proposed supported housing schemes.
- The timeframe for the registration of carers.
- Additional supporting information that the Cabinet Member might consider including in his next progress report to the Committee.

Resolved – (1) That Councillor Mattock be thanked for attending the meeting to present this performance 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.

(Councillor Carol Shelley made a non-prejudicial interest regarding discussion about the Citizens Advice Bureau, in her capacity as a volunteer at the organisation.)

15. Cabinet Member Question and Answer Session - Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Transport

Councillor Dale Heenan, Cabinet Member for Sustainability and Transport, was in attendance and presented a detailed report summarising progress and performance in respect of each of the following service areas within his portfolio of responsibility:

- Sustainability;
- Strategic Transport Network;
- Public Transport (including Concessionary Fares, Specialist Transport, Council Transport and Fleet Management);
- Traffic and Transport Forward Planning (including Local Transport Plan and Implementation of Local Transport Plan);
- Strategic Highways & Maintenance Works;
- Strategic Flood and Water Management.
- Strategic Spatial Planning and Development Framework Planning and Libraries *(for the period up to May 2015 only)*

The Committee noted that the report included a brief narrative on significant achievements in planning in the period between the Cabinet Member's last Scrutiny Q and A in December 2014 and the amendment to Cabinet Member portfolio responsibilities in May 2015, at which time the portfolio responsibility transferred to Councillor Toby Elliot.

At the request of the Chair, Councillor Heenan, in his presentation of the report, commented specifically on those elements within his portfolio that he felt had been most successful, those where a different approach might have produced better results and the lessons that might have been learned as a consequence, and the challenges he expected to be faced by the Council relation to these service areas in the coming year and beyond, particularly in relation to on-going budgetary constraints.

Following his presentation of the report, Councillor Heenan responded to members' specific questions and observations on the following issues raised in the presentation and also in the accompanying report:

- The allocation of highways capital funding to the Localities for taking forward local priority schemes.
- The role of Localities in influencing and prioritising planned works programmes.
- The sources and utilisation of income derived from solar park developments.
- Bridge assessments and opportunities to improve direct footway links between North and South Swindon.
- The Cheney Manor Flood Mitigation scheme and the sub-contracting arrangements utilised in relation to traffic management during the period of the works.
 - The detrimental impact for road users and residents of the associated temporary traffic management scheme.
- The Council's Asset Management Strategy and the effective management of the local highway asset and available financial resources.
- The Regent Circus Development pedestrian crossing points.

- The cycling strategy and the feasibility of allowing dual use of footpaths by pedestrians and cyclists.
- Passenger transportation and the exploration of alternative means to the diesel engine powered bus.
- The disruption to traffic movements last winter as a result of road works, with particular reference being made to the works carried out to the Stratton railway bridge, and the likelihood of further utilities works affecting the bridge in the coming months.
- The condition of primary footways network and the effective application of the limited financial resource available for requisite maintenance works.
- The Council's unsuccessful application for funding from the Local Highways Management Fund and the criteria applied to applications.
- The Thamesdown Drive extension and measures to resolve the Greenbridge "bridge" problem.
- The closure of Fleming Way and implementation of the "two way Station Road plan".
- The potential for damage being caused to the highway infrastructure and properties in the Railway Village due to buses routed through the Railway Village.
- The feasibility and potential for voluntary public contribution (via a fare increase) towards maintaining non-viable commercial bus services.

Resolved – (1) That Councillor Heenan be thanked for attending the meeting to present this performance 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.