

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 26 APRIL 2017

PRESENT:- Councillors David Renard (Chair), Russell Holland, Oliver Donachie, Toby Elliott, Fionuala Foley, Brian Ford, Mary Martin, Garry Perkins and Keith Williams.

Councillor Steve Allsopp attended the meeting in respect of Minute No. 122.
Councillor Jim Robbins attended the meeting in respect of Minute Nos. 125 and 126.
Councillor Bob Wright attended the meeting in respect of Minute No. 118.

113. Declarations of Interest.

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

Councillor Toby Elliott made a non-prejudicial personal declaration of interest in respect of the Agenda Item No. 11 ("Draft Airports National Policy Statements") on the grounds of his employment by Network Rail.

114. Minutes.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th March, 2017, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

115. Public Question Time.

Ms Sarah Church, a Shrivenham resident, had submitted a written question on the Council's proposed changes to library opening hours from 6th April and whether these proposals and other proposed changes in respect of the library service were compliant with the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964. The Chair thanked Ms Church for her question and advised the meeting that a written answer had been provided to Ms Church and had also been circulated at the meeting.

Ms Church asked a supplementary question about the inclusion of non-core libraries in any future Public Sector Mutual. Councillor Mary Martin, the Cabinet Member for Communities, responded to the question at the meeting.

116. Exempt Items - Exclusion of Press and Public.

Resolved – That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to in the item listed below, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information, as defined in the respective paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Item No.	Paragraph No.	Minute No.
16	3	128

117.

Budget Management Update

Councillor Russell Holland, the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services, and the Corporate Director, Resources and Transformation, submitted a joint report presenting the 2016/17 Revenue Budget forecast out-turn and a capital programme update.

Councillor Holland introduced the joint report and, in particular, drew members' attention to the importance of the work at Waterside for which specific funding was requested.

Resolved – (1) That the projected Revenue Budget out-turn position for 2016/17, set out in Table 1 of the report and Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

(2) That the additional capital expenditure at Waterside, detailed in paragraph 3.6 of the report, be approved.

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

118.

Housing Revenue Account Acquisitions Programme 2017/18

Councillor Oliver Donachie, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness, and the Corporate Director, Communities and Place, submitted a joint report seeking Cabinet's approval to take immediate steps to provide additional homes for up to 100 families that are presently homeless. It was noted that the intention of the proposal was to also target, where possible, empty properties, thereby making full use of existing housing and reducing the blight caused in neighbourhoods by empty homes.

Councillor Bob Wright (Central Ward) asked a number of questions relating to the definition, costs and accessibility of affordable housing, and the availability of Council Houses for those at the benefits cap (£20,000), which Councillor Donachie responded to at the meeting.

Resolved – (1) That a budget of £17m be allocated from within the Housing Revenue Account to purchase existing family sized properties from the local housing market to alleviate current homelessness pressures. The purchases to be funded by a combination of Housing Revenue Account reserves, the use of retained Right to Buy receipts and borrowing where required, as set out in paragraph 3.15 of the report.

(2) That, if required, additional Housing Revenue Account borrowing be approved, to fund house purchases and improvement works to the Council housing stock, as set out in paragraph 3.15 of the report.

(3) That the Director of Law and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Head of Housing Management and Community Safety, be authorised to complete all associated legal documentation necessary to purchase the properties identified and on such other terms as he considers necessary to protect the Council's position.

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

Councillor Fionuala Foley, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, and Councillor Keith Williams, the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways and Transport, and the Head of Education and the Head of Highways and Transport, submitted a joint report setting out the Council's legal duties in relation to Education Transport and seeking Cabinet's approval to (i) implement the proposed Education Transport Policy for pupils attending education establishments from the start of the academic year 2018/19, (ii) consult on a proposed Education Transport Policy for the academic year 2018/19, including changes relating to Post 16 transport and Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) 16 years to 25 years travel, and (iii) implement a Personal Travel Budget (PTB) offer as the primary method of transport assistance allocated to pupils with SEND, requiring transport and at all transition phases from September 2017 onwards.

The report also highlighted the intention to promote appropriate independence skills amongst young people, advising that all young people would be supported and encouraged to travel independently to school, including through the use of public transport when assessed as reasonable to do so.

Councillor Foley thanked the officers from the two service departments for their work in preparing the report and emphasised that no young person currently in post 16 or further education would be affected by any of the proposals.

Councillor Keith Williams elaborated on how addressing transport issues was essential to ensure that potential barriers to young people having access to education could be removed.

Given that the consultation would occur during the pre-election period, Councillor Foley moved an amendment to show that due consideration had been taken of relevant guidance.

Resolved – (1) That the Head of Education and the Head of Highways and Transport be authorised to conduct a consultation during May and June 2017 on the proposed Education Transport Policy 2018/19 including:

- a) Changes to remove automatic discretionary subsidised support for pupils accessing mainstream Post 16 education. There will be no changes for pupils already attending Post 16 schools or colleges who received travel assistance prior to September 2018.
- b) Changes relating to Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) 16 years to 25 years travel to introduce a Personal Travel Budget (PTB), a bus pass or a parental contribution to the transport required. There will be no changes for pupils already attending Post 16 schools or colleges who received travel assistance prior to September 2018.

(2) That the Head of Education and Head of Highways and Transport be authorised to implement the offer of a Personal Travel Budget (PTB) or bus pass as the primary methods of transport assistance allocated to pupils with SEND, requiring transport at all transition stages (year R, 3, 7 and 12) from September 2017 onwards and/or when changing school location.

(3) That it be noted that the proposed consultation will be in accordance with the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity (March 2011) as it will

be a Council consultation led by the relevant officer.

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

120. Swindon Challenge

Councillor Fionuala Foley, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, and the Head of Education, submitted a joint report setting out a strategy to address and raise performance in primary, secondary schools and 16-19 education in Swindon through the introduction of "Swindon Challenge". It was noted that this was a three-year programme to improve outcomes for young people and improve school performance and that the report was necessary to inform members of the strategy and the actions taken so far to implement the programme.

Councillor Foley drew members' attention to the aims and objectives of the Challenge Board, reiterating the position that the Council was just one part of a wider collaboration with schools, employers, councillors and the community working to raise school attainment levels.

Resolved – (1) That the Strategy for School Improvement, outlined in the report, be adopted.

(2) That the Head of Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, be authorised to develop and implement the Swindon Challenge action plan.

(3) That the Head of Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, bring a further report to Cabinet as soon as practicable on how to make Swindon "A Learning Town".

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

121. Karen Reeve, Director of Children's Services

Councillor David Renard, the Leader of the Council, advised the meeting that Karen Reeve, the Council's Director of Children's Services, would soon be leaving the employ of the Council and that this would be the last occasion that she would attend a Cabinet meeting in that capacity. On behalf of members, Councillor Renard thanked Karen for her years of service and for her achievements in support of Children's Services.

122. Swindon Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan 2017/18 (Minute For Confirmation)

Councillor Keith Williams, the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways, and Transport, and the Head of Highways & Transport, submitted a joint report seeking approval for the adoption of the Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan for 2017/18 and for the Local Transport Plan Capital Programme budget apportionment for 2017/18.

It was noted that the Local Transport Plan (LTP) is the principal means of delivering the Council's transport programme and is the statutory document that contains the

transport policies and programmes of the local transport authority. It is listed in Article 4 of the Council Constitution as a key document informing the policy framework for the Council and it is subject to an annual report to the Cabinet in order to ensure transparency in the apportionment of the funding and aid the delivery of the programme.

Councillor Steve Allsopp (Walcot and Park North Ward) welcomed the proposed maintenance works on Upham Road and asked that the works be publicised well in advance of commencement, to try and minimise disruption while the work was being undertaken. Councillor Williams confirmed that this would be the case, advising that every measure was taken in advance of any planned road works to both advise local communities of pending road works and to try and limit disruption.

Councillor Brian Ford (Cabinet Member for Adults' Health and Social Care) advised the meeting of the continuing concerns of Wroughton and Wichelstowe residents about the proposed tunnel at Junction 16.

Resolved – (1) That Council be recommended to approve:

- a) The Local Transport Plan (LTP) Implementation Plan for 2017/18.
- b) The Local Transport Plan Capital Programme budget categories and total spend for 2017/18, as detailed in Tables 1 to 8 of the Implementation Plan attached as Appendix 3 to the report.
- c) The allocation of the 2017/18 Highways Maintenance Incentive Fund as set out in paragraph 3.8.

(2) That, subject to approval of the Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan by Council, the Head of Highways and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for StreetSmart, Highways, and Transport, be authorised to:

- a) Prioritise schemes in accordance with Vision for Swindon priorities.
- b) Approve scheme progression in accordance with the updated Protocol (attached as Appendix 2 and originally approved by the Cabinet in July 2010 Cabinet Minute 23, 2010/11 refers).
- c) Amend the Protocol to reflect changing job titles, organisational restructuring, and improved input from and visibility to Councillors.
- d) Vary allocations between different budget categories
- e) Approve variations in scheme costs.
- f) Add/substitute schemes, provided expenditure is contained within the approved total budget.
- g) Develop and submit a bid to the National Productivity Investment Fund and to any other relevant funding opportunity that might be launched by Government, or other funding agencies, for transport schemes that will benefit Swindon and which are in accordance with Vision for Swindon priorities.

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

123. Draft Airports National Policy Statement

Councillor Garry Perkins, the Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills, and the Corporate Director, Economy, Regeneration and Skills, submitted a joint report responding to Council's decision at its meeting on 10th November 2016, that the Cabinet Member report to Cabinet, when practicable, on how Swindon can

take advantage of Heathrow's expansion (Council Minute 62 2016/17 refers). The report set out the Council's proposed response to the Government's consultation on the draft Airports National Policy Statement.

It was noted that the Government's proposed policy in relation to the provision of airport capacity was important to Swindon, which had benefitted from good access to Heathrow Airport, as this was a factor in persuading international businesses to establish and maintain a presence within the Borough. It was the Cabinet Member's and Corporate Director's view that it was important to the Borough's economy that Heathrow Airport continues to operate as the United Kingdom's premier international gateway and that, accordingly, it was important for the Borough Council to make its views known by responding to the consultation.

Councillor Perkins and Councillor Martin emphasised the importance of a direct rail link to Heathrow from the west, which would aid Swindon's economy and businesses by reducing the journey time to less than an hour.

Resolved – (1) That the Corporate Director, Economy, Regeneration and Skills, be authorised to respond to the Government consultation on the draft Airports National Policy Statement by:

- a) Welcoming the Government's decision to expand runway capacity in the south-east through the construction of a third runway at Heathrow Airport, given the importance of Heathrow as the main international gateway for Swindon's business community and residents.
- b) Endorsing the Government's assessment that such expansion at Heathrow Airport will provide the greatest economic benefit for the UK, including to Swindon, through enhancing the potential for increased inward investment in the town by multi-national businesses taking advantage of Swindon's easier access to international markets.
- c) Recognising that expansion at Heathrow Airport will complement the Council's Economic Strategy objectives to maintain Swindon's competitiveness as a location in which new and existing businesses will be able to thrive, notably through the reduced journey times taken to access the Airport from Swindon with the Western Rail Link to Heathrow in place.
- d) Supporting the objectives within the draft NPS to promote improved public transport access to Heathrow Airport, and to specifically urge Government to ensure that the Western Rail Link to Heathrow, with the attendant benefits that it will bring to communities along the Great Western Corridor, be prioritised for delivery in 2024 in accordance with the current construction programme for the scheme.

(2) That the Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration, and Skills, report this decision to Council.

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

124. Draft Economic Strategy for Swindon to 2026

Councillor Garry Perkins, the Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills, and the Corporate Director, Economy, Regeneration and Skills, submitted a joint report seeking approval of the revised draft Economic Strategy, setting out the Council's Vision, Objectives and Actions to accelerate growth in Swindon's

economy over the next ten years. The report also sought approval to going out to public consultation on the draft Economic Strategy with a view to a further report to Cabinet and Council, for final signing off of the Strategy, in the Autumn of 2017. Councillor Perkins identified how the strategy, once adopted, would be used to promote inward investment and secure access to government funding.

It was noted that, in producing the draft Economic Strategy (Appendix A to the report), officers had engaged with central Government departments, Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP), businesses, business service providers, Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and business networking groups.

In light of the recent announcement of a general election, Councillor Perkins moved an amendment delaying the start of the consultation.

Resolved – (1) That the revised draft Economic Strategy, which sets out the Vision, Objectives and Actions for Swindon's economy over the next ten years, be approved for the purposes of public consultation.

(2) That the Cabinet Member for the Economy, Regeneration and Skills, and the Corporate Director, Economy, Regeneration and Skills, submit a further report on the adoption of the Strategy to Cabinet and Council for approval by the Autumn of 2017, having taken into account comments made during the consultation process.

(3) That it be noted that the consultation process would be commenced on 9th June 2017.

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

125. Libraries Strategy - Alternative Delivery Models

Councillor Mary Martin, the Cabinet Member for Communities, and the Head of Localities, Community Involvement and Volunteering, submitted joint report seeking approval to consult on the establishment a Public Services Mutual (PSM) organisation, established as a charity, to deliver Swindon's Library Strategy for promoting and increasing literacy and learning. This proposal responded to the Cabinet decision at its meeting on 8th February 2017 to conduct an options appraisal to consider alternative delivery models for the Council's Library Service (Cabinet Minute 94 2016/17 refers).

It was noted that approval of the recommendations in the report would initiate consultation on the preferred option to establish a Public Services Mutual, the development of a viable business plan and the development of appropriate contractual, governance and staffing arrangements that would be required to establish a PSM as the basis on which the core Library Services will be delivered.

Councillor Jim Robbins (Mannington and Western Ward) asked questions seeking clarification on elements of the legal advice referred to in paragraph 5.4 of the report. Councillor Martin and the Director of Law and Democratic Services responded at the meeting.

In light of the recent announcement of a general election, Councillor Martin moved an amendment proposing a delay in starting the consultation.

Resolved – (1) That the Head of Library Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, the Head of Localities, Community Involvement and Volunteering, the Corporate Director Resources and Transformation, the Director of Finance (s151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Democratic Services:

- a) Develop a viable business plan for the Public Service Mutual (hereafter referred to as PSM), that meets the financial framework for the service, and sets out appropriate arrangements for the treatment of assets, back office costs, charges for services to non-core community-led Library services and staff transfer and pension arrangements.
- b) Consult with Library staff, Councillors, Friends of groups and supporters, and Library users about the intention to establish a PSM for the delivery of Library services, and the ownership and governance arrangements for the new organisation.

(2) That the Head of Localities, Community Involvement and Volunteering, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, the Corporate Director Resources and Transformation, and the Director of Law and Democratic Services:

- c) Develop an appropriate governance, client and contractual model that would apply between the Council and a PSM for the delivery of the Library Strategy.
- d) Report to a future meeting of Cabinet appropriate recommendations regarding the establishment of a PSM, subject to the outcomes of the consultation, the development of a viable business plan, and further legal and procurement advice.
- e) Seek financial support from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to meet the costs of professional advisers to support the development of the business plan for the PSM.
- f) Draw down a sum of up to £30k from Libraries transitional funding to enable a joint funding arrangement to be established with DCMS to meet the costs of developing a viable business for the PSM.

(3) That it be noted that the consultation process would be commenced on 9th June 2017.

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

126. Swindon Libraries - Children's Library Membership

Councillor Mary Martin, the Cabinet Member for Communities, and the Head of Localities, Community Involvement and Volunteering, submitted joint report seeking Cabinet's approval of a scheme by which the Register Office staff would make parents more aware of the library service when they come to register their child.

The report addressed the financial and other implications of a motion to Council at its meeting on 26th January 2017, seeking the establishment a library card scheme where children would automatically become library members when their parents register their birth. It was noted that, in accordance with Standing Order 9(1), the motion had been referred, without discussion, to Cabinet.

Councillor Jim Robbins the seconder of the original motion at Council, spoke on behalf of Councillor Fay Howard, who had moved the motion at Council but was not in attendance, to thank the Cabinet Member for the report.

Resolved – (1) That the adoption of a scheme to encourage children's membership

of the Library Service, as detailed in the report, be approved.

(2) That Councillor Mary Martin, the Cabinet Member for Communities, report this decision to Council.

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

127. References from Other Council Bodies - Health and Wellbeing Board

Councillor Brian Ford, the Cabinet Member for Adults' Health and Social Care, and the Director of Law and Democratic Services, submitted joint report inviting Cabinet to consider references from the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 15th March 2017 that (i) the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Refresh 2017, and (ii) the Swindon Tobacco Control Strategy 2017-2022, be adopted.

Resolved – That the “Health and Wellbeing Strategy Refresh 2017” and the “Swindon Tobacco Control Strategy 2017-2022” be adopted.

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

128. Wichelstowe Parcels 2 & 3

Councillor Toby Elliott, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability, and the Corporate Director, Economy, Regeneration and Skills, submitted a joint report seeking approval to progress the delivery of residential development at Wichelstowe on land known as parcels 2 and 3.

Resolved – (1) That the Corporate Director, Economy, Regeneration and Skills, in consultation with the Cabinet member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability, be authorised to proceed with planning the development of parcels 2 and 3 at Wichelstowe (“the land”).

(2) That the Corporate Director, Economy, Regeneration and Skills, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability, prepare the business case for Wichelstowe Parcels 2 and 3 and, following its consideration by the Commercial Investment Board and CMAG, submit the business case to the June Cabinet meeting for approval.

(3) That the Director of Law and Democratic Services consider terms for the transfer of the land and report these to the June Cabinet meeting for approval.

(4) That the Director of Law and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability, also consider the appropriate company structure and necessary legal processes and report these to the June Cabinet for approval.

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