

Additional Information on work within the portfolio

Pledges

- 1.1 For Pledge 7, the wider Phase 1 development programme of 100 additional affordable homes will be completed by April 2018. This includes supported housing developments at, Bembridge Close (6 bungalows), Linden Ave (5 bungalows) and the Hawthorns (24 bungalows). Plans for a further major regeneration scheme are being developed in Queens Drive, Park South. These developments also contribute to Pledge 9.

Public Protection

- 1.2 There are currently 1978 registered food businesses in Swindon and generally compliance and standards of food safety have been maintained through a regime of inspection, advice and support. The numbers of premises rated 4 and 5 star under the national Food Hygiene Rating (FHR) system is 1153 (as at 8/01/2018). We have 571 premises excluded or exempt from the Food Hygiene rating scheme or are waiting for their first inspection. However 11 businesses remain rated at zero star despite the considerable support and assistance given to them. We are currently in the 2nd stage of project called Operation Elevate, which supports zero and 1 rated premises with the aim of increasing their hygiene rating to a 2 or above. In the first stage of the Operation 75% increased their rating to a 2 or above. In these cases it has been appropriate to take formal enforcement action such as enforced closure, seizure of unsafe food stuffs or prosecution. We continue to work closely with business combatting the serious issue of meat fraud and are participating in a regional initiative to ensure the traceability safety and traceability of animal feedstuffs entering the food supply chain. There is support for the Government's proposal to make display of FHR (Food Hygiene Rating) scores mandatory for food
- 1.3 The Council is preparing for the large raft of new legislation to be enacted in the Housing field. The new powers will change the way enforcement is carried out, and provides for improved funding of the function through Civil Penalty Charges & Rent Repayment Orders where significant non-compliance is identified, and as an alternative to prosecution. Proper application of the new powers will significantly improve landlord compliance in the rented sector.
- 1.4 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Licensing is to be extended in scope—to include properties inhabited by 5 people or more and single and two storey properties must now be licensed, if they fall within the above remit, including properties converted into bedsits.
- 1.5 The Council was awarded over £270,000, from the Government's Controlling Migration Fund (CMF). This funding has been secured to help tackle a variety of issues, one of which relates to the safety of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) in Central Swindon, particularly around housing and fire inspections following the tragic fire in Manchester Road in November 2016. This project will focus on providing advice and information to landlords and tenants as well as wider environmental hazards such as fly tipping and waste management

and also providing safety and wellbeing advice, enabling better integration, and identifying enforcement work principally within the private rented sector..

- 1.6 We continue to monitor air quality across the Borough, and are taking forward additional, more intense, work around a discrete area of the town that is exceeding air quality limit criteria. A separate report is in the accompanying Cabinet papers.
- 1.7 The Council's efforts to constrain Statutory Nuisance service demand, through better provision of enabling information, and with the recent introduction of online early case management, appears to be having an effect; with 892 new cases registered in 2017/18 YTD; a 15% pro-rata reduction against 1220 in 2016/17 and 1162 in 2015/16. Peak time for this workflow is in Spring through Autumn, and so it is expected that the full year's demand will be below each of the last two years.

Housing

The Causes of Homelessness

- 1.8 The top reason for all homelessness acceptances in 2015/16 and 2016/17 was the termination of assured shorthold tenancies (mainly used in the private sector). This accounted for 38% of all homelessness acceptances in Swindon and 29% in England.
- 1.9 The second highest was parents, other family or friends are no longer willing to accommodate. This was the reason for 15% of all homelessness acceptances in Swindon and 26% in England during 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 1.10 The third highest reason was the breakdown of a relationship either non-violent or violent. Violent relationship breakdowns were more frequent than non-violent breakdowns. Relationship breakdowns accounted for 6% of all homelessness acceptances in Swindon and 18% in England during 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- 1.11 The Council has recently applied for and received additional Flexible Homelessness Support Grant to alleviate the pressures described above. The newly allocated funding allocation is shown in the table below:

Year	2017/18	2018/19
Swindon allocation (original)	£807,206	£904,071
Swindon allocation (revised)	£1,645,133	£1,842,549
Difference	£837,927	£938,478

- 1.12 Along with other local authorities, Swindon has seen a recent upsurge in Rough Sleeping. A recent estimate has been made of 45 rough sleepers at various locations across the Borough. The Council has responded by protecting £1.4m of grant funding to our main providers of accommodation for the single homeless and those fleeing domestic abuse. This accommodation is managed by the Salvation Army, Threshold Housing Link, Stonewater

Housing and Swindon Women's Aid. The Council continues to provide part funding for the Street Outreach Service as well as the use of its Homelessness Prevention Fund to support individuals in the private rented sector.

- 1.13 **Tenant Engagement** The service continues to explore new ways to take on the views of our tenants. "The Housing Sounding Board" has grown to over 1000 active participants as well as over 800 Facebook and over 700 twitter account followers. Additional "Street Reps" have been recruited following a successful pilot in Penhill. The dedicated tenants' website continues to be developed with nearly 4000 viewings.
- 1.14 A new Tenant Participation Strategy was completed in 2017 and covers a range of opportunities and support available to tenants who volunteer to help to improve the housing service.
- 1.15 **Tenant Academy** - Over 75 tenants took part in Tenant Academy Courses in 2016/17 including programmes for our sheltered housing residents. Work with tenants affected by the benefit cap has commenced, with 25 tenants referred to training providers and four tenants so far have gained employment during the year. We also referred a further five people for employability support as a result of referrals from housing officers and made seven referrals under the Greenlight programme.
- 1.16 **Housing and Adult Social Care.** There have been a number of joint initiatives which make best use of Council resources including developing and refurbishing new affordable homes to meet complex needs, for example 24 assisted living bungalows at the Hawthorns.
- 1.17 The new post of Social Care Lettings Officer continues to work on individual complex Housing and Adult Social Care cases whilst also developing protocols to improve partnership working, for example, training and information sessions held between housing officers and the Great Western Hospital discharge team
- 1.18 A Department of Health Grant Award of £340,000 to apply some of the most advanced technology to the new development under construction at the Hawthorns in Gorse Hill, Bembridge Close in Park North and at Linden Avenue in Pinehurst. This technology will support residents and there carers to enable individuals to live as independently as possible, for example using movement sensors and technology that monitors the taking of medication.
- 1.19 A new Pathway flat is now up and running within one of Swindon's sheltered housing schemes. This flat can be used by someone struggling in their current accommodation who may be awaiting an assessment or adaptation or for someone unable to return home from hospital pending assessment or longer term accommodation sources and add to the savings already achieved in Adult Social Care. This has proved so successful that 2 more flats are currently being adapted to be used as Pathway flats.
- 1.20 **Repairs and Improvements.** An independent Stock Condition Survey (SCS) identified that 98.6% of homes are compliant with the Decent Homes

Standard. Financial challenges are detailed in the accompanying Cabinet Report on the Housing Revenue Account.

- 1.21 **Capital contracts.** A contract worth £7 million was completed recently on a programme of structural repairs and thermal improvements to 190 steel frame and concrete houses in Pinehurst and Meadowcroft
- 1.22 Progress with other long-term contracts are shown as follows:
 - 1.22.1 Gas Central Heating – in year 2 to of a possible 5 year contract with potential value up to £8.9 million
 - 1.22.2 Electrical Upgrades – in year 3 of a possible 4 year contract with potential value up to £4.3 million
 - 1.22.3 External Planned Maintenance – in year 2 of a possible 4 year contract with potential value up to £4.1million
 - 1.22.4 Roofing Renewals – 1 year contract complete, but contract not being extended due to gas safety issue, which will delay works, but new contract to be let and roof work to be accelerated during 2018/19.
 - 1.22.5 PVCu windows & doors – 1 to 5 year contract with potential value up to £4 million
 - 1.22.6 Kitchen refurbishment in year 2 of possible 5 year contract with potential value up to £4.6 million [to supplement delivery by our in-house team]
 - 1.22.7 Bathroom refurbishment - initial long-term contract not carried out. Short-term contract let with value up to £650k for 2017/18. New long-term contract to be let during 2018/19
 - 1.22.8 Major Adaptations – 2 to 4 year contract let with potential value up to £4.8 million
- 1.23 An options appraisal has been completed to two high-rise blocks in the south of the town and design works are planned to be carried out during 2018/19.
- 1.24 Gas and electrical safety remains a high priority and we are on target for 100% compliance for the 8th consecutive year for gas safety and 100% for the 1st year for 10-year periodic electrical inspections. The Council obtained an Association Removal Contractors Association (ARCA) gold award for the 2nd consecutive year and has a 3-year asbestos removals licence in recognition of our good practice for the safe removal of asbestos containing material.

Community Safety

- 1.25 **Reducing Domestic Abuse.** On November 21st 2017, during Domestic Abuse Awareness Week, the Community Safety Partnership successfully launched the 'Domestic Abuse is Everybody's Business' campaign. The campaign was an outcome of a Swindon Domestic Homicide Review (the details of which are currently confidential) and is designed to encourage witnesses of domestic abuse to report their suspicions. The need for the

public to recognise and report domestic abuse where they suspect it was identified as a factor in the homicide and this campaign recommendation received positive feedback from the Home Office.

- 1.26 **Prevent (Counter Terrorism).** The CSP leads on preventing individuals from becoming radicalised by responding locally to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat we face from those who promote these views. A local Prevent Board monitors and responds to concerns and in 4 cases extensive support has successfully been given to all involved to prevent radicalisation.
- 1.27 **Anti-Social Behaviour.** The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) Team has introduced Community MARACs (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) to intensively tackle the highest-risk cases of crime and anti-social behaviour; including gang activity, domestic abuse and dangerous drug networks. This process has led to significant positive outcomes for victims and in some cases perpetrators, in cases that had an immediate threat to life.
- 1.28 **Needs Assessment and Strategy.** A Swindon substance misuse needs assessment has been undertaken and informed the 2018-2022 Swindon Substance Misuse Strategy (all ages) has been produced and agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Strategy outlines four key priorities: Prevention and early intervention with young people and their families; Reducing health related harm and addressing inequalities; Promoting sustained recovery for those dependent on substances; and Reduce substance misuse related crime and anti-social behaviour.
- 1.29 **Service Recommissioning.** The current contract for adult substance misuse treatment expires at the end of March 2018 and we have worked with Wiltshire County Council to recommission a substance misuse treatment service for Swindon and Wiltshire. The new service will commence in April 2018. The service will focus on Prevention, Accessibility, Collaboration and Treatment and will embrace the digital age with innovative prevention and treatment options using digital technology alongside face to face treatment options.
- 1.30 **Treatment.** The adult drug service is meeting client demand with 676 clients being effectively treated over the past 12 months (Target 600). For non-opiate and alcohol treatment the service is performing in the top quartile and for opiate treatment performance is just below the top quartile compared to other local authorities. The young people's substance misuse service (U-Turn) has received a positive Care Quality Commission report following a recent inspection. The services continue to have no waiting times.

Licensing

- 1.31 A Public Spaces Protection Order covering the control of dogs in Lydiard Park was successfully introduced last year. This PSPO has been recognised by the Kennel Club, (who have been critical of many other PSPO's elsewhere), as exemplar. The presence of the PSPO has reduced the number of dog related incidents at Lydiard through education, and no formal complaints have been raised in the last year around dog behaviour at the park. Work is almost

complete on a Borough-wide PSPO dealing with dog fouling and dogs off leads in play areas. An opportunity will also be provided for Parish Councils to implement the Order.