

**Response from the meeting of the Cabinet on the
O&S Committee's Comments – 20 April 2022 & 11 May 2022**

20 April 2022

Item Number: 4 – Joint Governance – Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils; and

Item Number: 5 – Inter-Authority Agreement between Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Council

Requested by: Chairs - O&S and F&A

Reasons Considered:

Due to the significance of the items in relationship to the governance of the Council and its proposed merger.

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted that the report had been withdrawn, that this may impact on the planned integration of services with potentially a delay to this. There were concerns around this and the Leader agreed to provide clarification on the impact of this to Cabinet next week for all Councillors.

Cabinet Response:

These items were withdrawn following publication of the agenda. The Leader made a statement on why they were withdrawn which was recorded in the minutes of Cabinet 20 April 2022, subject to a press statement.

Item Number 6 – Amendments to the Constitution

Requested by: Chair - O&S

Reasons Considered:

Due to the significance of the items in relationship to the governance of the Council and its proposed merger.

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations and provided the following observations:

1. The Committee felt the clarification on the reasons why a report is confidential should be explained within the report itself to show how the information related back to the legal reason for it being exempt. It would also be useful if the report could provide a timescale/event for when it may be possible for the information to become public.
2. The PABs need to improve the consistency in their minute format to facilitate Councillors' understanding,
3. Consideration should be given if the PAB minutes could be public minutes.
4. Noted that the better description of items expected to go to PAB would be those items that propose significant change to a service.

Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved, including the recommendation from the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee that the wording of the remit of the new

Audit and Standards Committee as defined at Appendix 2 to the report should be revised to highlight its role in reviewing the risk for the Council, and subject to the following amendment to recommendation 1 to read:

- (1) it approves the definition of a key decision ~~aligns with proposals for the Joint Cabinet Committee and the value set by Stratford on Avon District Council,~~ as set out at Appendix 1 to the report.

Officers were asked to investigate the potential for the PAB agendas and minutes to be made public and that there should be a more consistent approach to the work of the PABS, and the format of their minutes.

Council Response:

Council approved the recommendations from Cabinet.

Item Number 9 – HEART Shared Service Partnership

Requested by: Chair - O&S and Labour Group

Reasons Considered:

Serious and worrying delays for residents in need of this service

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the report at length and had concerns about the cyclical nature of the concerning position set out in the report.

The Committed noted the recommendations in the report and agreed that a report be brought back to Scrutiny in six Months, unless a report is brought to Cabinet at that time on the progress/improvements made and if needed the options available to the Council to change the service.

The Committee thanked the Head of Housing and Portfolio Holder for their time in attending and engaging with the Committee on this report.

Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

Item Number 10 – Masterplanning Framework for Land to the North and East of Kenilworth/South of Coventry

Requested by: Green Group

Reasons Considered:

We strongly welcome the intention of this item and we are hopeful that it will have a significant positive impact on residents, especially in the north of the District. It goes to the heart of taking innovative steps to address the climate emergency, which is a strategic priority of the Council.

We would like the following discussed:

- Can a recommendation be added to include discussion in relevant PABs (e.g. Place and Economy) prior to the development of this masterplan?
- Paragraph 1.13 states that the purpose of the masterplan has yet to be agreed. Should the purpose include creation of a shared vision for what the 'zone' will

offer in terms of economic, social and environmental benefits? A new vision is likely to have greater buy-in with other councils, developers, employers and the general public.

- Arguments against bold action to encourage active travel are often essentially 'predict and provide' e.g. 'many people use cars and we expect them to continue to do so'. Can the masterplan include more progressive approaches to balancing the travel needs of different groups with recent government guidelines on active travel and the need for climate change mitigation?

So, this call-in is primarily based on the strategic priority and number of residents affected, alongside consideration of a possible additional recommendation.

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report and proposals for providing the master planning framework to help recognise the constraints in the area and developing a collective vision. It welcomed the responses from officers and the reflection from this will be provided to the Cabinet.

The Committee suggested that the words Green Belt are set out within the document as this plan will have an impact on that.

The Committee welcomed the agreement to ensure that wider stakeholder groups will be involved in the consultative role. Whilst those to be involved will be agreed by the project board once it has been formed, it is expected that this will include local district councillors, local parish councils, residents groups, Stoneleigh Park, HS2, local major land owners along with Solihull MBC and Rugby BC.

The Committee recommended that at least one PAB should be involved for discussion and involvement in this area of work.

Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved, along with the recommendation from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and subject to paragraph 1.23 in the report being amended to read:

1.23 Beyond the PB a wider stakeholder group(s) will be involved at key stages in a consultative role. Whilst the wider stakeholders to be involved will be agreed by the PB once it has been formed, it is expected that this will include local district councillors, local parish councils, residents' groups, Stoneleigh Park, HS2, local major landowners/developers and Solihull MBC and Rugby BC.

Item Number 14 – Creative Quarter /Future High Street

Scrutiny Comment:

The Committee recommended a briefing update to all councillors regarding the project.

Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

11 May 2022

Item Number 3 – Future Relationship with Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Scrutiny Comment:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee thanked officers for the report and efforts made to bring the merger forward.

The Committee requested that the report should reflect the need to rebuild our employer brand both internally and externally.

In terms of future work, the Committee requested that this should include an analysis of lessons learned, and these could be incorporated into other initiatives, including the Climate Emergency Action Plan, and the South Warwickshire Local Plan.

The Committee also requested a short summary on the ICT clean-up actions and a report on the future service provision, both for shared services and services solely delivered by WDC.

The Committee also expressed its interest in the potential for devolving powers to Town and Parish Councils and asked that a further report is brought forward in the future.

Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved, along with the following additional recommendations from the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- (1) That the Significant Business Risk Register be updated as a matter of priority in the light of the decision not to proceed with the merger with SDC; and
- (2) That in the light of the cessation of the merger process with SDC, a further report on the work proposed and undertaken to re-establish the Council's position and "brand" as an employer with existing and potential employees be brought forward at the earliest opportunity.

Council Response:

The recommendations made by Cabinet 11 May 2022 were approved. Council resolved that:

- (1) the formal submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to create a South Warwickshire District Council, be withdrawn;
- (2) work on the full-service integration of teams across Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Councils be ceased;
- (3) work on the identification of sharing civic and office accommodation between Stratford-on-Avon and Warwick District Council be ceased;