

AGENDA

Meeting: **Cabinet**
Place: **Online Meeting**
Date: **Tuesday 5 January 2021**
Time: **10.00 am**

[Online Meeting](#)

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Stuart Figini, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718221 or email stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225)713114/713115.

During the Covid -19 emergency situation the Committee is operating under revised procedures including in relation to public participation, as attached to this agenda.

The meeting will be available to view live via a Teams Live Event Link as shown above.

All public reports referred to on this agenda are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Membership:

Cllr Philip Whitehead	Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications
Cllr Richard Clewer	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities
Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling	Cabinet Member for ICT, Digitalisation, Operational Assets, Leisure and Libraries
Cllr Pauline Church	Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment
Cllr Simon Jacobs	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection
Cllr Laura Mayes	Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills
Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property

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Part I

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

Key Decisions Matters defined as 'Key' Decisions and included in the Council's Forward Work Plan are shown as 

1 **Apologies**

2 **Minutes of the previous meeting** (*Pages 5 - 18*)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 1 December 2020 previously circulated.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Leader's announcements**

5 **Public participation and Questions from Councillors**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public. This meeting is open to the public, who may ask a question or make a statement. Questions may also be asked by members of the Council.


Please Note:

Written notice of questions or statements should be given to Stuart Figini of Democratic Services stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk 01225 718221 by 12.00 noon on Wednesday 30 December 2020. Due to the Christmas and New Year holidays and the proximity of the Cabinet meeting it may not be possible to respond to questions prior to the meeting. The sooner questions are received the greater opportunity of receiving a response during this time. Anyone wishing to ask a question or make a statement should contact the officer named above.

6 **COVID-19 Update** (*Pages 19 - 40*)

Report of the Chief Executive.

7 **Nursing care contracts** (*Pages 41 - 54*)

 Report of the Chief Executive.

8 **Porton Science Park - Collaborative Innovation Centre** (*Pages 55 - 104*)

 Report of the Chief Executive.

9 **Allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy Funding to manage phosphates in the River Avon Special Area of Conservation** (*Pages 105 - 112*)

🔑 Report of the Chief Executive.

10 **A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down (Stonehenge) Road Improvement Scheme** *(Pages 113 - 130)*

🔑 Report of the Chief Executive.

11 **Procurement of Framework contract for temporary agency staff** *(Pages 131 - 136)*

🔑 Report of the Chief Executive.

12 **Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2020/21 Q1-2, 6 Month Report** *(Pages 137 - 154)*

Report of the Chief Executive.

13 **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business, which the Leader agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

Part II

Items during consideration of which it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

NONE

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Cabinet

MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 1 DECEMBER 2020 AT ONLINE MEETING.

Present:

Cllr Philip Whitehead (Chairman), Cllr Richard Clewer (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cllr Pauline Church, Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Toby Sturgis and Cllr Bridget Wayman

Also Present:

Cllr David Halik, Cllr Phil Alford, Cllr Chuck Berry, Cllr Richard Britton, Cllr Andrew Bryant, Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Clare Cape, Cllr Trevor Carbin, Cllr Jane Davies, Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Sue Evans, Cllr Peter Fuller, Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Sarah Gibson, Cllr Gavin Grant, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Sven Hocking, Cllr Ruth Hopkinson, Cllr Atiqul Hoque, Cllr Chris Hurst, Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Bob Jones MBE, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jerry Kunkler, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Brian Mathew, Cllr Ashley O'Neill, Cllr Steve Oldrieve, Cllr Stewart Palmen, Cllr Horace Prickett, Cllr Pip Ridout, Cllr James Sheppard, Cllr Jo Trigg, Cllr Suzanne Wickham and Cllr Christopher Williams

134 **Apologies**

There were no apologies.

135 **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020 were presented.

Resolved:

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2020.

136 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

137 **Leader's announcements**

The Leader announced that Secretary of State for Transport had granted consent for the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down (Stonehenge) Road Improvement Scheme on 12th November 2020. He explained that it was a

significant investment in Wiltshire, not only for resolving one of the longest standing traffic problems that effected communities living in the area, but also to reunite the northern and southern parts of the World Heritage Site, and boost the economy of the region. A detailed report would be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 5 January 2021 to outline the role and remit of the Council in the delivery of the scheme.

138 **Public participation and Questions from Councillors**

Questions were received from the following:

- Darren Hopkins about the Chippenham HIF Bid
- Adrian Temple-Brown about the Chippenham HIF
- Ian James about the council's finances and Chippenham HIF
- Patrick Kinnersly about the Western Gateway Sub-National Transport Body Draft Strategy
- Steve Perry (Chair of CAUSE) about the Chippenham HIF
- Mike Blanchard about the Chippenham HIF; and
- Chris Caswill about the Chippenham HIF

Cllr Whitehead confirmed that the questions had received written responses which were published on the Council's website prior to the meeting.

Supplementary questions were received from the following:

- Steve Perry – Future development of transport taking into consideration climate change issues
- Chris Caswill – Publication of Chippenham HIF documents

Cllr Whitehead confirmed that written responses would be provided for the supplementary questions asked at the meeting.

In addition to the above public questions, Cllr Whitehead and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection responded verbally at the meeting to the following questions received from Councillors:

- Cllr Ian Thorn, Cllr Chuck Berry and Cllr Tony Jackson asked a question and made comment about the future operation of Furlong Close care complex in Rowde, near Devizes
- Cllr Carole King asked a question about CATG funding and a parking review

139 **COVID-19 Update and Financial Update**

Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications introduced the report which provided a brief summary of the key activities to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus in Wiltshire since the last update to Cabinet in November 2020.

Questions were received from Sue McGill about EV charging points. Cllr Whitehead acknowledged that the questions had received written responses which had been published on the Council's website prior to the meeting. There were no requests for supplementary questions.

Cllr Whitehead explained that since the last report England has entered a new national lockdown and response meetings have been re-established; shadow recovery work continues; work has taken place to enhance the Wiltshire Wellbeing hub and develop an enhanced local tracing offer and support for businesses, vulnerable groups and care homes and schools continues. Cllr Whitehead thanked officers for their continued hard work and resilience during this difficult and testing time.

Officers provided updates of their service areas, as detailed in the report, covering the following areas - Test and Trace, mass vaccinations, mass testing and new technologies, outbreak management, community spaces, wellbeing hub, care homes, health and care, education, safeguarding, economy and safe spaces.

In response to a question from Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills about schools involvement in the process for the distribution of free school meals, the Chief Executive and Director of Education and Skills confirmed that the process to include schools had already commenced with a recent a webinar taking place which shared the process being undertaken. The Cabinet noted that the Council was working with schools about how the funding for free school meals would be distributed locally.

Cllr Pauline Church, Cabinet Member for Finance, Procurement and Commercial Investment thanked officers for their hard work and determination to achieve the spending controls in place. She commented generally on the financial aspect of the report and highlighted that the Council was on a more robust financial footing, in part to the financial help from the government.

Cllr Graham Wright, Chair of the Wiltshire Covid-19 Response Task Group and Cllr Pip Ridout, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group, reported that the Council is currently operating streamlined Overview and Scrutiny arrangements, allowing officers to focus on the response to COVID-19 and support Wiltshire communities in the context of ongoing restrictions. Cllr Wright referred to notes of the Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Scrutiny Task Group and the Financial Planning Scrutiny Task Group which met on 26 November to consider the Cabinet report. The [notes](#) of these meetings were published in the agenda supplement 2 prior to the Cabinet meeting.

Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Chair of the Environment Select Committee asked questions about the process for determining a Local Authorities tier level and hospital bed occupancy rates. Cllr Whitehead confirmed that a written response would be prepared following the meeting.

In response to questions from Cllr Ian Thorn, Leader of the Liberal Democrats about (i) the number of children entitled to free school meal payments

compared to those receiving the payment; (ii) locations of vaccination sites; (iii) Financial assistance to Care Homes – grant or loan. Officers explained that (i) all children entitled to free school meals had the opportunity to access the funding; (ii) vaccination sites included City Hall, Salisbury and other sites identified by the NHS and more locally by the BSW CCG; (iii) the financial assistance provided to Care Homes is by way of a grant and therefore does not need to be repaid.

In response to questions from Cllr Gavin Grant about (i) Self Isolation Payment Scheme and the responsibility of employers; (ii) Small Business and Discretionary grant scheme, including the Local Restrictions Support Grant and the Additional Restrictions Grant; Cllr Whitehead and officers explained that (i) the Council are providing positive communications messages to employers about their responsibilities for employees, including attendance at work; (ii) Over 2000 applications had been received for the Local Restrictions Support Grant and these applications were now being processed and the scheme was progressing well. The Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) had received over 500 applications since in launch on 20 November 2020, with an allocation of £10m. Although the allocation to the ARG scheme was welcome it was felt that the was insufficient to meet anticipated demand. This would be monitored and reviewed in the new year.

In response to a question from Cllr Gordon King about the Kickstart Programme and those failing to qualify for the apprenticeship support; Officers reported that discussions were currently taking place with the Department for Work and Pensions and it was hoped that clarity on this issue could be provided shortly.

Resolved:

- 1. Continue to encourage all residents to download the NHS Test and Trace app on their phone.**
- 2. Continue to encourage all residents to follow national guidance.**
- 3. Note meetings have been re-established to support response whilst recovery activity continues in shadow.**
- 4. Note the current revenue budget is forecast to be balanced by the end of the financial year, with a small underspend of £0.071m**
- 5. Note changes in national policy and the work underway within the four Recovery Coordinating Group themes and on organisation recovery.**

Reason for Decision:

Wiltshire Council continues to work closely with partners to deliver in a rapidly changing environment.

140 **December 2020 - Readiness for the End of the Transition Period with the EU**

Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications presented the report which

outlined the preparations that have been underway for the end of the transition period on 1 January 2021.

Cllr Whitehead highlighted that the report offered reassurances that the Council with partners were taking all possible steps to prepare for Brexit and in particular the possibility of a no-deal Brexit , alongside concurrent threats such as seasonal flu, severe winter weather including floods and snow and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cllr Graham Wright, Chair of the Wiltshire Covid-19 Response Task Group reported that the Council is currently operating streamlined Overview and Scrutiny arrangements, allowing officers to focus on the response to COVID-19 and support Wiltshire communities in the context of ongoing restrictions. Cllr Wright referred to notes of the Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Scrutiny Task Group which met on 26 November to consider the Cabinet report. The [notes](#) of this meeting were published in the agenda supplement 2 prior to the Cabinet meeting.

In response to questions from Cllr Ian Thorn, Leader of the Liberal Democrats about (i) the upcoming challenges for the Council and preparedness of staff to manage these; and (ii) support for the farming community. Officers explained that (i) the Council is prepared to manage the challenges offered by Brexit, although there were greater risks to be faced by the Council with the possibility of prolonged snow or winter events; and (ii) A group has been established directly to support farmers during this period.

In response to a question from Cllr Jo Trigg about the EU Settlement Scheme and clarification on the number of applications; Cllr Whitehead reported that it was understood that the majority of people who had applied to the Scheme had been approved. This would be confirmed in a written response following the meeting.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the assessment of the council's readiness for the end of the transition period.**
- 2. To note the opportunity to shape the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and the potential implications of the government's approach to state aid.**

Reason for Decision:

Wiltshire Council has an important role as community leader in advocating for our residents and local businesses.

141 **Consultation to inform the Wiltshire Local Plan Review**

Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property presented the report setting out the next steps for consulting on the Wiltshire Local Plan Review.

Questions were received from the following:

Steve Perry – the question was covered under minute 138 above

Mike Blanchard

Kim Stuckey

Isabel McCord

Myla Watts

Peter Cousins

Helen Stuckey

Chris Caswill

Sue McGill

Cllr Nick Murry

Cllr Whitehead acknowledged that the questions had received written responses which had been published on the Council's website prior to the meeting.

A supplementary question was asked by Chris Caswill about the impact of COVID-19 on the proposed consultation. Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property explained that guidance from the Government has urged all local planning authorities to continue to prepare their Local Plan and not to suspend work during COVID-19. To stop preparations would incur the risk of speculative ad hoc development being permitted outside the Council and communities' control.

Cllr Sturgis highlighted that Local Plans are informed and shaped by the government's requirements for growth that each area needs to accommodate, in this case in the period up to 2036. He explained that much of the required level of growth - around 45,600 homes - had already been planned for and that based on the position at April 2019, there was a residual or shortfall of around 17,000 homes. He reminded Cabinet that they approved a timeline for the Wiltshire Local Plan Review at their meeting in March 2020 to enable consultation to be undertaken with the community and stakeholders on how the Council might deliver the required level of growth across Wiltshire. By undertaking consultation prior to any actual allocations being made in a draft Local Plan, people will have the opportunity to put forward their views and inform the Council's thinking in early 2021. These views will then inform the details of the draft Plan.

The report presents the proposed content for an extensive consultation on the direction of the Wiltshire Local Plan Review. Cllr Sturgis, along with other Cabinet Members requested that all Councillors encourage their local communities to become involved in the consultation.

In response to questions from Cllr Laura Mayes about (i) clarity in relation to the overall housing requirements; and (ii) the role of neighbourhood plans, speculative applications and current 5 year housing land supply position (using the example of Devizes), Cllr Sturgis explained that (i) the residual figure at April 2019 clarified how much of the overall housing requirement for each settlement was left to be planned for - for Devizes this is 330 homes; and (ii) an action plan was in place to improve housing supply and a number of planning permissions had been granted as a result.

Cllr Richard Clewer, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities referred to Appendix 4 and how the Local Plan Review proposes to address climate change and biodiversity net gain, which would be an important part of the consultation.

Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Chair of the Environment Select Committee welcomed the approach to the rural area and expressed his frustration at the current guidelines and their inflexibility to encourage development in villages.

In response to questions from Cllr Ian Thorn, Leader of the Liberal Democrats about (i) protections for non-statutory nature sites; and (ii) the number of dwellings required for the Calne area. The Leader and Cllr Sturgis (i) confirmed that national planning policy framework and current local planning policies set out what protection may be appropriate for nature sites; and (ii) the consultation documents detail all possible sites.

In response to questions from Cllr Sarah Gibson about how to improve engagement with local residents during consultations on the local plan, the Leader, Cllr Sturgis and Cllr Bucknell referred to paragraph 27 of the report; which referred to the consultation arrangements and confirmed that the consultation would be far and wide and engagement would take place with as many groups and local residents as possible, this may involve Area Boards.

In response to questions from Cllr Gavin Grant about (i) the 5 year housing land supply and housing market areas; (ii) confidence in 'planned for' housing figures; (iii) the housing range from which a preferred housing requirement would be identified, the Leader confirmed that an updated housing land supply position would be published in the next two weeks. Cllr Sturgis explained that: (i) For the purpose of calculating 5 year housing land supply housing market areas are no longer suitable and Government requires us to do this on a county basis but they are used for the Local Plan as a basis to distribute homes because Wiltshire is so large; (ii) The Council has to provide evidence the identified sites are deliverable and financially viable; and (iii) The 40,000 range is based on a standard methodology and figures change. The larger figure is used for testing as this may be the figure that needs to be used in the future and is based on evidence.

Resolved:

- 1. To approve the documents as set out in Appendices 1, 2, 3 and 4 for consultation to inform the content of the Wiltshire Local Plan Review, subject to amendment in (2);**
- 2. To delegate authority to the Director for Economic Development and Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Property to: make any necessary changes to the consultation documents in (1) in the interest of clarity and accuracy before they are finalised for publication; finalise evidence documents relating to the consultation; and make arrangements for and undertake statutory consultation with the start date to take into consideration the COVID-19 position; and**
- 3. Receives a report after the consultation summarising the main issues raised.**

Reason for Decision:

To ensure that progress continues to be made on maintaining an up to date Local Plan for Wiltshire in line with the Council's Local Development Scheme and statutory requirements.

142 In House Learning Disability Services Report

Councillor Simon Jacobs, Cabinet member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection presented the report which outlined the proof of concept for a structured Outreach and Enablement model led by the Council run in-house learning disability services.

Cllr Jacobs explained that this would include a fully dedicated team supporting people who have complex neurological and cognitive difficulties' which impact on their long-term independence, choice and wellbeing. These services will be of high quality and person-centred, supporting individuals to develop their own aspirations and strengths, and enable them to achieve their full potential.

Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills, Cllr Chuck Berry, Chair of the Health Select Committee and Cllr Gordon King expressed their support for the initiative.

In response to questions from Cllr Ian Thorn, Leader of the Liberal Democrats about (i) maintaining the services provided; and (ii) for services to be shaped and moulded by the experience of users, Cllr Jacobs and Officers confirmed that current services would be expanded to support a wider group of people with complex needs, and ensure all provision is being utilised effectively and creatively across children and adults services in a joined-up approach.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the establishment of an Outreach and Enablement Project**
- 2. To note this will be a six-month proof of concept project**
- 3. To note that we will undertake a co-produced review of our building based services**

Reason for Decision:

Wiltshire Council's in-house day service offer requires a review to:

- Establish its effectiveness.*
- Ensure it meets the needs of its existing service users*
- Gain an understanding of how people with complex needs are able to set their own goals and develop their 'best life'*
- Understand how the service can develop and support people to connect to their local communities to build meaningful relationships.*
- Establish how we reach more people to help them to maximise their independence*
- Assure ourselves that we are cost effective and offer value for money*

143 Update on Disposal Programme

Councillor Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications presented the report (i) setting out the forecast receipts from disposals for the next three financial years; and (ii) seeking approval to declare 3 assets to be declared surplus and capable of review to determine the best financial return for the council.

Cllr Whitehead reminded Cabinet that they had previously approved a revised approach to disposal of surplus assets, and once the assets had been declared surplus each site will be considered by the Asset Gateway Group. The Group would determine the best financial return for the Council, during which time other uses of the sites would be considered and determine what is in the best interest for the Council, both from a service and financial perspective.

Cllr Pip Ridout, Chair of the Financial Planning Task Group confirmed that the Task group had held in depth discussions about the proposals contained in the report at their meeting on 26 November 2020. There were no additional comments to add to the Task Group notes that were circulated prior to the Cabinet meeting and published on the appropriate [website pages](#).

Resolved:

- 1. To note the position in respect of disposals for financial years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21**

2. **To confirm that freehold interest of the 3 assets can be sold by the Council.**
3. **To Authorise the Director for Housing and Commercial to dispose of the freehold interest in the assets or in his absence the Corporate Director - Resources.**

Reason for Decision:

To note the current position in respect of capital receipts and confirm the freehold interest in the assets can be sold to either generate capital receipts in support of the Council's capital programme or reuse to generate income for the Council.

144 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

145 **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To agree that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified in Item Numbers 13 and 14 because it is likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

146 **Management Arrangements for the Contracted Leisure Centres**

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Cabinet Member for ICT, Digitalisation, Operational Assets, Leisure and Libraries presented the report which set out proposals for the future management arrangements for the Council's leisure centres currently managed by People Leisure Ltd (PFP).

The report detailed four options for the Cabinet to consider so that a leisure service is maintained in the north and west of the county.

The Cabinet noted that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Environment Select Committee had received a briefing from officers on 30 November 2020 on the proposals and expressed their support for the proposals detailed in the report.

Resolved:

- a) **To note the outcomes of the second open procurement exercise approved by Cabinet on 08 September 2020;**

- b) To note the options that have been considered and approve the option that Members determine should be implemented:
- **Option 1: Award a 2 year + 2 year contract to Places Leisure based on the open accounting model for implementation as of 01 April 2021**
 - **Option 2: Bring centres in house from 01 April 2021**
 - **Option 3: Award a 6-month contract to Places Leisure and then bring in-house as of 01 October 2021**
 - **Option 4: Award a 12-month contract Places Leisure and then bring in-house as of 01 April 2022**
- c) To approve the recommendation that Option 3 is progressed;
- d) To allocate the necessary resources and budget of £0.819m, funded from the use of capital receipts under the flexible use directive, to bring the centres in-house, in accordance with Option 3;
- e) To note the governance arrangements being put in place by the interim Corporate Director - Place and Environment to oversee the contract extension and the insourcing of the leisure centres chair a Transition Board to be established post Cabinet;
- f) To delegate to the Director for Community and Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for IT, Digitalisation, Operational Assets, Leisure and Libraries to take all necessary steps to implement the agreed option including the award of contract should this be relevant to the appropriate option.

Reason for Decision:

To ensure the continued provision of leisure services across Wiltshire's currently outsourced sites.

147 **Land acquisition**

Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications presented the report seeking Cabinets consideration of the Council submitting an offer for an option on land as set out in Appendix A to this report. In addition, the report seeks consideration of acquiring land from Wiltshire College including an agreement on overage.

It was noted that offers for the option on land set out in Appendix A to the report were required by the 16 December 2020 and if payment was required before the end of the financial year it would be necessary to bring forward unallocated capital funds from the 2020/21 capital programme.

The Cabinet noted that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Environment Select Committee had received a briefing on the proposals on 30 November 2020 and expressed their support for the proposals.

Resolved:

- 1. That the Council makes offers for an option on the land owned by the Shiles family to the south of Chippenham as shown in appendix A to the report.**
- 2. That the Council makes offers for an option on the Shiles land based on maximum existing use value for the land and a percentage of the land value uplift if the site comes forward for development minus the Council's costs plus the vendors fees , and another offer based on reduced existing use value and vendors fees but increased percentage of land value uplift minus the Council's costs.**
- 3. That the existing use value is determined by an independent valuation.**
- 4. That the detailed offers are made by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.**
- 5. That subject to the Council providing loan finance to Wiltshire College to enable them to refinance their existing loans the Council makes an offer to purchase land at the Lackham college site at existing use value.**
- 6. That the Council enters into an agreement with Wiltshire college to purchase an element of land value uplift on that land if it comes forward for development.**
- 7. That the agreement will require Wilshire College to repay the Council the agreed sum plus the Council's costs at an agreed date if the land does not come forward for development.**
- 8. That the detail of the agreement with Wiltshire College is delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council.**
- 9. That if the offers are accepted and payment is required in 2020/21 financial year the requisite capital allocation is brought forward from the 2021/22 unallocated capital programme.**

Reason for Decision:

The proposals will enable the Council to make offers for land that has strategic importance both in terms of relationship with the Council's existing land ownership but also the possible route for a distributor road around the south east of Chippenham.

(Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 2.00 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Stuart Figini of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718221, e-mail stuart.figini@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: COVID-19 Update

Cabinet Member: Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Military Civilian Integration and Communications

Key Decision: Non-Key

Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of activity to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus in Wiltshire since the last update to Cabinet in December. Since the last report a national lockdown has been replaced by a tier system with Wiltshire placed into Tier Two (high). Work has been undertaken to develop a local tracing service and support for businesses, vulnerable groups, care homes and schools continues. Mass vaccination programmes started week commencing 7 December, and local vaccination centres began to open 16 December in Wiltshire. Shadow recovery work continues.

Proposal(s)

Cabinet are asked to

- Continue to encourage all residents to download the NHS Test and Trace app on their phone.
- Encourage all residents to answer a call received from 0300 456 0100 as it may be the local contact tracing team within the Council
- Continue to encourage all residents to follow national guidance
- To note the financial forecast as detailed within the report
- To note changes in national policy and the work underway within the Recovery Coordinating Group themes.

Reason for Proposal(s)

Wiltshire Council continues to work closely with partners to deliver in a rapidly changing environment.

**Terence Herbert
Chief Executive**

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: COVID-19 Update

Cabinet Member: Cllr Philip Whitehead, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Military Civilian Integration and Communications

Key Decision: Non-Key

Purpose of Report

1. A brief summary of the key activity to mitigate the impact of the coronavirus in Wiltshire since the last update to Cabinet in December.

Background

2. As of Sunday 19 December 2020, 1,743,893 people in England had tested positive for COVID-19. Further information is available [online](#). The [ONS](#) suggest that as of 4 December there were 68,939 registered COVID-19 deaths across England and Wales of which 65,061 were in England. As of 18 December in Wiltshire there have now been 6232 people who have tested positive for COVID-19. As of 18 December the rate of cases per 100,000 in Wiltshire in the last 7 days was 78 which is below the national average. Up to the 4 December, 428 registered deaths involving COVID-19 in all settings in Wiltshire had occurred (223 in care homes, 178 in hospital, 23 at home and 4 in hospices). Further information on weekly mortality is available from [ONS](#).

Main Considerations for the Council

3. On 23 November the Prime Minister set out the [COVID-19 Winter Plan](#). Within this measures were confirmed which will be monitored in relation to which tier an area is placed under. These measures include case detection rates in all age groups, case detection rates in the over 60s, the rate at which cases are rising or falling, positivity rate (the number of positive cases detected as a percentage of test taken), and pressure on the NHS both currently and projected.
4. The Prime Minister announced on 26 November that a return to a [tier alert system](#) would commence 2 December.
5. Wiltshire was placed in tier 2 (high tier) as during that time rates within Wiltshire were increasing and pressures were being felt within the acute hospitals. The tiers were reviewed again on 16 December 2020 and Wiltshire remained in tier 2.
6. On 17 December the government announced that the furlough scheme has been extended another month until the end of April 2021.

7. On 19 December the government announced a [revised tier structure](#) consisting of 4 tiers and parts of the country were placed into tier 4. This was due to concerns over the variation of COVID-19 and increasing numbers of positive cases. Wiltshire remained in tier 2.
8. Additional key government announcements published since the cabinet paper are in **Appendix 2**.
9. Wiltshire Council has continued in response mode for the COVID-19 pandemic. Internal Gold response group continues to meet which feeds into weekly multi-agency response groups SSG (strategic Coordination Group) and the TCG (Tactical Coordination Group).
10. The Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub continues to offer support, guidance and signposting and proactively contacted all those recently recorded as being clinically extremely vulnerable.
11. There has been a 13.5% increase of pupils eligible for free school meals in October 2020 compared to January 2020. This equates to 1055 extra pupils.
12. The COVID-19 Winter Grant Scheme is now live. Wiltshire has received a grant of £1.1m to support families with children, other vulnerable households and individuals most in need with the cost of food, energy and water bills. The scheme runs from December until 31 March 2021. Payments have already been made to 9,133 eligible children via 239 schools to the value of £274,440 and to 1217 eligible pre-school children via 236 early years settings to the value of £36,190. Further payments will be made to this group in January and March.
13. We have awarded further grants to the value of £69,454 to Wiltshire Community Foundation – ‘Surviving Winter Scheme’ and the Centre for Sustainable Energy who support vulnerable adults with fuel payments through winter. A proportion of the grant will be held within the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme which will accept applications from individuals and families.
14. To support local retailers and small businesses during the COVID-19 crisis we have put together a Shop Local, Support Wiltshire directory. Sorted by place, shoppers can find the businesses close to them, many offering the option to buy online or click and collect. <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/shop-local-wiltshire>.
15. We are on track to deliver approximately £100m of COVID-19 grants to over 10,000 businesses across Wiltshire in 2020.
16. As we moved back out from the national lockdown into the tier system, libraries and leisure centre have been re-opened.
17. A second public COVID-19 webinar was held on 8 December which again was well received. Residents have requested further webinars to be held.
18. Planning for Wiltshire’s long term recovery upon exiting lockdown continues, with our recovery work still running in shadow. Significant developments since the

last report are summarised under the sub-headings below; with additional detail in **Appendix 1**.

Test and Trace

19. The local tracing service has been live since Mid-November, picking up any cases that NHS Test and Trace have not managed to contact. As a total, 85% of COVID-19 cases in Wiltshire are now followed up by either NHS Test and Trace or our local contact tracing service. In previous months the county's average was around 60-70%, so this is a big improvement.
20. In Wiltshire we have a regional testing site in Salisbury and a local testing site became operational on 1 December based at the previous Trowbridge mobile site. Two further sites have been identified for mobile testing units to maintain coverage across the county. These are in Chippenham and Warminster.

Mass Testing

21. Testing is now being widened to include a host of additional settings and community groups. Within Wiltshire, GP surgeries as well as care homes and schools now have access to swab test kits for those most vulnerable. Care homes are also being provided with a number of test kits (lateral flow tests) for visitors so that there can be closer and more frequent family contact with residents in a secure and safe way.
22. In addition, two pilots will be starting in the New Year using the lateral flow test kits within a business setting and within some of internal council staff who work to support some of our more vulnerable individuals. The results of these pilots will be evaluated to assess the potential for wider roll out.

Mass Vaccination

23. Mass vaccination programmes started week commencing 7 December, and local vaccination centres began to open 16 December in the county using the vaccine from Pfizer. Due to the large logistical nature of the programme the council have been working closely with the NHS, who are leading the roll out, to ensure that resources and support are provided across the Local Resilience Forum.

Outbreak Management

24. There has been a continued increase in case notifications to the public health team across a variety of settings, requiring outbreak management and monitoring. New assets to assist schools and businesses prepare for and deal with cases and outbreaks have been designed and distributed locally and surge capacity has been identified from the public health team for an anticipated increase in outbreak notification in the New Year.

Community spaces and engagement

25. As we moved back out from the national lockdown into the tier system, libraries and leisure centre were re-opened. 16 libraries have reverted back to browsing along with bookable computer access ensuring residents without internet or computers are able to get online. 5 libraries continue to offer order and collect and will move to browsing in the new year. Other smaller libraries will follow suit in the New Year. Netheravon Library re-opened for the first time since lockdown on 14 December as a purely volunteer-led and run library.
26. The library service is working to expand opening hours so that libraries are open until 6pm at least once per week and open on a Saturday.
27. All ten in-house leisure centres have re-opened including the new Calne Community Campus and Amesbury Sports Centres for the first time and nine of the ten Places Leisure managed leisure centres are open. Trowbridge Sports Centre will open in the New Year following the structural repairs.
28. The number of community groups increased over the second lockdown to 343. The support required was significantly less during November, however, volunteers again stepped up wherever they were required. We continue to offer guidance and are working with partners and the groups to build up the resilience of these groups. The Wiltshire Together platform is building strongly to provide a more comprehensive picture of community activities, services, community officers and partners.
29. The success of the Wiltshire Together Champions programme now continues, working with voluntary organisations and officers from the Communities and Public Health team to provide a friendly face and to maintain compliance with the current COVID-19 measures.

Wellbeing Hub

30. The Wellbeing hub stood up during the first lockdown period and its objective is to implement a county wide initiative offering support, guidance and signposting to the local population. It was stood back up in November 2020 for the second response phase and initially ran over 7 days a week. The hub will be in operation 5 days a week during the Christmas period to ensure those in need are assisted during this difficult time, with emergency duty service available for any emergencies at weekends and bank holidays. Contacts into the hub significantly dropped during Mid- December and therefore, we have reviewed the hub opening hours and it now operates over 5 days, with support available from the Council's Emergency Duty Service (EDS) to provide an emergency response if required over the weekend.
31. All shielding residents were contacted during the first lockdown. 3,100 people who have been recently identified as being clinically extremely vulnerable since the second lockdown in November 2020 have also been contacted.
32. The hub continues to support members of the public who raise queries around current lockdown guidance and refer concerns or issues relating to business and organisations to the public protection/ public health team.

33. The Wellbeing hub fortnightly multiagency/partner meetings have been re-established to ensure a multiagency responsive system is in place.

Care Homes

34. The Council continues to work in partnership with Wiltshire Care Partnership, the CCG and CQC in implementing a support programme to Care Homes. This has included the dedicated COVID-19 team, regular webinars and newsletters, and a BSW CCG Care Home Oversight Group chaired by the Director of Nursing & Quality.

35. As of 15 December there were 16 care homes reporting new COVID-19 positive cases, a figure that has been stable for the last 3 weeks. There was a total of 51 cases, mainly due to a cluster of cases in 2 homes. There are more cases amongst staff (33) than residents (18). This is the lowest number of cases amongst residents for 4 weeks.

36. Multiple cases in a single setting continues to be a rare occurrence, although has increased, showing how infection control measures supported by regular testing continue to be effective measures preventing widespread transmission in most settings.

37. Since mid-April, the Council has worked in partnership with the CCG and CQC to weekly review risks and support all local care homes.

38. The Health Protection Board reviews outbreaks in care homes fortnightly and considers whether there should be any restrictions to visiting. The Council is encouraging care homes to allow visiting but have advised them to review their risk assessments and ensure that infection prevention and control measures, including social distancing, are in place to ensure COVID-19 safe visiting.

39. This advice continues with the lateral flow tests that have been introduced for care home visitors due to the reliability of such tests on asymptomatic people. These tests will be another way that care homes can strengthen safe visiting but do not signal a relaxation of the measures in place. A letter from the Directors of Public Health and Adult Social Services of BaNES, Wiltshire and Swindon have been sent to care homes to emphasise this message.

40. The Council is working closely with the CCG to prepare for the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccinations.

Health and Care

41. The multi-agency approach we are taking is enabling us to support individuals to return home as quickly as possible. We have identified and implemented additional capacity for people with complex needs so that there is an opportunity to make longer term plans away from a hospital ward. Planning is also taking place to deliver a new service in partnership with our Community Health partners to help people to remain at home and avoid a hospital admission wherever possible and we are aiming to have an impact this winter.

42. The Care Home Advisory group that we established early into the first lockdown to provide expert advice to care providers continues to meet regularly and has addressed a range of issues including testing and infection control measures which has been welcomed by our providers.
43. Our current PPE supply continues to meet the demands of the business across Wiltshire. In addition, both Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire & Swindon Local Resilience Forum (LRF) as a whole, have sufficient stock across lead PPE items. In relation to Wiltshire Council daily monitoring of stock levels, usage rates and estimated days of supply are carried out alongside fortnightly monitoring of stock levels against usage rates seen in April/May, at their highest.
44. Wiltshire Council also carries out the same fortnightly monitoring for Swindon Borough Council in order that the LRF status is known and reported. These reports identify Wiltshire Council having approx. 3 months' supply across lead PPE items and the LRF having approx. 8 months' supply.
45. Department of Health and Social Care continues to provide monthly PPE supplies to assist with demand across certain settings, should the need arise, to those who are ineligible to register on the Govt PPE portal. These services include children's and adults social care, rough sleepers' team, CCG staff and Direct Payment employees and with education and childcare settings recently being included.
46. Discussions with DHSC have taken place as to whether these monthly supplies will also include PPE demands to assist funeral directors within the geographical area. This has yet to be decided.
47. Monthly reviews continue with procurement to ensure commercial suppliers have adequate stocks/lead times with discussions regarding post Brexit.
48. A Wiltshire Council representative attends the Tactical Co-ordination Group (TCG) updating the meeting with the current PPE status relating to the LRF as a whole. Assistance from the TCG would be provided if needed.

Education

49. Attendance continues to be monitored and schools continue to be supported to achieve full attendance. The weekly attendance data survey of early years providers indicates that of the 95% of settings that respond, 90% are open. Attendance across all schools was 91% on the 9 December 2020, this remains above the national level of 86% on the 3 December 2020.
50. There is sufficient childcare provision currently, although there are concerns about the sustainability for a small number of settings. A hardship fund is open for settings that have fewer children this year and who need additional help to maintain viability.
51. There was a total of 113 positive cases across 46 school settings in Wiltshire as of 9 December 2020. A total of 3036 pupils were self-isolating. Early years settings have been increasingly affected by infections with 12% having had a positive case in either staff or a child.

52. On the last day of term in December the government announced that secondary schools would have a staggered return for pupils, with exam years returning first and mass testing of pupils being made available on a weekly basis. The Council has been working closely with schools to support them and to clarify the guidance and the staffing requirements for the tests.
53. There have been 13 Ofsted visits to Wiltshire primary schools during term 2, all of which have been conducted remotely. The outcomes of these are ungraded and have been published in the forms of letters sent to the school community following the visit. They have visited:
- 1 school judged 'outstanding'
 - 6 schools judged 'good'
 - 1 school judged 'requires improvement'
 - 4 schools judged 'inadequate'
54. Continued guidance for schools for remote learning has been given through the Headteachers' briefing and through disadvantaged learner networks from the EdTech Demonstrator Hub, signposting schools to resources, training webinars and school to school support to improve remote learning. All schools have in place remote learning plans which can be enacted for individuals, bubbles, year groups and a whole school. The DFE have updated their expectations for remote education with a minimum set of expectations. This sets out expectations for curriculum coverage and sequencing, quality and minimum equivalent lengths of teaching time for primary and secondary students.
55. With the removal of national restrictions on the 2 December back to a tiered system, additional guidance was published for [schools](#). The changes have been shared with schools via the weekly newsletter and webinars. Schools have adjusted risk assessments and arrangements to implement the guidance.
56. Details to changes to examinations for summer 2021 and for primary assessments have been outlined and shared with schools; further support and guidance will be developed during terms 3 and 4.
57. The 'Well-being for Education Resilience' has been adapted for the local Wiltshire context by a multi-agency collective to ensure it complements existing initiatives (e.g. Five to Thrive training programme). It provides an opportunity to provide immediate support for education settings in managing the emotional health and wellbeing of their communities during the pandemic, and to take a more co-ordinated approach longer term, clearly promoting and signposting people to local support. There has been positive engagement from primary and secondary schools. A multi-agency directory of services and programmes that support children and young people's emotional wellbeing and mental health that went live in November continues to be promoted to schools.
58. Extensive [guidance](#) has been revised and updated following the most recent government guidance introduced to coincide with the resumption of the tier system on 2 December relating to home to school transport. There continues to be no requirement for social distancing on home to school transport, but secondary age pupils on dedicated home to school transport are now required to wear face coverings, unless they are medically exempt. This brings dedicated

school transport into line with public transport. Letters were sent to all affected pupils, to schools and contractors advising them of this change, while exemption cards were sent to schools and notices for display on vehicles were sent to contractors. Wiltshire Council continues to stress the importance of:

- Additional cleaning of vehicles with particular attention being paid to frequently touched areas such as door handles, bells pushes, arm rest etc
- Good vehicle ventilation being maintained at all times

59. All taxi drivers and Passenger Assistants are required to wear a face covering.

60. Free school meal funding has been provided direct to schools and early years settings to ensure all eligible pupils receive two £15 vouchers to cover the two-week Christmas period. This funding is going to all pupils in receipt of free school meals, 2-year-old 'Better Together' funding or early years pupil premium. Education settings have had flexibility to use a variety of methods to provide this support for their families and these have reflected the local area and family circumstances.

Economy

61. In November the claimant rate was 11,895, levelling off from August's 12,850. Wiltshire's claimant rate remains at 4%, compared to a Great Britain rate of 6.3% and a South West rate of 5%.

62. Of the 11,895 claimants, 2465 are under the age of 24 which is a fall of 100 in the past month. For the first time since the initial claimant spike, the number of unemployed has risen in the aged 50+ category, but only by a small margin.

63. Data from Citizen's Advice shows there has been an increase in Universal Credit (UC) claims in November of 389 individuals. This follows a fall last month of -244, and November is showing the highest claimant rate this year.

64. There has been a further decrease in furlough claims through September as national restrictions were eased. We are yet to see the impact of the November restrictions.

65. At the end of September people were furloughed in Wiltshire, a rate of 6%. Wiltshire continues to have a lower furlough rate than the national average (now 8%).

66. A second round of the self-employment grant has generated a rise in the number of claims nationally. Wiltshire's claim rate continues to be lower than the national and regional average. However, Wiltshire businesses have higher value claims, consistently £200.00 higher than the national average across the months. The data identifies 25,300 eligible businesses in Wiltshire.

67. As of 17 December we have received 581 applications for the Self Isolation Payment Scheme (SIPS) and have awarded 167 payments. Payments are £500 and are to support those in financial need as a result of being required to self-isolate. A team is in place to administer this payment scheme.

68. The Kickstart Programme provides apprenticeship support to 16-24 year olds who are not currently in employment or training. We have coordinated a multi-agency approach to the Kickstart Programme, with the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership taking the lead on this via the Growth Hub. We have 270 placements lined up across Wiltshire. Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) are now allocating young people to these placements. There has been a delay in rolling out the scheme within the DWP but the scheme will now be implemented early in 2021.
69. The Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSG) has supported businesses who have had to close during the most recent four week lockdown. As of 17 December we have made £3.176m of payments under this scheme and £483k has been paid using the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG), which is aimed to support businesses who aren't eligible for the main LRSG funding. These grant payments have supported 2394 Wiltshire businesses. We are on track to deliver approximately £100m of COVID-19 grants to over 10,000 businesses across Wiltshire in 2020.
70. The council has submitted a bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to fund energy efficiency improvements in council buildings. A total of £4.7m has been requested, which will stimulate local supply chains and sustain green jobs locally.
71. The council has also submitted a £0.5m bid to the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme. This will fund energy efficiency improvements in 2021 for 100 of our council homes that are rated D-F on their Energy Performance Certificates.
72. The council has been talking to training providers about local provision of green skills to prepare for the opportunities presented by the energy transition.

Safe Spaces

73. We continue to work closely with our partners in town councils to evaluate the effectiveness of social distancing schemes and have a clear structure in place with weekly meetings overseeing all schemes for creating safe space for walking and cycling particularly in busy areas.
74. The Council is consulting on all cycling schemes funded from government's Emergency Active Travel, and the consultation will end on 8 January.
75. Following recent guidance from government we have considered our preparedness for severe winter weather, reduced roadworks during seasonal holidays to improve traffic flow, and considered social distancing at busy transport hubs.

Organisational Recovery

76. The organisational recovery programme continues, albeit progress has been impacted by the diversion of some of the programme resources to support the ongoing response to the pandemic. Despite this some initiatives will continue to

be implemented as planned and further details will be provided in the next Covid19 update to Cabinet in February.

Financial Implications

77. This report provides an update on the Councils financial position as at the end of period 8, projecting the forecast position as at 30 November 2020, detailing any significant changes in the variances since the period 7 position and updating on any announcements from Government.
78. At the Cabinet meeting on 1 December the COVID-19 Update and Financial Update report presented a forecast small underspend of £0.071m, a continuing improvement on the previous forecast position. In addition, £4m was set aside in a specific earmarked reserve to deal with the challenges of setting a balanced budget for the financial year 2021/22 as approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 3 November.
79. Since the last budget monitoring report there have not been additional funding announcements to support any additional impact for the current financial year (2020/21). Specific grants continue to be assumed to be fully spent to support the activity for which they have been awarded or ring-fenced for these purposes and therefore do not impact on the overall financial forecasts for the council.
80. Overall Place services have a revised forecast variance improvement of £1.291m from period 7 and is due to income forecasts in Car Parking, Planning, Building Control and Land Charges showing an improvement in actual income received in comparison to the previous forecast. Transport forecasts have improved as confirmation that government grant will continue to the end of the financial year and not end in January as originally expected.
81. In other service areas there are further significant positive changes to forecast variances. The forecast total spend has reduced by £2.197m thus improving the overall position.
82. Families and Children's are forecasting a favourable movement of £0.475m largely due to lower than expected caseloads as a result of lockdown activity during the financial year which have meant vacancies have not been filled by agency social workers as would normally be the case and higher level of income to support asylum seeking children.
83. There has been an adverse movement in Access & Reablement of £0.613m from period 7 to period 8. There is a result of an increase in commitments in Access & Reablement as the Hospital Discharge Funding is phased out, and people become eligible for local authority funded support. There is also an increase in staffing costs. This is offset by a reduction in the anticipated risk of new packages that were built into the previous forecasts.
84. There is a favourable movement on Adults Commissioning of £0.603m from period 7 to period 8. Two block contracts with Order of Saint John have ended, contributing to £0.400m of the movement. There has also been an agreement to fund work undertaken by Age Concern, previously funded from the

commissioning budget, from a mixture of the Hospital Discharge funding and the improved Better Care Fund.

85. The forecast for Housing Benefit Subsidy has improved, with greater confidence in the ability to recover overpayments and results in a £0.500m favourable variance.
86. The net position of the favourable movement in the forecast of the income losses and the additional movements in forecast service spend results in an overall forecast underspend for the council of £2.892m.
87. Given the continued improvement in the overall forecast position, there is now the opportunity to put further monies aside to deal with anticipated issues arising in the 2021/22 financial year. Not only will this be utilised to assist in balancing the 2021/22 budget, but monies will also be set aside to deal with latent demand originally forecast to be incurred this year, but now expected to arise in the next financial year.
88. Areas of latent demand being considered are around Mental Health services, Children in Care, SEND Transport and maintenance of Council buildings. To ensure funding is available to support the anticipated delayed expenditure in future years these balances will be requested to be transferred into an earmarked reserve to manage latent demand.
89. This will be fully reported and detailed out in the quarter 3 position when there is further clarity on the forecast financial position for this financial year as well as understanding the position with respect to latent demand and in which year that pressure and risk may fall on services.
90. Any additional underspend at the end of the year will be transferred to the General Fund Reserve which currently stands at £15.456m. Conversely any overspend that may arise at the financial year end will be required to be funded by this reserve.
91. Given the uncertainty as we move into the winter months and the uncertainty of further response and recovery costs during this period the spending control measures will still continue until the situation becomes clearer and to ensure we continue to protect the General Fund Reserve and where possible continue to bolster earmarked reserves for future resilience.

Legal Implications

92. The Council's legal team continues to provide advice on the application of new COVID-19 legislation and all aspects of recovery.

Safeguarding Implications

93. Adult and Children's social care continue to maintain all statutory requirements.
94. Referrals into children's safeguarding services are now above pre-COVID-19 levels and we forecast this growth to continue to increase at least until the end of the financial year. However, as a result of lower demand from March through

to the summer the number of children subject to child protection plans or looked after is lower than forecasted; this pattern is similar in many local authorities and has recently been recognised by both Ofsted and the DfE, with national publicity campaigns commenced.

95. The Safeguarding Vulnerable People's Partnership in Wiltshire is leading a campaign to ensure all agencies and services review their current practice to maintain good oversight of vulnerable children and know when to refer concerns to social care. We continue to anticipate growth in the numbers of children subject to child protection plans and looked after children, however it is unlikely that this growth will now peak before the end of this financial year.
96. Planning continues to ensure statutory social care demand can be met and demand modelling draws data and intelligence from a wide range of providers and partner organisations to enable a system wide response. Regular sit-reps are obtained from across the safeguarding partnership so that demand readiness can be assured.
97. The demand into Adult MASH remains low with a suspected sudden surge in the New Year. This follows the historical trend and considers the latent demand expected around financial abuse, which is expected due to the pandemic. Further work is underway with our Communications team to raise awareness of financial abuse and where to find support.
98. Referrals into Adult Social Care Advice and Contact teams are predicted to follow a similar pattern to safeguarding referrals with a dip in December followed by a rapid increase in January/ February. Further review and analysis are required to identify and understand incoming demand from primary care/acute services and any resultant impact on demand for adult care.
99. The Learning Disability Team is already experiencing a higher than normal level of demand due to the impact that the closure day and respite services have had on individuals and their carers. Demand is expected to remain high with a peak of very high demand over the Christmas period.
100. The demand for both Mental Health Assessments and s136 assessments is expected to remain stable until the new year when both are likely to see a significant increase. It is also expected that there will be some slight increase coming from cases on the edge of admission requiring more intensive mental health support from the local authority – i.e. those who were being sufficiently supported outside of local authority services pre-COVID-19 may find a reduction in that support increases demand for local authority Adult Mental Health service provision.
101. For the sector, demand for support and services for those with lower level needs is likely to rise significantly as the long-term impact of COVID-19 and associated lockdowns are felt (social isolation, winter season, stretched unpaid carer capacity, reductions in community support capacity, etc).
102. Work is underway to understand the recent government announcements for Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) funding being made available (in-year) to support the local authority's response to

domestic abuse and support to victims and their families. In preparedness of the new Domestic Abuse Bill coming into effect in April 2021, plans are now in place having been reviewed through Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnerships as well as the Vulnerable People Stakeholder's group.

103. Lessons learnt in relation to domestic abuse from the previous lockdown are being used by providers of domestic abuse services. Christmas and New Year is usually the time where demand and pressure is highest on domestic abuse services with volumes already higher than normally anticipated, and awareness of helplines and communications is being raised. We will continue to maintain the domestic abuse 24 helpline at least until the end of the financial year.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

104. This report will be considered by the Financial Planning Task Group on 4 January 2021 and Wiltshire COVID-19 Response Task Group on 7 January 2021, with members of the Executive and senior officers in attendance to answer members' questions. The Chairmen will report any comments and findings of the task group at the Cabinet meeting.

Procurement Implications

105. A sequential approach to supplier relief was agreed earlier on in the response phase of the pandemic, ensuring that suppliers were pointed to central Government support where possible first and work with us on an open book basis when necessary. The Council has established an internal Commercial Board to provide oversight and assurance on the end to end procurement process around future contract activity and management.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

106. Work continues to understand the impact of the pandemic on those with protected characteristics. Equality implications are being considered in the Council's decision making and any change to service provision. Recovery theme leads have embedded the use of a Health Equality Assessment Tool. The Community Resilience theme working with partners is leading on the work to enable Wiltshire's communities to be cohesive places where difference is celebrated.
107. Further information about some of the work undertaken by the Community Resilience theme is outlined in **Appendix 1**.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

108. A new Climate Strategy will be developed in the coming year to set out how the council is going to meet its challenging targets to become carbon neutral by 2030. As part of developing the strategy, each Recovery Theme will need to consider the environmental impact of its activities and identify opportunities to contribute to a green recovery.
109. The council has recently joined forces with dozens of local authorities across the country and signed up to the ADEPT blueprint for a green recovery. This

[initiative](#) aims to secure more powers and resources for councils to take action on climate change and nature restoration, and to build back better from COVID-19.

110. The Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group has put forward recommendations on Energy, Transport and Planning which have now all been published. The Executive's response to the Energy and Transport recommendations and the Planning recommendations are available as downloads [here](#).

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

111. A partnership risk register is in place and owned by the Recovery Co-ordinating Group (RCG). Recovery partnership risks are managed in themes on separate registers with an escalation procedure for significant risks to be reviewed by the RCG.
112. Wiltshire Council specific risks around recovery are managed within the Organisational Recovery programme on a separate register. That register will feed into the Council's Strategic Risk Register. Wiltshire Council's Performance and Risk Management reporting will resume for quarter two 2020/21.
113. Internal management of risk during the current response phase has led to the identification of new risks and the creation of a Council-wide risk register managed by Gold CLT.

Workforce Implications

114. Government guidance about employment matters affected by the pandemic continues to be applied. The COVID-19 policy implemented in March 2020 sets out information for staff, including the application of policies and procedures to support response and during recovery, and will continue to be reviewed and updated following consultation with the trade unions.
115. The current tiering of regions based on the level of COVID cases has been taken account of and communications to staff to reiterate the need to work at home wherever possible have been issued. In addition, the process for approving staff to return to the workplace has been reviewed to ensure staff are only attending the workplace for essential reasons, i.e. impact on service delivery, to access equipment or information or for well-being reasons, and with approval of Directors.
116. The organisation recovery programme is taking steps to assess, evaluate and review the way in which the workforce operated during lockdown so that we can embed some of the positive changes and identify new opportunities to deliver services differently.

Conclusions

117. Wiltshire Council continues to play a critical role with its partners and the local community in responding to the impact of the coronavirus in the county.

Terence Herbert, Chief Executive

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17 December 2020

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Additional detail on work under themes and on Organisation Recovery
Appendix 2: Key government announcements provided since last cabinet report

Appendix 1

Health and Wellbeing – additional information

Homelessness

- In partnership with Aster Housing, we have allocated a property using the Housing 1st Model . The first review is due in a couple of weeks, but early signs are positive and wrap around support is working well .
- With long-term government funding we have identified properties for use as move on accommodation for rough sleepers. We are hoping that these will be available in the new year.
- The Homes4Wilts housing need figures were 2712 in March 2020 and are now 3071 - an increase of 13%. The reason for the increase will be a combination of increased demand and the fact that less affordable housing has been re-let due to organisations locking down and also a prioritisation of homeless applicants being rehoused during the pandemic for obvious reasons. The additional applications have placed a toll on the Homes4wilts team. Additional resources have been brought in and also colleagues from the housing options and homelessness teams have stepped in to help address the increase. If the supply of affordable housing does not catch up the inevitable consequence will be that households will wait longer before being rehoused. The service manages this through the coordination of various affordable housing supplies primarily to meet homelessness demand. That is through the temporary accommodation supply and increasingly the property provided by Stone Circle Housing company. There is every reason to believe demand will increase significantly in 2021 when Courts start hearing more possession proceedings.
- In partnership with agencies who work with rough sleepers we have completed our annual rough sleepers count which was done in the early hours of the morning at the end of November. Figures are due to be verified shortly by government but are not that different to our September quarterly count .

Anti-social behaviour

- Next steps are being taken with the wider ASB group to define ASB, it's types, their links and differences to then understand applicable and effective responses. The Salisbury City Centre group are keen to resolve issues closer to the root and positively.
- National PHE guidance supports our approach to work in an intensive, person-centred, strengths focused way with clients as equal partners in this process and a blueprint is being developed.

Substance misuse

- We continue to work closely with Motiv8, who support children with substance misuse, on their digital offer.
- Turning Point, who support adults with substance misuse, continue to support those most vulnerable. Their online offer continues to grow as do online workshops.
- Dual diagnosis work is progressing and pathways for both adults and children are close to being finalised.

BSW Mental Health / Learning Disability / Autism

- Bringing partners and localities together to co-design a response to the national community services framework for mental health.
- AWP have undertaken a bed base review which was undertaken with partners and CCG localities.
- The system has restarted the learning disability and autism spectrum condition programme (and the 18-25 pathway)

Care, Safeguarding and Education Theme – additional information

FACT

- The FACT Executive and Operational Boards continue to oversee the delivery of the revised programme structure focussing on the agreed priority projects;
 - Early Support Assessment - implementation plan
 - Inclusive approaches - alternative education provision
 - Young People's Service - multi agency staffing, Contextual Safeguarding and data sharing related to Child Exploitation
 - School Readiness - speech, language and communication in the early years
 - Integrated Working - MH/LD/ASD
 - Transitional Safeguarding - older adolescents and young adults
- The current focus is on ensuring each project has an effective multi-agency project board driving its progress and a clear set of objectives and milestones.
- The FACT Operational Board is planning to hold a workshop session during March/April 2021 to reflect on the impact that COVID-19 has had upon services and service; the outcome of these discussions will inform current and potential future FACT projects.

Community Resilience Theme -additional information

With the move out of national lockdown and into tier 2 the Community Resilience recovery continues to focus work on activities that address inequalities deepened by COVID-19 and on enabling and supporting communities to undertake compliant activity during lockdown to support, in particular, loneliness, isolation, youth provision and mental health.

A youth provision task and finish group is promoting networking across youth organisations in Wiltshire, enabling them to better share learning and information and to connect with statutory services within Wiltshire Council. The group will also review funding from Area Boards to Youth Services and work with those Area Boards where there are opportunities to bridge the gaps in provision in the rural parts of the county.

Further work to understand how inclusive and diverse the sector is will also be undertaken focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on minority groups to help understand if youth provision is picking up on this need and meeting it, or if there a gap that will lead to reduced opportunity for these young people.

Community spaces

The Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre has re-opened enabling 26 visits per day.

Active Communities continues to support residents utilising online resources on its website. An active communities advent calendar was released through December via social media.

Wiltshire Community Foundation, Community First and Public Health held a webinar for 66 participants to support community groups with guidance to open community spaces and groups safely.

Community Engagement

A series of recovery workshops, Area Boards, partnership meetings have been delivered during the latter half of 2020. Comprehensive reports will be taken to the Area Boards early in 2021 identifying key priority themes based on data and community feedback.

Regular meetings and partnership working continues with VCS partners, Town and Parish Clerks, Community groups and Faith Leaders.

Recovery community engagement activity across the partnership system has been mapped seeking to enable a joined-up approach to connecting activity.

Inequalities workstream

We are continuing to collate and monitor the data on the impact of COVID-19 on inequality groups in Wiltshire in order to ensure we are able to support our communities to target activity to address emerging issues, and link into other Recovery themes as needed to provide targeted support.

Opportunities to build on our data include the VCS Impact Survey (currently live), a series of targeted, informal engagement sessions with specific groups, and a proposal for an academic research piece on the hidden voices of the pandemic in Wiltshire. The latter comes with a financial cost and options for supporting this are being explored.

The group is assisting BSW CCG Engagement Team with roll out of the COVID-19 vaccine, helping them to engage with marginalised groups who are less likely to come forward, whether because they aren't registered with a GP, have communication or transport barriers, or have lack of understanding or trust in the vaccination process.

Good progress by the "Get Connected" multiagency digital inclusion group: AbilityNet taking over the work previously carried out by Wiltshire Online Digital Champions, working with older people to improve digital skills, another project had delivery of 50 Chromebooks to be distributed to those without equipment. Julian House linked in

with the group to address specific needs of Gypsy, traveller and boater communities with the potential for these groups to benefit from Project Mercury (Army technicians have been renovating old laptops for reuse in the community).

Appendix 2- Key government updates provided since last Cabinet report

- Guidance was issued on 29 November 2020 in relation to [Christmas bubbles](#). This was [revised](#) on 19 December 2020 due to increases of cases.
- Evidence published 30 November 2020 on [the health, economic and social effects of COVID 19 and the tiered approach](#)
- From Monday 14 December the [self isolation period](#) for people identified as being a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19 changed from 14 days to 10 days (with the exception of those in certain health and care settings).
- Publication of guidance for the [Christmas Support Payment \(CSP\)](#) for wet-led pubs that have been severely impacted over the Christmas period due to temporary local restrictions
- Announcement on 30 November that retailers will be able to [extend their daily opening hours](#) from Monday to Saturday in the run up to Christmas and through January.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: **Recommissioning and procurement of nursing block and
nursing & residential care framework beds**

Cabinet Member: **Councillor Simon Jacobs – Cabinet Member for Adult Social
Care, Public Health and Public Protection**

Key Decision: **Key**

Executive Summary

1. Current contracts for nursing block and nursing and residential framework beds expire on 31st March 2021. This report makes proposals to develop and implement a new commissioning platform for these services across two stages:
 - a. The establishment of a pseudo-dynamic purchasing system, known as the 'Care Home Alliance', or 'Alliance' to commence in February 2021.
 - b. Alliance providers to tender for 'draw-down' contract opportunities for block contracts or individual framework beds to commence in April 2021.
2. The Alliance platform improves access to good value, quality care home capacity and the ability to respond to urgent system need, while being fully compliant with procurement regulations. It creates an improved market shape in which to commission services from private providers in challenging trading conditions.
3. Officers have engaged with providers on the long-term direction for care homes and will engage providers on the Alliance platform before procurement begins.

Proposals

1. Cabinet is invited to consider the proposals outlined in item 1.1 of this report. In summary:
 - a. That officers continue to develop and implement the Alliance platform and draw-down contract procurement.
 - b. That the authority to make decisions connected with the procurement and award new contracts and associated documents is delegated to the Director Joint Commissioning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection and the Corporate Director of Resources.

Reason for Proposal(s)

A new commissioning approach to secure value for money nursing and residential care capacity is required due to the expiry of existing contracts and market conditions, which remain challenging.

Terence Herbert, Chief Executive

Subject: Commissioning and procurement of nursing block and residential and nursing framework beds

Cabinet Member: Councillor Simon Jacobs - Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection

Key Decision: Key

1 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report concerns proposals for the successful recommissioning and procurement of nursing and residential care capacity. This report makes the following specific proposals:

1.1.1 The development and implementation of a new commissioning and procurement platform for nursing and residential beds in Wiltshire. This platform will be in the form of a pseudo-dynamic purchasing system known as the 'Care Home Alliance', or 'Alliance'.

1.1.2 Under the Alliance, 'Draw Down Contracts' can be tendered for by the providers who are Alliance members. This enables the Council to be more flexible if it needs to tender at short notice as it has due to COVID and winter pressures.

1.1.3 As identified in appendix 1 (Indicative Procurement Timeline), the Alliance will commence on 8th February 2021. The first 'Draw Down Contracts' will be tendered in February 2021 with contract commencement on 1st April 2021. These contracts will be for:

- a. Block contract nursing beds
- b. Framework contract beds for both nursing and residential care
- c. 'Passive' nursing and residential care services required on an ad-hoc basis (as identified in the Alliance tender documentation) to enable the Council to quickly and compliantly secure services in response to urgent system need and its strategic priorities.

1.1.4 To delegate authority to make decisions connected with the procurement and award new contracts and all associated documents to the Director Joint Commissioning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection and the Corporate Director of Resources.

1.1.5 That officers will continue to assess demand and market conditions and urgent care system needs to review the level of block beds required under the Alliance.

2 Relevance to the Council’s Business Plan

2.1 This report’s proposals resonate most strongly with the Council’s Business Plan’s priority to protect the vulnerable:

- 2.1.1 A more personalised, targeted approach to supporting complex cases.
- 2.1.2 Supporting more cost-effective package costs and enabling more effective use of existing capacity in the wider social care and health workforce.
- 2.1.3 Shape care markets sustainably with providers. Using their vision and creativity to move beyond traditional services and to implement principles of person-centred care and an enabling approach to service delivery.
- 2.1.4 To facilitate prompt discharges from acute hospital.
- 2.1.5 Meet the Council’s duty of care to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities by ensuring equitable access to nursing and residential care supply.

3 Background

- 3.1 Nursing and residential care plays an essential role in the care system, for some of the most vulnerable people in the community. Good care home services aim to deliver high quality care, which is person centred, treat people with dignity and respect, keep people safe, offer real choice and control, promote independence and social inclusion and are supported by highly skilled and dedicated staff.
- 3.2 These services support other developments which improve the health and wellbeing and independence outcomes of customers, including asset based social care practice and outcomes-based commissioning.

Current Block & Framework Contracts

3.3 Wiltshire currently has three distinct types of contracts for care homes: Block, Framework and Spot. An overview of the contract models is provided here:

<i>Figure 1 – Care home contract types in place in Wiltshire</i>	
Block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fixed number of pre-purchased beds at a more competitive rate with guaranteed supply. ➤ Council is committed to the ‘block’ level of spend including unoccupied (void) beds ➤ Utilisation therefore needs to remain high to secure value for money. ➤ An approved provision for voids can also be used to create capacity in times of urgent system need
Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pre-agreed rates and terms and conditions with more competitive rates. ➤ No commitment to purchase beds which are not required, so no cost for voids ➤ Do not guarantee supply ➤ Reduce administration time and costs around individual placements
Spot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Individual beds are purchased as required and last for the duration of each individual service user’s stay at the home ➤ Rates are not pre-agreed so are subject to individual negotiation.

- 3.4 Block and framework contracts maximise the Council's ability to manage spend and bed availability and be less reliant on spot-purchased beds where it has less control financially and in terms of quality assurance.
- 3.5 Block and framework contracts also place obligations on the provider to achieve specified quality of care outcomes and support system flow by reducing delayed transfers of care from hospitals into the community.
- 3.6 Block Nursing The block contract was extended from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. Currently Wiltshire has 7 providers offering a total of 178 block nursing beds across 11 care homes.
- 3.7 Framework Nursing & Residential: The framework contract ends 31st March 2021. Currently Wiltshire has 14 providers offering 149 nursing beds and 154 residential beds across 19 care homes.
- 3.8 Most of the Council's block and framework care homes contracts for nursing and residential care expire on 31st March 2021. The exception to this is the block contract for residential care with Order of St John Care Trust (OSJCT) which runs until 2025.
- 3.9 Voids and utilisation: Utilisation of existing block beds throughout 2020 is 98.50% at October 2020, showing that there is minimum risk of the Council having large numbers of voids.
- Future cost, demand and strategic direction
- 3.10 Overall demand for nursing care beds exceeds current block contracted and framework supply, leading to increased use of individual 'spot' care home beds where the Council has less control over pricing at the point of need.
- 3.11 In the wider care homes market, there is an increasing number of voids within care homes, increased significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This indicates that block contracting and a range of pre-agreed pricing on framework beds is in both providers' and the Council's best interest in terms of surety of income and supply respectively.
- 3.12 Spend on block and framework care home beds depends upon contract prices and demand. An alliance platform typically improves purchasing power and a Council's ability to manage both cost and demand pressures.
- 3.13 In November 2020, officers engaged care home providers in a market shaping workshop. This event considered both Council and providers emerging priorities as well as hearing valuable insight and feedback.
- 3.14 The use of demand data, including the effects of COVID -19, helped identify demand priorities and informed longer-term strategic direction for care homes and the wider social care commissioning landscape.
- 3.15 Current modelling shows a drop in demand for traditional residential beds but an increase in nursing bed needs, particularly for more complex cases and including people living with dementia. Commissioning through an Alliance platform enables both commissioners and providers to be more flexible.

- 3.16 The term of the Alliance Agreement will be for 6 years with expected start on 8th February 2021. The 'Drop Down' Nursing Block Contract will be for an initial term of 3 years with the provision to extend for up to a further two years (3+1+1). Expected start date for these contracts is 1st April 2021.

4 Statutory Requirements

- 4.1 Local Authorities in England have a range of responsibilities under the Care Act (2014) in relation to these proposals:
- 4.1.1 To shape care and support market sustainably and in collaboration with care providers, to ensure a range of appropriate and high-quality providers and services are available.
- 4.1.2 Local market oversight and contingency planning for provider failure and a temporary duty to support providers and service users through service interruptions. Where a provider cannot meet needs as their business has failed, the Council ensures smooth transition for services users so that their needs continue to be met.
- 4.1.3 The Council's duties in market shaping, oversight and provider failure as well as safeguarding apply to all care providers active in the county, regardless of whether the Council has a contractual relationship with a provider.

5 Main Considerations for the Council

Commissioning approach and principles of service delivery

- 5.1 The tender seeks to provide high quality, safe and person-centred care that promotes choice and control, dignity and quality of life for service users, families and carers.
- 5.2 A key principle is establishing longer-term relationships with service providers to develop services in partnership, modernising the approach to care beyond traditional models and developing models of trust, risk sharing, accountability and continuous improvement.
- 5.3 The Council will seek to increasingly co-produce care models with service users and wider stakeholders and maximise the use of available resources to deliver value for money and impact.

Pricing and Value for Money

- 5.4 The Alliance's implementation occurs alongside regular activity over peak winter demand and COVID-19 response. The need to facilitate timely hospital discharge and support more people in the community has increased the need to secure cost-effective, flexible and person-centred care home capacity.
- 5.5 On joining the Alliance from 8th February, providers can tender for block contracts for nursing care, and to provide framework beds for nursing and residential care. These contracts will start from 1st April 2021.
- 5.6 Wiltshire Council must consider its financial position and secure best value from any contract. Drawdown block and framework contracts will be let based on an appropriate price/quality ratio, with price being the overriding factor as

providers will have had to demonstrate quality to get on the Alliance. The Council will seek to significantly reduce spot purchasing and use which will deliver efficiencies for the Council.

- 5.7 The Council will publish a placement process to clarify its arrangements and priorities for purchasing care home beds. This process will consider the contract type (e.g. block, framework or spot) against other essential factors such as service user choice and control and the Council's statutory duty to meet care needs in the most cost-effective way. A draft placements process is intended to be published as part of the draw-down contracts tender in February 2021. The Council will also establish its price position for 2021/22 for any beds commissioned outside of the Alliance.
- 5.8 To maximise the value for money achieved from investing in block contracts, the placements process will seek to prioritise those contracts wherever possible. Where a suitable block contract bed is not available, brokers will secure a framework bed. If no suitable framework beds are available, then another suitable bed from an Alliance member will be sought. Finally, a 'spot' bed from a non-Alliance provider may be sourced.
- 5.9 In consultation with providers, officers are preparing to carry out an 'Actual Cost of Care' exercise for care home beds in Wiltshire (see 15.5 below). This is expected to be completed early in 2021/22. The summary findings of the exercise will be published and may inform a future update of the published placements process.
- 5.10 Additional measures have been included into the Alliance terms and conditions to reduce the impact of block contract void costs and ensure value for money.

Market Readiness

- 5.11 The widespread impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has reprioritised activity across all parts of the care sector. Many organisations and care home providers have raised concerns of COVID-19's impact on their business models and have sought direction from the Council on future commissioning intentions and support for the market.
- 5.12 The Wiltshire care home provider market is large. There are 173 care homes registered in the county, relying on a balance between private and publicly funded care. COVID-19's impact has significantly reduced the level of privately funded resident enquiries, suggesting greater interest in working with the Local Authority.
- 5.13 In November 2020, officers held a market shaping event with care home providers in partnership with the Institute of Public Care (IPC). This delivered valuable insight on providers' views on future opportunities, priorities and concerns. It has informed the Council's draft Market Position Statement which identifies the Council's commissioning priorities.
- 5.14 Officers have arranged specific market engagement sessions on 10th December for the Alliance and draw-down contracts. The Alliance procurement will start in w/c 14th December (see Appendix 1). Further

engagement sessions will take place during the tender period to help address any provider queries.

- 5.15 Officers have sought to maximise opportunities for providers to take part in initial tendering activity by ensuring the self-assessment questionnaire for Alliance membership is robust yet straightforward.

Governance and Commissioning Arrangements

- 5.16 It is imperative that a robust governance structure is in place for this procurement to ensure key decisions are considered through appropriate forums in a timely manner. Robust project management arrangements have been established with representation from across the Council's commissioning, operational and corporate services.

6 Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

- 6.1 A briefing on these proposals has been scheduled for the Chairman and Vice-chairmen of the Health Select Committee and the Chairman of the Financial Planning Task Group. The chairmen will report their comments at the Cabinet meeting.

7 Safeguarding Implications

- 7.1 Current contract arrangements with care home providers contain robust safeguarding measures in line with Council policy. All Alliance contracts build on these provisions and give clear direction on safeguarding policy process.

8 Public Health Implications

- 8.1 The current service specification is informed by public health data and evidence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This has supported the establishment of key performance indicators in the contract to drive the efficiency and effectiveness of services.
- 8.2 Improved availability of care home bed supply will ensure that people with care needs that cannot be met in less specialised settings and who are reliant on financial support from the Council to pay for care, can access appropriate services to meet their needs and support their wellbeing.

9 Procurement Implications

- 9.1 The Council will follow a robust process in line with the Public Contracts Regulations (2015) Light Touch regime. The procurement vehicle for the Alliance is a pseudo-dynamic purchasing system under regulations 74-76 of the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR). Due to the contract value, it will follow a full OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union).
- 9.2 Advertising and market engagement for the tender will stimulate the market and should secure competitive bids from those providers able to meet the requirements to join the Alliance and bid for services. The procurement process enables officers to seek a good geographical coverage of block and framework beds across the county.
- 9.3 The initial procurement exercise will invite providers to join the Alliance from its start date of 8th February. Providers will be selected on the basis of key business information, current Care Quality Commission (CQC) registration status and evidence provided through a quality self-assessment.

- 9.4 Providers with an 'Inadequate' CQC rating will not be invited to join the Alliance. However, they will be able to resubmit an application when they provide sufficient evidence that their CQC rating has improved.
- 9.5 In addition to the initial invitation to participate in the Alliance, providers can subsequently apply to join the Alliance every four weeks for the first six months of its term, and quarterly thereafter.

10 Equalities Impact of the Proposal

- 10.1 An initial EQIA risk assessment was undertaken which concluded that the potential impact on service users did not meet the requirement for a full Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA). A summary of the risk assessment's findings is included as Appendix 2 with a full copy available on request.
- 10.2 These proposals support equitable access for any individual who has assessed needs and who also requires financial support from the Council. Future contract opportunities and service specifications for future services will require providers to demonstrate social value.
- 10.3 Providers seeking to join the Alliance must demonstrate that they have policies and procedures in place that are compliant with Equality Act 2010.
- 10.4 Service specifications under the Alliance state that providers must demonstrate use of local resources, take account of customer's religion and culture, value diversity and promote equality and inclusivity.

11 Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

- 11.1 The tender evaluation criteria and contract terms & conditions include provision on environmental and climate change impact to ensure this is appropriately considered.
- 11.2 By ensuring a range of good quality local provision in the county, local residents are enabled to remain living in Wiltshire. Travel and associated fuel costs and usage for families are reduced along with related fuel emissions.

12 Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

- 12.1 This will create additional financial pressures for the Council from increased spot purchasing where the Council has less control on price. The price of currently utilised block and framework beds will also likely increase significantly as these contracts expire on 31st March.
- 12.2 Delay beyond 1st April for the implementation of draw down contracts will create an interim period of increased cost and negotiation on expiring block capacity.

13 Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

- 13.1 Due to challenging trading conditions in the care home market such as abnormally low utilisation amplified by COVID-19, providers may use the Alliance and draw down contract procurements to inflate price. Mitigation exists through the provisions for managing price in section 5 above.

- 13.2 Rigorous oversight and management of empty beds (voids) will be carried out to ensure effective use of block contract beds.
- 13.3 Delay in the project timeline: Officers continue to ensure sufficient engagement across Council functions to support this project and deliver to the required standard within the indicative project timeline in Appendix 1. A risk and issues log is in place and regularly reviewed.

14 Financial Implications

- 14.1 The Alliance will be managed and delivered within existing resources, a summary of which is provided below. The block contract budget is based on the number of block beds that were procured in 2017. Ongoing support budgets include spend for both spot and framework beds.

FY Budgets & projected spend in 2020/21 for budgets relevant to the Alliance		
Budget	2020/21 Budget	2019/20 Outturn position
Adult Care Nursing Placements- Block Contracts	£5,746,970	£5,205,878
Ongoing Support <i>residential</i> spot placement budget	£14,896,260	£15,412,157
Ongoing Support nursing spot placement budget	£8,919,340	£9,157,028
Total	£30,562,570	£29,775,063

- 14.2 Actual spend for the 2019/20 across block, framework and spot care home beds was £29,775,063 (excluding the Council's residential care block contract with OSJCT which is out of scope). Budgets in 2020/21 are greater than the 2019/20 outturn position. Projections for an outturn position in 202/21 are complicated by the impact of additional government funding for these services in relation to COVID-19. The overall picture however is expected to remain challenging.
- 14.3 In recent years there has been a small decrease in block bed availability while over the same time while there has been an increase in demand for nursing care. This has increased use of beds outside of the block contracts, with an impact on overall spend.
- 14.4 The table below illustrates the significant difference between the average cost of nursing block beds against the much higher cost of spot purchased beds. Frameworks are typically seen to also provide better rates than spot beds except for enhanced nursing beds, suggesting further opportunity for improved value.

Average weekly bed rates (Dec, 2020) <i>*indicates a combined average or standard and average spot purchased beds (where separate averages for 'standard' and 'enhanced' beds are not available)</i>			
Bed Type <i>(NB: nursing costs are exclusive of funded nursing care (FNC) payable by the NHS)</i>	Current Block	Current Framework	Current Spot
Nursing (standard)	£623.22	£716.58	£803.06*
Residential (standard)	NA	£712.02	£801.26*
Nursing (enhanced / EMI)	£702.18	£826.49	£803.06*
Residential (enhanced / EMI)	NA	£784.31	£801.26*

- 14.5 Draw down contracts support positive market management and give greater control to the Council on spend because rates, terms and conditions have been agreed up front. This reduces the reliance on other beds with a more expensive unit cost.
- 14.6 However, care must be taken to ensure block beds are appropriately utilised and deliver value for money as the impact of voids on block contracts reduces the value for money offered by the headline rate.
- 14.7 FNC is paid by the NHS in respect of individual service users who are eligible. For block nursing contracts, officers should consult and secure agreement from local NHS commissioners prior to the procurement for draw-down contracts to confirm arrangements for paying Funded Nursing Care (FNC) in respect of void beds. This is necessary to avoid any additional financial impact on the Council.
- 14.8 In transitioning to the Alliance, providers may seek to submit increased costs for block and framework drawdown contracts. Increases in weekly bed rates can be mitigated through better controls through the tender process, effective management of voids and as identified in section 5 above, implementing a published placements process and the findings of an actual cost of care exercise.

15 Legal Implications

- 15.1 Any procurement process must be undertaken in line with the provisions of Part 9 (Financial Regulations), Part 10 (Contract Regulations) of the Council's Constitution, as well as the Public Contracts Regulations (2015, PCR).
- 15.2 Decisions for the award of new contracts and all associated documents in respect of the Alliance and draw-down contracts may be delegated to the Director Joint Commissioning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for

Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection and the Corporate Director of Resources in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

- 15.3 Appropriate contract documents support the compliant and effective delivery of services and support the Council in ensuring its statutory duties are upheld through commissioning services from the private care market. Legal Services are supporting the project and ensuring the contractual documentation required is robust and fit for purpose.
- 15.4 Non-compliance with the Constitution, the Public Contract Regulations and the general principles of contract law could result in a legal challenge. However, this risk is minimised through a robust procurement process and involvement of the Council's Strategic Procurement Hub.
- 15.5 As identified in 5.10 above, in consultation with providers, officers are seeking to undertake an 'Actual Cost of Care' exercise for care home beds in Wiltshire in consultation with providers. Due to potential conflicts of interest/compliance with procurement laws, only certain officers are involved with this as a separate exercise to the current procurement. Confidentiality agreements have been signed with providers.

16 Workforce Implications

- 16.1 These proposals relate to a continuation of current activity which is delivered through external providers. There is no direct impact on the Council's own workforce.
- 16.2 Care Homes play a key role in community care & support services. The Alliance's focus on developing care models beyond the traditional is in-keeping with wider workforce strategy goals for demonstrating the social care sector as a rewarding place to work with good opportunities for career development; driving enhanced recruitment & retention rates and better availability of care for those that need it the most.

17 Conclusions

- 17.1 With existing nursing block and residential/nursing frameworks coming to an end in March 2021, a new commissioning and procurement platform for care homes activity is required.
- 17.2 Available evidence and market conditions suggest the Alliance platform is the most effective option to secure value for money and security of supply for the Council, while ensuring fairness and equal opportunity to care home providers in bidding for block contracts.
- 17.3 Therefore this report makes the following specific proposals:
 - 17.3.1 The development and implementation of a new commissioning and procurement platform for nursing and residential beds in Wiltshire. This platform will be in the form of a pseudo-dynamic purchasing system known as the 'Care Home Alliance', or 'Alliance'.
 - 17.3.2 Under the Alliance, 'Draw Down Contracts' can be tendered for by the providers who are Alliance members. This enables the Council to be

more flexible if it needs to tender at short notice as it has due to COVID and winter pressures.

17.3.3 As identified in appendix 1 (Indicative Procurement Timeline), the Alliance will commence on 8th February 2021. The first 'Draw Down Contracts' will be tendered in February 2021 with contract commencement on 1st April 2021. These contracts will be for:

- a. Block contract nursing beds
- b. Framework contract beds for both nursing and residential care
- c. 'Passive' nursing and residential care services required on an ad-hoc basis (as identified in the Alliance tender documentation) to enable the Council to quickly and compliantly secure services in response to urgent system need and its strategic priorities.

17.3.6 To delegate authority to make decisions associated with the procurement and award new contracts and all associated documents to the Director Joint Commissioning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Public Protection and the Corporate Director of Resources.

17.3.7 That officers will continue to assess demand and market conditions and urgent care system needs to review the level of block beds required under the Alliance.

Helen Jones (Director - Commissioning) – Director Joint Commissioning
Report Author: Sara Young – Programme Lead for Registered Accommodation,
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Date of Report: 01/10/2020

Appendices

Appendix 1	Indicative Procurement Timeline
Appendix 2	Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) risk assessment summary

Appendix 1
Indicative Procurement Timeline

Project Stage	Date
Stage 1: Alliance procurement programme	
Market Engagement	10.12.20
Tender publication	14.12.20
Pro-contract support session	05.01.21
Deadline for questions submitted via pro-contract	06.01.21
Deadline for responses to questions circulated to all tenderers	08.01.21
Closing date for submission of tenders (15.00)	15.01.21
Tender Opening	18.01.21
Tender Evaluation	19.01.21
Approval to award report	29.01.21
Care Home alliance commences	08.02.21
Stage 2: Tender for block and framework draw down contracts	
Tender publication	08.02.21
Pro-contract support session	15.02.20
Deadline for questions submitted via pro-contract	19.02.21
Deadline for responses to questions circulated to all tenderers	22.02.21
Closing date for submission of tenders (15.00)	28.02.21
Tender Opening	01.03.21
Tender Evaluation	02.03.21
Approval to award report	20.03.21
Draw down contracts commence	01.04.21

Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) Risk Assessment Summary

Section 5

Conclusions drawn from the impact of the proposed change or new service/policy

- The commissioning and procurement of nursing and residential, block and framework beds across Wiltshire will support equitable access to any individual to have their assessed needs met in an appropriate setting.
- A positive impact to ensure that the Care Home Alliance provides services that are designed to meet the needs of the people who use them. Residents and their family/carers will have access to high quality care services which are person centred, treat people with dignity and respect, keep people safe, offer real choice and control, promote independence and social inclusion and are supported by highly skilled and dedicated staff.
- The specification of future services will state that providers are expected to demonstrate social value.
- Commissioners will require the provision of services which take account of and are committed to ensuring that the organisation values diversity and promotes equality and inclusivity on all aspects of its business.
- The procurement process ensures that organisations entering into a contract with the Council must have their own policies and procedures in place to comply with the Equality Act 2010.

Section 6

How will the outcomes from this equality analysis be monitored, reviewed and communicated?

- The performance of the Care Home Alliance will be monitored by the Commissioners in the Adult Commissioning Team.
- A Care Home Alliance Contract Monitoring and Review Group will be developed and will continue during the lifetime of the new contract.
- This group will be attended by Commissioners and Provider Representatives and will be responsible for the continual develop of Care Home Services and will work with the providers to identify and implement opportunities for improvements in service delivery.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

**Subject: Porton Science Park - Collaborative Innovation Centre
Collaborative Innovation Centre**

**Cabinet Member: Cllr Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet
Member for Economic Development, MCI and
Communications**

Key Decision: Key

Executive Summary

Following Cabinet's decision of 7th January 2020, it was agreed the Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre project would proceed and £5m matched funding was allocated. As set out in our paper to that Cabinet last January 2020; a full application for European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) of £2.5 million was submitted by the council and was selected to go forward to grant funding agreement. The grant funding agreement was subject to the confirmation of matched funding and the project being at RIBA stage 3. The project is now at a stage where we can enter into contract with MHCLG, and we are seeking delegated authority to sign the Funding Agreement for the European Funding.

Following client engagement with the appointed building contractors and design team for the RIBA stages 1-3, and the undertaking of relevant ground surveys, the overall costs for the preferred option have increased. Working with the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership ("SWLEP"), which has been a valued partner in the development of Porton Science Park, an allocation of £2m has been secured from the Getting Building Fund towards the project. Together with the secured ERDF and council's existing capital commitment, this will cover the confirmed cost of construction while providing a sufficient margin for risk and ensure that we deliver both on the project's objectives and the council and partners' environmental standards requirements in delivering the new building. We therefore request delegated authority to enter into a funding agreement with the SWLEP for this additional funding.

Based upon the architectural drawings of the new Collaborative Innovation Centre, and the revised layout of internal space, the revenue calculation has been updated reflecting the changes in types of rentable space. The breakeven point for the centre remains at year six assuming an occupancy rate of 70% is reached within three years of opening.

Proposal(s)

Members are asked to delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Commercial Development; to enter into a Funding Agreement with MHCLG for the ERDF £2.5m grant funding.

Members are asked to delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Commercial Development; to enter into a Funding Agreement with the SWLEP for the GBF £2m grant funding.

Members are asked to note the adjusted revenue profile in light of changes to the level and type of lettable space in the revised building design.

Reason for Proposal(s)

- To ensure we can drawdown European match funding for the project, before the ERDF programme finishes
- To ensure we can secure additional funding to cover the building costs, meet environmental requirements and provide for project risk
- To offer flexible space for meetings and a collaborative laboratory space supported by existing ultrafast broadband provision, as well as creative and recreational space to support networking at the new centre
- To progress delivery of Porton Science Park, in partnership with SWLEP, MHCLG and campus partners Dstl and PHE.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: Porton Science Park - Collaborative Innovation Centre

Cabinet Member: Cllr Philip Whitehead Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic Development, MCI and Communications

Key Decision: Key

Purpose of Report

1. This report seeks to update members regarding increased cost of delivery arising from design changes which include relocation of the preferred site for the building, additional road and parking provision.
2. To provide members with an updated revenue projection for the centre's initial years of operation, which has been reprofiled in line with the internal design of the building with respect to type and quanta of lettable space
3. To secure additional funding and draw down matched funding for the capital costs of building the centre and provide specialist business support, training and development on-site, the council needs to enter into funding agreements with MHCLG and the SWLEP. This report seeks delegated authority to enter into these funding agreements.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

4. The project is a priority in achieving Key Action 2 of the Council's Business Plan which is to, 'Stimulate economic growth and create additional jobs in partnership with the Local Enterprise Partnership.'
5. Porton Science Park is a priority in delivering Objective 1: Wiltshire Has a Thriving and Growing Economy, in the Council's Business Plan

Background

6. The first phase of the Porton Science Park comprises 3948 sqm of serviced Innovation and Grow-on space for new and growing enterprises in the life sciences and related research sectors. The Centre was funded by Wiltshire Council, UK Government via the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and European Regional Development Funding, and became operational in January 2018. The centre is now 90% occupied.
7. Following Cabinet's decision of 7th January 2020, it was agreed the second phase of development would proceed and £5m matched funding was

allocated for a Collaborative Innovation Centre. The building will deliver 3,576 sqm of commercial space at the Science Park comprising:

- A 1780 sqm. Collaborative Innovation Centre which will provide
 - 192 sqm. 'Atrium' area for welcoming, networking and relaxation
 - 144 sqm. Meeting Space responding to market demand at Porton Down
 - 165 sqm. office space to be made available on easy-in, easy-out terms to research organisations, small businesses and collaborators
 - 498 sqm. laboratory space also available on easy-in, easy-out terms to promote collaborative scientific research and development, of which:
 - 398 sqm. "Wet space" geared towards research in biological and chemistry related research (including Life Sciences)
 - 100 sqm. "Digital orientated" geared towards research in digital and high technology sciences
 - 1,796 sqm. Grow on Space developed as a "shell" for bespoke occupier-led fitout; the space will be made on traditional but attractive commercial terms and provide much needed space for growing enterprises at Porton Down to grow and benefit from the research eco-system at the Campus
8. Future phases of development at the Science Park are expected to be market-led, centred around specific pre-lets. There will also be a requirement for catering and other social amenities as the park grows. The co-ordination and planning of this work will be guided by the Porton Science Campus Strategic Steering Group.

Main Considerations for the Council

9. The collaborative Innovation Centre is currently designed to RIBA Stage 3 and a detailed design and build programme has been established which projects completion and handover of the building in February 2022.
10. The project already had Planning Permission thanks to the Outline Permission and Reserved Matters secured by the council in delivering the first phase building in 2018. Whilst this has allowed us to apply for ERDF grant; adhering to their tight timescales for commencement and financial completion, it has also meant the design, scale and plot location for the building must conform with its conditions. The shape of the building following a central courtyard has reduced the overall size of the building slightly and limited the size of the conference/meeting space and labs/offices offered. This has altered the revenue costs in the initial forecast calculation, which were based on a similar size and offering as the first phase building.
11. The change in location in line with achieving conformity with planning permission and achieving suitable road access and parking standards has

meant an increase from initial cost estimates. The preferred solution will help resolve issues around visitor parking both at Phase 1 and this new phase of development.

12. The council has received several expressions of interest both from existing occupiers of the Science Park who are planning for growth, and companies both in the UK and abroad in taking new space at Porton Science Park. This evidence of demand substantiates the business case for creating additional commercial space to grow the Science Park further.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

13. A briefing was given to the Chairman of the Financial Planning Task Group and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Environment Select Committee on 17 December. Both task groups sit beneath the OS Management Committee and comments from the task group chairmen will be reported at the Cabinet meeting.

Safeguarding Implications

14. There are no additional considerations relating to the proposals to deliver Porton Science Park.

Public Health Implications

15. The creation of a significant number of high-quality job opportunities in the Health and Life Sciences at the Porton Science Park will have a beneficial impact on research to address public health issues.
16. This project will also form a positive response to the recent economic shocks including the nerve agent attack in Salisbury in 2018 and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, Porton Down is an important focal point for research and manufacturing in direct response to the pandemic.
17. Workplace health will be considered as part of this development, and the permitted scheme will incorporate positive design elements which will contribute to general wellbeing.

Procurement Implications

18. This project is using a Framework as a route to market and follows a “develop and construct” methodology. The Southern Modular Building Framework is a recognised OJEU compliant framework established and managed by a neighbouring Local Authority (Hampshire County Council) and we are working closely with them.
19. This project is following a two-stage process. The first stage, to enter into a pre-construction services agreement with the preferred supply chain partner to carry out design works across RIBA stages 1 to 4, is now almost complete. On acceptance of the design and the price we will look to enter into an NEC Building Contract with the Contractor to build the Innovation

Centre. This is expected to take place in March 2021; however, the Council are under no obligation to proceed to construction.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

20. There are no equalities impacts arising from the proposal

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

21. All users of the building will be expected to adhere to the operation manual for the building, ensuring that they manage it in an energy efficient way and in line with the BREEAM specification to which it will have been constructed.
22. In order to meet the requirement that the project is delivered to a BREEAM standard, advice was taken from the Building Research Establishment (BRE) on the most appropriate way of securing whole building accreditation in the knowledge that in the first instance only 50% of the building would be fully fitted out with the remaining parts constructed to Shell and Core standard with subsequent fit out works to be carried out at an as yet undefined date. The Project Team decided that the most appropriate route would be to carry out two separate BREEAM Assessments. One for the Fit-Out part of the building and one for the Shell and Core part.
23. Following a detailed appraisal of the two BREEAM assessments, we will not be able to secure an Excellent rating for the Shell and Core part of the building due to the fact that we are not able to obtain the mandatory EN01 energy credits. This is as a consequence of a technical issue with the BRUKL software used to calculate the credits; relating to lack of expected energy data due to no tenants in the Shell & Core parts of the building and therefore an energy performance result which is less than that required for an Excellent rated building. However despite the constraints of the site, the location and the nature of the build, we are now of the opinion that we are able to achieve an Excellent BREEAM rating for the Fit-Out part of the building.
24. In line with Wiltshire Council's recognition of the climate change issue, the development of the Centre has as an objective net zero carbon in operation. That is to say "The energy used by the building in operation should be reduced and where possible any demand met through renewable energy. Any remaining emissions from operational energy use should be offset to achieve net zero carbon" (as World Green Building Council definition). A dynamic thermal model for the building has been created to model the building performance and to assess the energy consumption of the building. The energy used to service the building with heating, cooling and lighting is being offset by the energy created by PV panels on the roof (providing the maximum load possible). The current prediction is that there will be an energy demand over and above the energy produced by the PV panels, and therefore in the next stage of the design we will assess what this means for the building and what needs to be considered to enable the building to be carbon neutral. Along with the roof PV panels, this building will include a combination of heat recovery units, air source heat pump condensing units

and rainwater harvesting. The project is predicted to achieve high scores within the BREEAM sections for Management, water and ecology. We have been working closely with the Senior Ecologist in the Spatial Planning Services over specific plant types and maintenance regimes and we will be following the Design Guide for PSP.

25. This project will work closely with a separate proposal to establish a Combined Heat & Power (CHP) solution at the Science Park. The Innovation Centre will be future proofed to enable connection to the heat network once established.
26. Providing additional laboratory and office space for growing SMEs in Wiltshire will also reduce the necessity for travel out of the county; offering benefits through reduced carbon emissions, improved air quality and an improved work-life balance. We have produced a Porton Science Park Travel Plan and are also developing a green travel plan with our campus partners to encourage greater car share and park & ride options across the site. Electric car charging points are currently under consideration, for installation as the science park develops.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

27. The European Regional Development Funding available to part-fund the scheme is at risk of loss from the SWLEP area if we cannot enter into a funding agreement.
28. Without entering into an agreement with the SWLEP we will not be able to draw down the Getting Building Funding to match the ERDF and Council funding and the project will not proceed.
29. If the project is required to cover the full potential capital borrowing costs during the first three years of operation, the Centre will run at a loss.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

30. As is common practice, clawback provisions will be made in the funding agreements for ERDF and Getting Building Funding. There is therefore a risk of clawback should the council fail to meet the conditions of these funding agreements. To mitigate this risk, the funding agreements will be reviewed (and, if necessary and appropriate, amendments requested) by the council's legal services team. Appropriate project management resource is in place to ensure satisfaction of the anticipated conditions which will be placed on the funding.
31. There may be a shortfall in occupancy of the Centre, which would result in underperformance in terms of rental income, and additional empty unit costs. Assumptions have been made for both of these issues in the cost calculation used to forecast the building's financial performance. These assumptions are relatively conservative (risk averse); assuming an initial occupancy of 50% rising to 80% overall as at year 4, compared with the

current performance of the phase one facility which is operating at full capacity after two years.

32. Conversely, there may be unexpected incidental costs, for example emergency repairs. The cost calculation for the Innovation Centre includes evidence-based allowances for both fit out and maintenance costs over the 15 year lifetime of the building which should be able to manage all but the most exceptional of circumstances. This will be managed as a “sinking fund”, meaning that surplus rental income will be set aside to manage years where there may be a shortfall. This risk and the responsibility for managing the building will lie primarily with the operator, however either failure to properly upkeep the building, or financial distress on the part of the operator, may require the council’s intervention.

Financial Implications

33. Capital financing costs would be circa £0.198 million per year based on annuity Loan for 50 years at 3.1%. The capital financing budget would need to be increased by this amount in year 21/22 and a similar amount for 22/23.
34. An NPV cashflow has been completed for Phase two, and forecasts that the site can breakeven in year 6 28/29. From year 3 25/26 the site can cover all forecast operational running costs including the capital financing costs.
35. Borrowing is being based on 50 years; this is therefore considered as a long-term investment.
36. ERDF grant conditions will need to be complied with to ensure the full grant amount can be drawn down and claw back is not triggered.

Legal Implications

37. The Council’s legal team has been involved in the procurement process which led to the appointment of the contractor through the Southern Modular Building Framework Agreement. The Framework is managed by Hampshire County Council, with whom the Council has signed the User Agreement in September 2019. The Framework Agreement is fully compliant with the relevant procurement legislation, particularly the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
38. The legal team will support the rest of the process and ensure that all relevant legal agreements entered into by the Council are compliant with the relevant legal requirements. This will ensure that Wiltshire Council is fully protected.

Workforce Implications

39. There will be a requirement for a Lab technician and general Facilities Management to support the new building. The Facilities has already been recruited in order to offer business continuity to both buildings. It is expected that the council will recruit for the lab technician role using its

normal recruitment processes and budget has been allocated in the 15 year revenue cost calculation for the business plan.

Options Considered

40. Do nothing. If the council does not proceed with this project the available European funding will be lost from the Swindon and Wiltshire area. Furthermore the opportunity to deliver an exciting and innovation second phase of development to meet known demand from businesses to locate at Porton will be lost, as well as the significant work that has been undertaken by the council in achieving the current stage of development. This would have negative financial, economic and reputational impacts and therefore is not the preferred option.
41. Do minimum – attempt to reduce the overall build cost through value engineering. During the RIBA stage 2 and 3 process, options relating to the use of surplus material within the masterplan site and achieving BREEAM Excellent for the Fit-out and Very Good for the Shell have been considered. In theory it may be possible to achieve savings in these areas or others however these will impact on the deliverability and projected outputs of the scheme. In particular, failing to deliver suitable landscaping would put the project at risk from a planning perspective, while failing to achieve a sufficient BREEAM rating would fail to meet both the Council's requirements for new build as well as a fundamental funding condition of the ERDF funding which has been secured towards the scheme (£2.5 million). This option has been rejected on the basis that it would likely fail to deliver since ERDF would likely be lost or clawed back and the project would also be put at risk from a planning perspective. It would also not adhere to the council's and Getting Building Funds minimum requirements to support sustainable building and support green recovery.

Conclusions

42. The first phase of Porton Science Park has been a great success creating high value new jobs, and growing SME businesses in the life sciences. This report has set out the business case for delivering a second phase of development which will build on, and complement, this success.

Simon Hendeby (Director - Housing and Commercial)

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Outline Business Case

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

ESIF-ERDF Full application form for Porton Science Park – Phase two.
Outline Business Case to SWLEP for Getting Building Funding

Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre

Outline Business Case

November 2020

Version 1.2

Gateway 2

Revised with advice from Cushman & Wakefield

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1. Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1.1 Wiltshire Council (“the council”) has prepared this Outline Business Case for the *Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre* in support of using a new Local Growth Fund grant made available by the Getting Building Fund. The project is to deliver a second phase of development at the Science Park at Porton Down which will consist of a Collaborative Innovation Centre and additional Grow On space for growing businesses. The project will be co-funded by European Regional Development Funding (“ERDF”) and Wiltshire Council capital funding. The land is owned by Wiltshire Council and the building will also be owned and managed by Wiltshire Council. The building is currently designed to RIBA Stage 3 and a detailed design and build programme has been established which projects completion and handover of the building in February 2022. The project already has Planning Permission thanks to the Outline Permission and Reserved Matters secured by the council in delivering the first phase Beech-Allen building in 2018, which is now operating at capacity and demonstrates the market demand that exists for the proposed Phase 2 building to come forward. The project’s economic objectives are to create new high-value employment opportunities at the science park, grow the science park’s business base, and encourage positive collaborations between the Porton Science Campus stakeholders, Higher Education and Research Institutions, and new businesses. The Science Campus stakeholders comprise; the Defence and Science Technology Laboratory (“Dstl”), Public Health England (“PHE”), Porton Biopharma Ltd (“PBL”) and our existing tenants at the Science Park. This project will also form a positive response to the recent economic shocks including the nerve agent attack in Salisbury in 2018 and the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, Porton Down is an important focal point for research and manufacturing in direct response to the pandemic.
- 1.2 This Outline Business Case is presented in accordance with HM Treasury Green Book / Five Case methodology. There is a clear strategic case for investment in this second phase of development at Porton Down which has been approved by Wiltshire Council’s Cabinet for capital funding, the Ministry of Homes, and Communities and Local Government (“MHCLG”) for ERDF. Porton Science Campus is one of the largest, if not the largest focal point of scientific research and development in Wiltshire and Swindon and has international recognition as a Centre of Excellence. The Science Park benefits from “Life Science Opportunity Zone” (“LSOZ”) status conferred upon it by the Department for Business, Education and Industrial Strategy (“BEIS”) working with the Office of Life Sciences (“OLS”) in recognition of its commercial attractiveness at an international level. The science campus is an important provider of high-value employment for south Wiltshire and this underpins its wider economic role in terms of supply chain and resident’s disposable income, which in turn supports its main settlements including the cathedral city of Salisbury. The Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre, once constructed, will produce significant and immediate economic outputs which will produce new commercial laboratory and office space for growing businesses in science, research and development; new additional high value employment opportunities; and, new state-of-the-art space and facilities for research collaborations between SME’s, Higher Education Institutions and the Research Institutions currently on the campus (Dstl and PHE). It will play an important role not only in direct response to crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic, but also in helping to reinvigorate and help ensure the resilience of the south Wiltshire wider economy by stimulating growth in science, research and development. The capital build will be accompanied by a programme of Business Support funded through revenue secured from ERDF. This Business

Support will animate new research activity at the Collaborative Innovation Centre and create a supportive environment enabling new enterprises to establish themselves and grow. There is a clear case for commercial viability and as the lead authority in capital implementation of this project, the council demonstrates robust procurement and compliance procedures. The financial case is based on professionally assessed costs and an income model which demonstrates that no net additional revenue impact should accrue to the public sector as a result of the project. It is proposed that delivery and implementation of the project will be governed and managed by Wiltshire Council as the lead project sponsor working closely with campus stakeholders. A delivery programme is provided as part of this Outline Business Case.

Scheme Overview

- 1.3 The Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre project is to build a second phase, 3,576 sqm building at the Science Park comprising:
- A 1780 sqm. Collaborative Innovation Centre which will provide
 - 192 sqm. ‘Atrium’ area for welcoming, networking and relaxation
 - 144 sqm. Meeting Space responding to market demand at Porton Down
 - 165 sqm. office space to be made available on easy-in, easy-out terms to research organisations, small businesses and collaborators
 - 498 sqm. laboratory space also available on easy-in, easy-out terms to promote collaborative scientific research and development, of which:
 - 398 sqm. “Wet space” geared towards research in biological and chemistry related research (including Life Sciences)
 - 100 sqm. “Digital orientated” geared towards research in digital and high technology sciences
 - 1,796 sqm. Grown Space developed as a “shell” for bespoke occupier-led fitout; the space will be made on traditional but attractive commercial terms and provide much needed space for growing enterprises at Porton Down to grow and benefit from the research ecosystem at the Campus

Figure 1 below illustrates the building’s footprint and appearance:

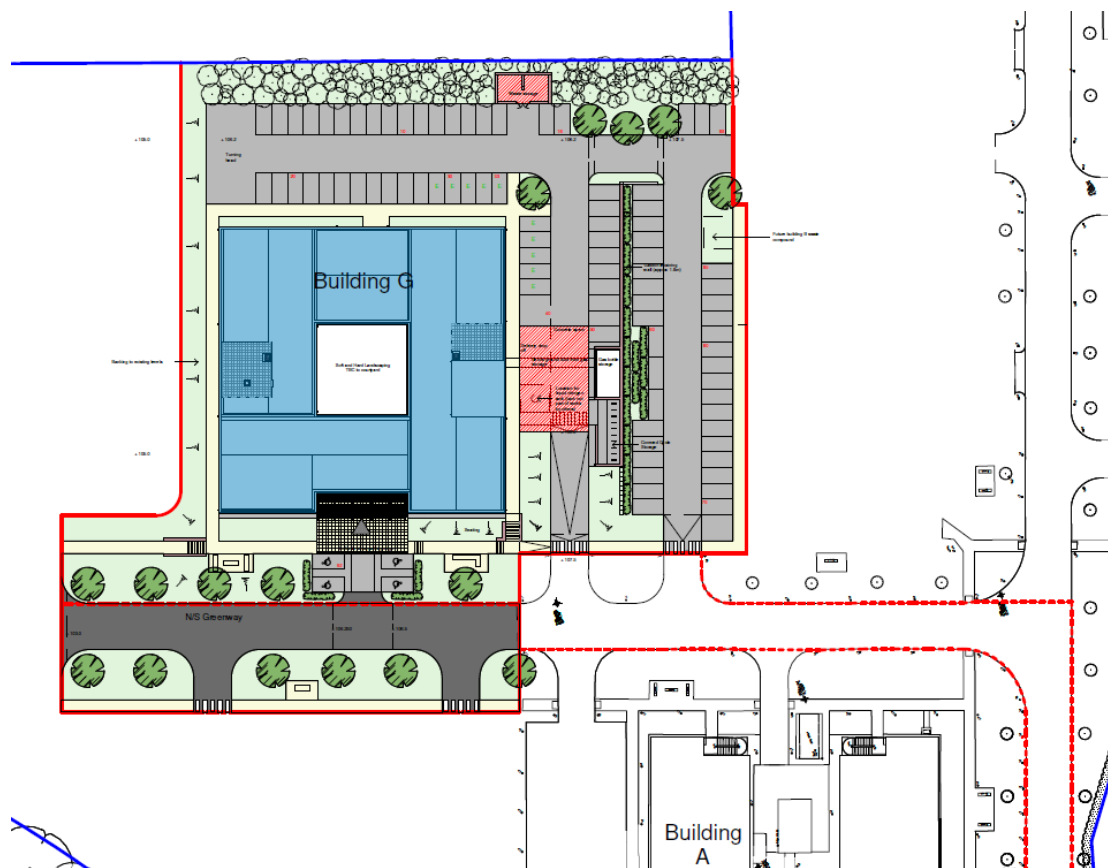


Figure 1 Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre-Site plan

Full design drawings and plans are provided at **Appendix B** of this OBC.

- 1.4 The Innovation Centre will be a collaborative space, designed to accommodate up to 63 researchers and ancillary staff from business, Higher Education and Research Institutions, and made available on flexible terms to facilitate short-term initial-phase research projects (i.e. new research projects which may be contracted for between three to twelve months). It will therefore have a high turnover which will bring to the Science Park a new and varied audience in the scientific research community which will in turn increase its profile and visibility on the market. In support of this the meeting space, of which there is an overall shortfall in supply at the Campus today, will be able to accommodate up to 100 people¹ and thereby create the opportunity to hold scientific symposiums which again will improve the profile and reach of the Science Park, supporting its status as an LSOZ. This will be a completely new and important addition to the Science Campus’s existing strengths.
- 1.5 The attached Grow On space will supply the identified strong demand for additional commercial laboratory and office space, co-located both with the new Collaborative Innovation Centre and the wider research ecosystem that exists at Porton Science Campus. It will also boost the effectiveness of the Campus stakeholders by providing an opportunity for supply chain and related businesses to be located at the Science Park. It will make the science park much more attractive on the investment market and will spur further phases of development on the 10-hectare site. It will be able to accommodate up to 137 researchers and ancillary staff.

¹ Assuming a relaxation in Covid-19 restrictions on workspaces

- 1.6 The design of the building has been undertaken by McAvoy who are a prominent and competent modular build enterprise. The design is at the time of preparing this OBC at RIBA Stage 3, and the build programme is on schedule for opening of the new building to take place in March 2022.

Figure 2 below illustrates the Atrium concept in the Innovation Centre for shared working, networking and relaxation for researchers:



Figure 2 Design Concept for the 'Atrium' within the Innovation Centre

- 1.7 As a market leader in modular build, McAvoy will deliver significant savings in time and cost compared with a more traditional build process by delivering the buildings off-site reducing the construction overhead at the main build stage. The building will be constructed to a Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method ("BREEAM") "Very Good" rating, the highest viable rating currently deliverable at Porton Science Campus, and in line with council and ERDF environmental policies, and the SWLEP's Local Energy Strategy.
- 1.8 Capital expenditure will be used on the Design and Build of the Phase 2 Innovation Centre which under our proposals will be completed and handed over in February 2022.
- 1.9 The project will be accompanied by a Business Support programme designed to enable new and small enterprises collaborating at the Innovation Centre to establish themselves and grow. This activity will be funded through ERDF. It will help ensure that outputs relating to new innovative research are produced and provide a supportive environment to collaborating researchers benefiting from the new building at the LSOZ.
- 1.10 The project will have a substantial positive impact on GVA sub-regionally of approximately £200 million, which measured against the overall project cost produces a benefit cost ratio of 17:1.

1.11 A summary of each of the five cases as per the Treasury’s Green Book approach is presented below:

Strategic Case Overview

1.12 The project will address growth needs identified in the Swindon and Wiltshire ESIF strategy which in turn is informed by a wide body of evidence including the Local Enterprise Partnership’s Strategic Economic Plan. The project is also aligned to the Industrial Strategy and the Life Sciences Sector Deal.

1.13 The needs the project will address are in:

- Innovation,
- Knowledge and Skills Sharing, and;
- Business Competitiveness

Economic Case Overview

1.14 The project will deliver 3,576 sqm of new commercial laboratory, office and ancillary space. It will support the creation of 10 new enterprises, provide business support to 58 enterprises, and enable 10 collaborations with research institutions. This will create 200 new jobs in the scientific research and development sector. We have modelled the economic output of this activity in full within the Economic Case and conclude that the Benefit Cost Ratio (“BCR”) on against overall project cost including SWLEP investment will be 17:1.

Commercial Case Overview

1.15 The commercial case for LGF investment is based around the following:

- **Demonstrable commercial viability** – the requested SWLEP Getting Building Fund investment will be used to co-fund the capital design and build of the Phase 2 Collaborative Innovation Centre. Our commercial case demonstrates the viability of this building.
- **Robust procurement procedures** – the council has already procured the main design and build contractor for the project using compliant procurement procedures. Any additional procurement will follow the council’s standing orders and constitution relating to procurement which in turn are fully compliant with procurement legislation and best practice to secure best value for money.
- **State Aid compliance** – The council has sought legal advice from Bevan Brittan to confirm State Aid compliance and includes this written advice at **Annex C**.

Financial Case Overview

1.16 The total scheme costs amount to £9.5m, of which £9.2m comprises the capital cost of design and build of the Collaborative Innovation Centre and Grow On Space, and £0.3m comprises revenue funding secured via ERDF to deliver the associated Business Support programme. The funding proposal is broken down as follows:

- £5m Wiltshire Council capital
- £2.5m ERDF
- £2m SWLEP GBF

Management Case Overview

1.17 The delivery and implementation of this project will be governed and managed by Wiltshire Council, as the applicant and lead project sponsor. The council is working closely with Campus and wider stakeholders on the Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre project and the governance arrangements for this are provided at **Appendix I**. The council is highly experienced in the delivery of capital projects and has well established working relationship with all local stakeholders. An indicative delivery programme is provided alongside this business case which demonstrates that the Centre will be completed and open in March 2022. The council has established monitoring and evaluation procedures in place, and a live risk register with mitigation measures which is reviewed regularly at the CEM (client engagement meetings).

2. Strategic Case

Introduction

- 2.1 The strategic case for investment includes an overview of the scheme’s vision and objectives, its rationale and challenges the scheme is seeking to address, the policy / strategy context (including alignment to the Strategic Economic Plan (“SEP”) and Local Industrial Strategy (“LIS”)), and the likely do-nothing scenario.

Project Vision and Objectives

- 2.2 The vision for this project is to deliver a 1780 sqm Collaborative Innovation Centre to support scientific activities linked to the Porton campus alongside 1796 sqm of new commercial Grow On laboratory and office space to accommodate growing businesses at the same location. The centre will be a research and innovation facility providing; collaborative workspace, flexible office and laboratory bench space. A programme of business support, training and development will be provided by specialist providers at the Centre. The project will promote and develop interaction between universities, SMEs and the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP), enabling universities to strengthen their role as strategic partners in growth in Swindon and Wiltshire. Porton Science Park is strategically positioned to facilitate this, as it benefits from Life Sciences Opportunity Zone status conferred upon it by Government. Our approach will help academics, entrepreneurs and businesses achieve and accelerate growth at Porton Down by investing in innovation, research and development activities.
- 2.3 The Centre will form a second phase building at Porton Science Park, on land adjacent to Dstl and PHE, outside of the secure MOD compound perimeter at Porton Down. The area is a nexus of the South Wiltshire Research Triangle, incorporating the relationships between PHE/Dstl, QinetiQ, Salisbury NHS Trust and Southampton University. It is located to the north east of Salisbury within the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) A303 Growth Zone.
- 2.4 The council promoted the Innovation Centre in response to European Structural and Investment Funds (“ESIF”) ERDF call OC33R18P 0793. This call was made under ESIF Priority Axis 1: Promoting Research and Innovation:
- 1a) enhancing research and innovation infrastructure and capacities to develop research and innovation excellence, and promoting centres of competence, in particular those of European interest
 - 1b) promoting business investment in research and innovation
- The council consulted with the SLWEP in submitting its business case to the ERDF managing authority MHCLG. The project was successful at both Outline and Full Business Case stages. The Full Application for the Innovation Centre is included at **Appendix A**.
- 2.5 At the time of submitting this application, the project's scope was limited to the Innovation Centre and did not include Grow On space. Through subsequent discussions with SWLEP officers involved in promoting the Science Park as an inward investment opportunity it emerged that there could be potential in extending the project to include additional commercial laboratory and office space built out as a shell for bespoke fitout for new occupiers. This would bring advantages in being able to market the Science Park as having existing new capacity for occupiers beyond the Phase 1 Beech-Allen Building and thereby supply an identified demand.

It would also improve the commercial viability of the project by increasing its potential to generate rent income on more secure terms.

2.6 Council officers further developed the project to include Grow On space and in January 2020 sought cabinet approval for a capital commitment to investing in this space, in addition to match funding the ERDF co-funded Innovation Centre. The proposal was given cabinet’s approval and it is on this basis that the council moved forward to procure main design and build contractors to ensure that the programme would meet the funding availability period of ERDF.

2.7 Following a procurement process to appoint a design and build contractor, McAvoy was selected as the council’s preferred bidder and appointed in June 2020. The key programme milestones are as follows:

- Design to RIBA Stage 4: Jan 2021
- Design approval, proceed to build stage: February 2021
- Practical completion / handover: February 2022

The council will procure and appoint the provider for business support during the design and build process so that the business support programme will start coinciding with the opening of the new building, or earlier using the existing Phase 1 Beech-Allen Building as the locus for provision ahead of the opening of Phase 2. Business support provision will continue to mid-2023, this date being determined by the end of funding availability from the current ESIF programme.

2.8 The Council will deliver the project. The council is the headlease holder of the science park land upon which the Phase 2 building will be constructed. It has been working closely in partnership with Dstl, the freehold owner of the site, and the other campus partners including PHE and PBL for many years now and is the recognised lead on further development of the science park. The council has successfully delivered the first phase Beech-Allen Building, which currently operates at capacity, as well as a three-year business support programme called the Wiltshire and Swindon Health and Life Sciences Hub, in partnership with Wessex and West of England Academic Health Science Networks (“AHSNs”). The council has learned much through this early experience on the Science Park and those lessons will be fully taken into account to improve the build process and business support programme for Phase 2.

2.9 The project will benefit SME companies engaged in S&T activity in the health and life sciences sector, potentially including new start-ups, higher education institutions wanting to participate in specialist research activity at Porton, the existing institutions and companies at the Porton science campus, the business support provider (to be appointed), and the Council.

2.10 The Centre, being located at an existing and world-renowned science hub, will provide a high-quality environment in which to inspire invention, discovery, and experimentation combined with entrepreneurial prowess. It will provide users with the opportunity to take full advantage of the potential for collaborative working and knowledge sharing. The Centre will encourage greater interaction and collaboration between universities and businesses, allowing universities to establish and strengthen their role as strategic partners in local growth and stimulate further development at the Science Park.

2.11 Specifically:

- SME's will benefit from access to collaborative meeting, laboratory, office and conferencing space which is in high demand, as well as specialist technical support and business advice which is not at present readily available at the Porton Science Campus
- HEI's will benefit from the same access, enabling them to send visiting postgraduate researchers and research staff to engage with commercial enterprises and the research institutions at Porton Science Campus which will also benefit

2.12 The SMART objectives for which funding of £2m is sought to facilitate delivery of the Porton Collaborative Innovation Space include the following:

- Delivery of 3576 sqm of new laboratory, office and ancillary space by February 2022
- 10 new enterprises created by mid-2023
- 53 enterprises supported by mid-2023
- 10 new collaborations with research institutions by mid-2023
- 228 new jobs created by mid-2023
- An uplift in Gross Value Added ("GVA") of £23,712,000 per annum by mid-2023
- An uplift in Land Value ("LVU") of £253,645 as a direct consequence of creating the second phase building, and generating potential land value uplift of up to £6,375,000 on the wider science park

2.13 These objectives are all considered SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time definitive.)

2.14 To help us achieve these objectives, the Get Britain Building funding will be used towards the capital design and build of the Collaborative Innovation Centre.

Project Definition

2.15 The project involves the delivery of a phase 2 Collaborative Innovation Centre and Grow On Space as follows:

- A 1780 sqm. Innovation Centre which will provide
 - 192 sqm. 'Atrium' area for welcoming, networking and relaxation
 - 144 sqm. Meeting Space responding to market demand at Porton Down
 - 165 sqm. office space to be made available on easy-in, easy-out terms to research organisations, small businesses and collaborators
 - 498 sqm. laboratory space also available on easy-in, easy-out terms to promote collaborative scientific research and development, of which:
 - 398 sqm. "Wet space" geared towards research in biological and chemistry related research (including Life Sciences)
 - 100 sqm. "Digital orientated" geared towards research in digital and high technology sciences
- 1,796 sq. ft. Grown Space developed as a "shell" for bespoke occupier-led fitout; the space will be made on traditional but attractive commercial terms and provide much needed space for growing enterprises at Porton Down to grow and benefit from the research eco-system at the Campus

2.16 The building will occupy a 0.4 hectare plot on the Science Park as shown in the plan below:

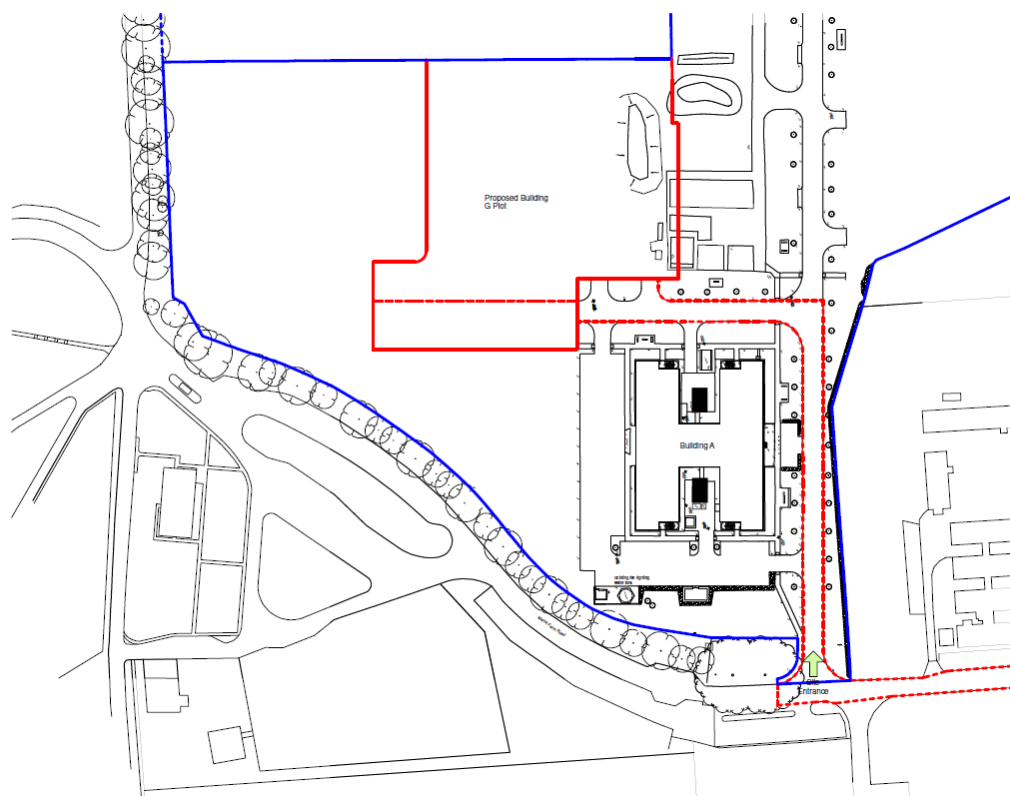


Figure 3 Location Plan

The plot will include car parking, landscaping and other amenities including cycle racks, which are all costed as part of the overall proposal.

2.17 The strategic design brief, provided at **Appendix E**, purposefully responds to the project objectives by:

- Specifying the council's aspirations for the quality of the building that will foster collaboration and innovation and provide flexible workspaces
- Meet or exceed the quality achieved on the Phase One Beech-Allen Building
- Specifying environmental standards including reduction in energy emissions to achieve carbon neutrality, and meeting BREEAM Very Good or equal alternative environmental standard
- Specifying a design life of a minimum of 60 years with a structural warranty of a minimum of 30 years
- Specifying a requirement that the internal layout of the building be designed as flexibly as possible to enable changes to be made relatively easily to reflect particular tenant needs and requirements over future years
- Providing the planning context and seeking to ensure that the building design can be delivered within and discharge any remaining conditions of the existing Outline Permission and Reserved Matters Approval (ref 15/12526/REM)
- Setting out the project programme and milestones ensuring handover in February 2022

- Ensuring that all parts of the building are fully accessible to people with disabilities
 - Addressing lessons learned from the delivery of the first phase building, for example with respect to soft landscaping planting
- 2.18 The location is in the ownership of the council on the basis of a long leasehold granted to it by Dstl on 16 August 2016. The Phase 2 building will be delivered and handed over to the council in February 2022.
- 2.19 The project will address growth needs identified in the Swindon and Wiltshire ESIF strategy which in turn is informed by a wide body of evidence including the Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan. The project is also aligned to the Industrial Strategy and specifically the recently published Life Sciences Sector Deal.

Challenges and opportunities to be addressed

2.20 The needs the project will address are in:

- Innovation,
- Knowledge and Skills Sharing, and;
- Business Competitiveness

Innovation

2.21 The project will broaden out innovation at Porton to more SME's in Swindon and Wiltshire. While Swindon and Wiltshire have clear strengths in innovation, with a comparatively high number of patents, cost makes it harder for SME's to innovate. The Centre will provide a flexible and affordable space for collaborative innovation combined with specialist support (Innovation Technology Counsellors) to enable SME's to innovate to grow their businesses and consider looking for new markets and innovation partners overseas. It will attract entrepreneurs looking for an innovative environment in which to start a new high-value creative business. It will also function as a Technology Translator, able to explain the importance of emerging technologies to more SME's. It will provide a physical location for specialist technical activity and start-ups to secure additional grants to fund their endeavours. It will drive greater commercialisation and exploitation of research and development activity, particularly arising from private and public investment. It will promote innovation for Smart Specialisation – 'the entrepreneurial process of discovery', by enabling blue skies research as well as new discoveries and inventions; improving the interface between Higher Education Institutions and business; and, delivering a better environment for commercialising research.

Knowledge and Skills Sharing

2.22 The project will enable collaborations transferring good ideas, research results and skills between universities, research institutions and business. This will enable businesses to innovate and new products and services to be developed. One of the project's objectives will be to nurture long-term relationships between these entities. While realistically it must be assumed that the number of such collaborations being born within the timescale of the project will be modest, the Centre nonetheless should trailblaze a new culture of cooperative research at Porton, leveraging the advantages of its location and local knowledge base. This in turn will encourage foreign and domestic investment in the science park.

Business Competitiveness

- 2.23 The project will provide a supportive environment for our existing businesses to grow while reinforcing Porton Down an attractive location to invest. Some businesses already see the supply chain opportunities of being located near some of the UK's largest, most innovative firms and the commercial opportunities associated with the Military. They can also be attracted to the area's strategic connectivity to national and international markets and the quality of life on offer. However, the competition faced by Swindon and Wiltshire, and specifically Porton, is fierce because of the concentration of high value-added economic activity in London and the other large English core cities which present a challenge to a science park located in rural Wiltshire. To attract a greater share of foreign and domestic investment to the area it is necessary to leverage and showcase the existing research strengths Porton boasts and the uniqueness of its offer. This project, potentially alongside Life Science Opportunity Zone status for the Science Park, will achieve this objective. It will promote the area and attract new inward investors from around the world, for which innovation is a major business driver. It will provide a new key selling point in the LEP's inward investment strategy for Porton and its role in the Industrial Strategy. It will become a well-recognised venue for annual events to be held (Festivals of Innovation, Venturefests) and highlight innovative companies in Swindon and Wiltshire, raise aspirations among business owners and managers, and encourage networking and the development of partnerships and collaborations.
- 2.24 In summary, while the first phase of development at Porton Science Park has been highly successful and demonstrates its potential, it is fundamentally a workspace-focussed facility with no readily available business support on offer, and a recognised and evidenced lack of meeting, conferencing and collaborative space. It is necessary therefore to deliver this second phase which will address those issues both by providing the space within which collaboration and innovation for Smart Specialisation can take place, and the on-hand technical and business support to enable SME's to innovate to grow.

Constraints, dependencies and interdependencies

- 2.25 In order to meet spend deadlines for the funding associated with both ERDF and GBF, the scheme has been developed in accordance with the Outline Planning Consent and Reserved Matters reference S/2007/1402/OL.² Divergence from the conditions and principles of the outline planning consent at this stage would require a full planning application which would risk delaying the build programme and thereby put at risk the management team's ability to ensure spend by the relevant funding deadlines and delivery of the completed building by February 2022.
- 2.26 Because the science park at Porton Down is a rural location, it is constrained from a transport perspective. While the proposed scheme will not pose any transport concerns from a planning perspective, it is one of several factors which renders achieving a BREEAM Excellent or above accreditation unviable, and therefore is a contributory factor to the management team's decision to target a Very Good accreditation as the maximum achievable score for this project. The evidence for this is provided as part of this business case and will be presented to the council, and MHCLG with respect to exempting this scheme from the standard requirement for new build to be delivered at BREEAM Excellent and above. Other constraints relating to the rural location of the science park relating to ecology, environment and landscape impact are

² Details available via the council's planning portal at:
<https://unidoc.wiltshire.gov.uk/UniDoc/Document/Search/DSA,517453>

mitigated through the conditions attached to the outline planning consent to which this scheme will accord.

2.27 The council owns the land the project will be delivered on under a long leasehold granted to the council by the Secretary of State for Defence. The headlease contains a user and restriction clause as follows:

- **Clause 4.7.2** of the lease requires the Council to only use the Premises (land edged red on the lease Plan) for laboratories, research facilities, workshops and storage for:
 - scientific and engineering research; and
 - the development of small scale production of high technology products in the Permitted Fields
- The Permitted Fields are not only “health and life sciences”, but all of the areas listed under the relevant definition:
 - Chemical and biological sciences;
 - Biomedical sciences;
 - Physical and material sciences;
 - Environmental sciences;
 - Communications and information systems technologies;
 - Electronic and sensors technologies;
 - Advanced defence, aerospace and automotive technologies; and
 - Other advanced engineering technologies.

2.28 As an important new development at the Porton Science Campus, the Science Park is part of a large and dynamic ecosystem of public and private sector S&T research and development and is therefore to some extent dependent on new development which might be brought forward by Dstl, PHE and PBL. The management team maintains a positive ongoing dialogue with respect to new development at the science campus with the campus partners. New development proposals which may have a bearing on the science park and the proposed Collaborative Innovation Centre include:

- Wider campus development including improvements to accessibility, development of the campus-wide travel plan, and review of the campus masterplan
- New development proposals which may come forward from each of the campus partners
- New provisions which may arise to ensure the security of the wider campus

It is not anticipated that any of these dependencies would have any immediate impact on the deliverability of the Phase 2 Collaborative Innovation Centre which all campus partners are aware of and are supportive of. Indeed, it is expected that where appropriate the campus partners will benefit from the delivery of the new centre, as it is an important part of this strategic case that the centre will facilitate collaborations between business and research institutions including Dstl and PHE.

The ‘do-nothing’ position

2.29 A key part of the strategic case for GBF investment is to consider the likely reference case scenario where no GBBF funding is secured. Under this scenario, the project will not proceed, and the council will be unable to invest in the Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre. There is no alternative funding to GBBF at this time to complete the funding envelope and deliver this important project. Therefore, in the absence of GBBF the project will not be delivered and it may take several years to find suitable alternative funding.

2.30 The most likely outcomes under a no-GBBF scenario are therefore that:

- The second phase Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre will not come forward and delivery of further phases of development at the Science Park will likely be delayed for a number of years
- ERDF co-funding of £2.5 million will be lost both to the project and to the Swindon and Wiltshire area as there is insufficient time remaining for a new proposal to come forward within the funding availability period of the ESIF programme
- The SMART objectives set out above relating to job and new business creation and support will not be achieved representing an opportunity cost to the area

Alignment with economic and planning policy / strategy

Porton Down Masterplan (January 2007)

2.31 The Porton Down Masterplan, while now in need of updating, establishes the broad principles for new development coming forward at Porton Science Park. The council is leading on the renewal of this Masterplan in view of the developments that have come forward since its original publication over a decade ago. These developments include the delivery of the first phase Beech-Allen building by the council which opened in January 2018. The proposed second phase Collaborative Innovation Centre and associated Grow On space continue the development of the Science Park, addressing the specific challenges detailed above. It is therefore aligned with the principles set out in the original Masterplan and the updated Masterplan will be brought up to date with the current state of development and emerging planning policy.

Wiltshire Core Strategy (January 2015)

2.32 The Wiltshire Core Strategy was adopted in January 2015 and covers the period up to 2026. It specifically identifies the scientific community at Porton Down as a ‘prized asset in Wiltshire’.³ Core Policy 5 strongly supports the principle of development at the Porton Down Science Campus for research and development purposes and states that the council will work with the principal site stakeholders to build on the work already undertaken to facilitate their business aspirations in accordance with Strategic Objective 1 of the Core Strategy.

2.33 Core Policy 5 also identifies wildlife management as a specific issue for which co-ordination is required. The council has worked with relevant consultees in bringing forward the Outline Planning Consent and Reserved Matters which the proposed site benefits from. These issues have therefore been resolved for the purposes of bringing forward the proposed Phase 2 development.

³ *Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)* available at: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-core-strategy>

Swindon and Wiltshire Strategic Economic Plan (2016) and Local Industrial Strategy

2.34 The current Strategic Economic Plan was published in 2016 and identifies the life sciences and defence technologies specialisms at Porton as being world class. The SWLEP's focus is to restructure the economic base of the area by focussing on innovation particularly in the life sciences and defence technology. The SWLEP is actively working with Wiltshire Council to promote the science park at Porton Down as a Life Sciences Opportunity Zone and is a key stakeholder in its future development.

National Industrial Strategy and Relevant Sector Deals

2.35 The economic contribution of the UK Life Sciences industry is widely recognised, with government commissioned research demonstrating that almost half a million UK jobs are supported by the Life Sciences sector, with the average GVA per employee over twice the UK average at £104,000. The activities of companies in the life sciences sector directly contributed £14.5bn to the UK economy in 2015, with an additional £15.9bn provided through the Life Sciences supply chain and employee spending.

2.36 This project aligns with the government's life sciences sector deal, which proposes significant additional measures and innovative programmes to secure a global lead in the areas of greatest opportunity in the UK.

2.37 Porton Science Park has won UK Government and by extension international recognition as a Life Sciences Opportunity Zone. It was one of six sites to be successfully granted the status in the UK in February of this year. The Government scheme allows partners on the site to showcase the capabilities of the Porton Science campus to an international audience, particularly overseas life sciences companies looking to expand into the UK. As Porton Science Park grows there will be an increase in international collaborative projects between industry, academia and Government that will attract investment from start-ups to multi-nationals.

Policy / Strategy Summary

2.38 It is evident from the above that the delivery of the second phase Collaborative Innovation Centre at Porton Science Park is a key policy and strategy priority for the council and the SWLEP. It represents the most significant centre of scientific research, development and innovation in south Wiltshire and is one of the key economic drivers of the LEP economy. All of the policy documents reviewed support further development of the science park at Porton Down.

3. Economic Case

Introduction

3.1 This section presents the economic case for GBF support in the Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre project and the economic benefits that the project will bring in developing Porton Science Park and creating high value employment in South Wiltshire. In line with Government guidance on Green Book appraisal and evaluation, it provides an overview of the various options that were considered and appraises a shortlist of options to identify a preferred option based on the value for money position and wider economic outcomes.

Appraisal options – long list to short list

3.2 The long list of options that were considered is presented in the table below, along with a short description and details of whether they are to be shortlisted through to the full economic appraisal stage.

Option	Description, cost and outcomes	Shortlisted?
Do nothing – no GBF investment	Under this option, it is assumed that the proposed Collaborative Innovation Centre is not delivered. Given there is no other funding available at the current time to deliver the phase 2 building, it is assumed it will not come forward. The building is critical in creating new suitable employment space at Porton Science Park and the projected outputs. As a result, the scheme outputs as proposed do not materialise under this option.	Yes – this option has been shortlisted as the do nothing reference case in accordance with the HM Treasury Green Book guidance to illustrate the impacts of no GBF funding in this project.
Do minimum – c. £1 million GBBF	Under this option, it is assumed that cost savings in constructing the proposed Collaborative Innovation Centre would have to be found. During the RIBA stage 2 and 3 process, options relating to the use of surplus material within the masterplan site and achieving a BREEAM Very Good rating for the project have been considered. In theory it may be possible to achieve savings in these areas or others however these will impact on the deliverability and projected outputs of the scheme. In particular, failing to deliver suitable landscaping would put the project at risk from a planning perspective, while failing to achieve a BREEAM Very Good rating would fail to meet both the Council's requirements for new build as well as a fundamental funding condition of the ERDF funding which has been secured towards the scheme (£2.5 million).	No – this option has been rejected on the basis that it would fail to deliver the Collaborative Innovation Centre since ERDF funding would likely be lost and the project would also be put at risk from a planning perspective. It would also not adhere to the GBF requirement to support green recovery.
£2 million GBBF investment	This option assumes that the Council secures £2m of GBBF in addition to the capital funding already committed to the scheme. This would	Yes – this option has been progressed through to full

Option	Description, cost and outcomes	Shortlisted?
	<p>deliver the required building for the Collaborative Innovation Centre at Porton Science Park. This will create 200 new high value jobs and deliver other beneficial outcomes as set out later in this economic case.</p>	<p>economic appraisal as the preferred option</p>
<p>Do more – additional GBBF (or other source) of investment</p>	<p>There could be a number of potential options where additional funding could be made available. For example, the scale of the proposed centre could be extended, quality of landscaping or interior fit out enhanced, or indeed new utilities could be installed to enhance the existing servicing to the science park (specifically water (clean and foul) and energy).</p>	<p>No – this option has not been shortlisted at this stage. Primarily this is because we are aware that the maximum allocation towards Porton Collaborative Innovation Centre from GBBF stands at £2 million. Furthermore, the project is already well developed within the anticipated budget and changing the scope of the design at this stage would be inefficient and could put the existing ERDF funding allocation at risk due to its deadline for expenditure. Installing new services for the remainder of Porton Science Park would be a separate project and is not a requirement for the proposed Collaborative Innovation Centre.</p>
<p>Alternative funding option – Council funds</p>	<p>Under this option, it is assumed that the Council could fund the required £2m of proposed GBB funding through prudential borrowing.</p>	<p>No – this option is discounted on the basis that this is not affordable from a Council perspective, given its existing and ongoing financial commitments to the Science Park</p>
<p>Alternative funding option – private sector</p>	<p>Under this option, it is assumed that the private sector could fund the required £2m of GBB funding through an appointed developer partner</p>	<p>No – this option is discounted on the basis that the Collaborative Innovation Centre is not a purely commercial venture. The space it will provide and is designed to achieve will enable public research collaborations between both Research and Higher Education Institutions working with business. The market would not have the appetite to to fund the Collaborative Innovation Centre on the basis of the risk vs reward and the fact that it has a number of distinct quasi-public good features as</p>

Option	Description, cost and outcomes	Shortlisted?
		alluded to in the market failure case for intervention.

Description of assessed options

3.3 Based on the analysis above, two options have been shortlisted through to full economic appraisal. Although typically an outline business case would seek to appraise a minimum of three shortlisted options, in this instance, the do minimum option above is not considered to be a credible and viable option to create the Collaborative Innovation Centre and achieve its objectives. This is because under the do minimum option the building would likely be undeliverable from a planning and environmental perspective. Therefore do-minimum has not been shortlisted. The HMT Green Book makes it clear that any shortlisted do minimum option must be “viable” and in this instance there is not considered to be a viable do minimum option on the basis that it needs to be of this scale to achieve sufficient critical mass to be financially viable once operational.

The shortlisted options therefore are:

Do Nothing

3.4 Under this option, it is assumed that the proposed Collaborative Innovation Centre is not delivered. Given there is no other funding available at the current time to create the overall funding envelope required to cover the capital cost of the building, it is assumed that it will not come forward. As a result, the scheme outputs as proposed do not materialise.

3.5 For this reason, the quantitative economic appraisal of the preferred option will assume a **nil deadweight position** on the basis of the following:

- There is an evidenced demand both for the availability of new laboratory, office and meeting space and the configuration of the Collaborative Innovation Centre to facilitate new research projects bringing together Research Institutions, Higher Education Institutions and business. In the absence of the requested SWLEP funding to deliver the building, it cannot go ahead and the scheme outputs will not be delivered.
- Without GBF support for the proposed Collaborative Innovation Centre, the scheme will not be viable and will not come forward under private sector led development. There are no other sources of public sector funding currently available to support delivery.

3.6 On the basis of a lack of scheme viability, it is therefore apparent that in the absence of SWLEP funding as proposed, no development and associated economic outputs will come forward. This therefore supports a nil deadweight position.

£2m GBF investment

3.7 This option assumes that the council secures £2m of GBF funding. This would deliver the required Collaborative Innovation Centre. This will create space for up to 200 new high value jobs as well as deliver outputs as follows:

- 10 new enterprises supported
- 58 total enterprises receiving support

- 10 enterprises cooperating with research institutions
- 48 enterprises receiving non-financial support

As set out, it will be delivered with the benefit of ERDF funding towards business support activity to take place in the Collaborative Innovation Centre.

Quantitative Economic Appraisal

3.8 A full economic appraisal of the preferred option has been undertaken in accordance with HM Treasury Green Book methodology. The economic benefits of the scheme have been assessed on a traditional employment / GVA basis and the results of this appraisal are presented below. The primary focus of the economic appraisal is on the economic / GVA approach on the basis that we understand that the SWLEP is seeking to deliver new employment space and associated GVA outputs as part of its Local Industrial Strategy and commitment to Government. We do recognise that the MHCLG Appraisal Guide and refreshed Green Book have shifted the approach to assessing value for money scheme towards other metrics including land value uplift as the key measure of private benefit for land and property schemes. However, the 2016 guidance does note that appraisals should not put a monetary value on employment impacts **unless** there is strong evidence of a supply side effect. We argue that there is in this Outline Business Case absolute evidence of a supply side effect insofar as:

- The proposal is to commit GBF towards direct delivery of employment space comprising laboratory, office and networking space configured to facilitate research collaborations between Research Institutions, Higher Education Institutions and business
- That in the absence of GBF this employment space cannot be delivered for the reasons identified in the options shortlisting process (principally viability)
- The increase in supply of commercial employment space is in response to an identified undersupply of such space at Porton Down and evidenced demand for this space to come forward now, which it otherwise could not; this is in line with the Local Industrial Strategy and responding to local need
- The Centre will attract new start-up businesses and graduate/post graduate based employees and in doing so will provide dedicated facilities (including wet lab space for which there is a distinct lack of across the SWLEP area) to enable new people to enter the labour market within the LEP area who may otherwise not find the facilities to be able to within the LEP area to meet their business ideas.

The reason that the updated guidance would ordinarily reject monetary value being placed on employment impacts is that ‘the default assumption is that any jobs created by a development resulting from government expenditure do not increase aggregate employment as these employment effects are already largely determined by macroeconomic decisions on the level of overall public expenditure (though they often have an important local impact).’⁴ We respond to this default assumption on two fronts with respect to this particular project and OBC:

- Essentially the argument put forward for the new guidance was that job creation as a result of government expenditure would essentially be entirely displacement of jobs that

⁴ *The DCLG Appraisal Guide (2016) p. 22*

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/576427/161129_Appraisal_Guidance.pdf

would be created anyway by general macroeconomic decisions on the level of overall public expenditure. This might be generally true but as we have identified the current macroeconomic conditions render the proposed collaborative innovation centre and its outputs unviable under private, or even local council, investment alone. In this case GBF is required to enable the delivery of new employment space at the Science Park which is designed for the particular process of enabling research collaborations between Research Institutions, Higher Education Institutions and business. Not only does the proposed GBF investment directly enable the creation of new jobs associated with this specialised activity, the specialist nature of this high value employment is also not wholly facilitated by macroeconomic decisions on government expenditure but requires local decision making, such as this OBC proposes, to enable them to come forward where they are needed (i.e., in this case the Science Park at Porton Down adjoining two major government research institutions, but which lacks employment space to accommodate Higher Education or indeed new business collaborations). For these reasons we strongly believe that in this case the argument that macroeconomic decisions on government expenditure alone would not enable the Collaborative Innovation Centre to come forward and the associated outputs, including new high value employment and the monetized economic benefits associated with that, would fail to materialise entirely. For these reasons we strongly consider that in informing SWLEP decision making the economic / GVA approach is by far the more appropriate metric to use, for this particular project and the reasons set out here.

- The updated Green Book guidance accepts the important local impact that the creation of new employment has. When the Secretary of State Robert Jenrick MP wrote to LEP Chairs on 10 June 2020, he outlined that the reason he was addressing LEPs in particular was ‘the key role [they have] going forwards in supporting local recovery’. It was for this reason that he expressed the Department’s interest in exploring how acceleration of Department funds could be used to support the delivery of capital projects in order to stimulate the economy over the next 18 months [...] to help create jobs and raise overall demand in the economy.’ The new projects would have to deliver on two overarching objectives, driving up economic growth and jobs, and supporting green recovery. Specifically, a call was made for ‘investment in innovation ecosystem including through improvements to research and development facilities driving up business productivity’. We consider it self-evident that this project meets these requirements. Furthermore, we consider that the measure of Land Value Uplift would entirely fail to reflect the satisfaction of this requirement in the call for funding proposals. The increase in business productivity enabling new job growth by investing in the innovation ecosystem through improvements to research and development facilities (in this instance, the supply side delivery of an entirely new Collaborative Innovation Centre at a location where this is high and currently unsatisfied demand) must, surely, be evaluated based on the monetised economic output of its delivery and not on Land Value Uplift which, while considered by the DCLG Appraisal Group in 2016 to be the more suitable and robust approach because it is based on observable market data, would in no way reflect the outcomes sought by the Secretary of State from the funding made available to Get Building. In short, the Secretary of State did not seek Land Value Uplift as an output in his call for projects, but rather economic growth and jobs and supporting green recovery. We therefore respond directly to those requirements in this Outline Business Case.

The LVU approach simply does not work for this type of capital innovation scheme in this location. The Council has discussed this with Cushman & Wakefield (C&W) who undertake business case development work nationally for LEPs and CAs and are retained national economic advisors to Homes England, and based on their experience a scheme of this nature will not achieve the required BCR hurdle rate through the application of the LVU approach. In C&W's experience, a number of other LEPs/CAs acknowledge this in relation the GBB fund and are satisfied with using the more traditional employment/GVA approach for this type of scheme as long as an explanation is presented as to why the LVU approach is not appropriate and an attempt has been made to demonstrate the outcome of using the LVU approach.

We therefore offer an estimate of Land Value Uplift in support of this business case to adhere to the 2016 MHCLG guidance and ensure that we meet the requirements of the Assurance Framework. However, we would like to emphasise once more our considered opinion that the Value for Money Assessment for this project should be primarily based on an employment and GVA approach for the reasons we have set out above.

Land Value Uplift Approach

- 3.9 The assessment of the land value uplift benefits of the scheme has prudently focussed upon the land which will be developed only and does not make any assumptions about land value uplift arising on the remaining 8ha available for development as a science park. This approach has been adopted on the basis that the project does not attempt to address identified servicing needs on the remainder of the science park relating to energy and water capacity. It will therefore improve the land value of the specific parcel of land upon which it will sit, but whether it will have a measurable impact on the existing economic use value of the remainder of the science park land is much more challenging to determine.
- 3.10 No external transport impacts have been modelled as this is not a transport-based business case; it is a regeneration scheme from a LEP perspective.

Land Value Uplift Benefits

- 3.11 The NPV of the net additional employment land value uplift has been based on VOA Land Value Estimates for Policy Appraisal 2019.
- 3.12 The existing economic use value of the land in question is determined as nil because it cannot be used for agricultural purposes under the terms of the Council's leasehold of the land, and scientific research cannot be undertaken on it because there is no building for which that use can take place. The site is currently lain vacant and as a result has no current economic productivity value or existing economic use value.
- 3.13 Values for commercial office out of town / business park for Swindon and Wiltshire have been used in the calculation. The blended figure including all Common Areas has been used since the Collaborative Innovation Centre by design contains Common Areas. For Swindon and Wiltshire this figure is £70.93 per square metre GIA.
- 3.14 Applying this to floorspace which would be provided by the Collaborative Innovation Centre results in a land valuation of £253,645. Since we assume the land to have a present value of nil based on its existing economic use value, the gross land value uplift would be £253,645. Given we are not taking this LVU based assessment any further we have not accounted for adjustment factors such as displacement (this figure is gross and accounting for displacement would net this down further), discounting (based on when the LVU arises) and neither have we adjusted

the VOA values to 2020/21 values. In practice, applying these adjustments would reduce the overall LVU further and this would not assist the case.

3.15 Clearly, based on this assessment alone the project would not meet the Assurance Framework requirement of a 2:1 BCR based on a £2 million investment from GBF. However, we would offer the following observations before moving onto the Employment / GVA Approach:

- This assessment is based on the VOA's analysis of land values for uses in Swindon and Wiltshire and as the VOA acknowledges valuations are extremely sensitive to local circumstances and site context. We would propose that the land value at Porton Science Park, given its location adjacent to major government research institutions bearing strong supply chains, would likely be much higher than the figure provided by the VOA's Estimates for Policy Appraisal based on a standard out of town office park. However, given the particular circumstances at Porton Down where the majority of the land in question is in public ownership, it is challenging to make any accurate estimates of land value based on market observation. We therefore do not attempt to propose a higher value per square metre GIA for the calculation but simply observe that in our opinion this is likely to be significantly higher given the prestigious nature of the location in question.
- Consistent with this, the quality of the buildings at Porton Down including the proposed Phase 2 Collaborative Innovation Centre are of a higher value than that associated with other types of office space which is the figure this calculation is based on. Again, we would expect that in actual market conditions, delivery of higher quality and particularly laboratory space would have a greater impact on land value uplift than traditional out-of-town office space would be likely to achieve.
- Applying the figure per hectare for out of town commercial office space for Swindon and Wiltshire from the same guidance (£850,000) to the remaining approximately 7.5 hectares of developable science park at Porton Down would result in a land value of £6,375,000. Two observations may be made in this regard:
- One could argue that by delivering the second phase of development at Porton Science Park will more firmly achieve that valuation impact on the remaining developable land than is currently observable. We have, for the reasons set out above, opted not to propose a BCR calculation based on this assumption, however theoretically it would result in a BCR of approximately 3 thereby achieving the Assurance Framework threshold. However, this would also be on the premise that the wider site would be developed out on the back of the phase 2 scheme which may be unlikely given the type of development proposed and the likelihood that further public sector funding may be required to unlock this beyond phase 2.
- Again, and for similar reasons as for the observations made on assumed land value uplift on the Phase 2 building land itself, we would consider it very unlikely under observable market conditions that the value of land at Porton Science Park would be this modest. Again, given its attractiveness of the location for scientific research and development, we would expect Porton Down to have a higher land value than average out of town commercial land in Swindon and Wiltshire.

Employment / GVA Approach

3.16 The economic appraisal model has been based on the following key headline assumptions and factors as per HM Treasury Green Book Guidance:

- Model start date – 2020 (this is the base year – i.e. the current FY when the first tranche of spend would commence and all NPVs are presented in 2020/21 values).
- Appraisal period – employment-led benefits have been assumed to have a persistence of benefits period of 5 years (as per best practice appraisal guidance). Note the Green Book would allow for a 10 year persistence period (based on persistence evidence e.g. from the PWC RDA Evaluation of similar activity) but to be prudent at this stage we have reduced this to 5 years to reflect the types of jobs being created.
- Discount rate – 3.5% per annum (based on Green Book guidance to reflect the Social Time Preference Rate)
- Sunk costs – to date the council has expended £246,017 on developing the project to this stage. These costs have been deducted from the calculation of overall public sector funding towards the scheme as per Green Book guidance and therefore excluded from the economic appraisal.
- Inflation assumptions – the economic appraisal has not made any assumptions with respect to inflation and this is excluded. The Green Book states that general inflation should not be included in scheme appraisal.

3.17 Gross Value Added (GVA) per FTE estimates associated with E(g)(ii) research and development of products or processes are based on regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: city and enterprise regions released by ONS on 19 November 2019 for professional, scientific and technical activities (SIC07 M) for the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership area.

New Commercial Floorspace

3.18 Under the no GBF option, no new floorspace will be delivered. Under the £2m GBF option, the following would be delivered:

A second phase, 3,576 sqm (GIA) building at the Science Park comprising:

- A 1780 sqm. Collaborative Innovation Centre which will provide
 - 192 sqm. ‘Atrium’ area for welcoming, networking and relaxation
 - 144 sqm. Meeting Space responding to market demand at Porton Down
 - 165 sqm. office space to be made available on easy-in, easy-out terms to research organisations, small businesses and collaborators
 - 498 sqm. laboratory space also available on easy-in, easy-out terms to promote collaborative scientific research and development, of which:
 - 398 sqm. “Wet space” geared towards research in biological and chemistry related research (including Life Sciences)
 - 100 sqm. “Digital orientated” geared towards research in digital and high technology sciences
- 1,796 sqm. Grown Space developed as a “shell” for bespoke occupier-led fitout; the space will be made on traditional but attractive commercial terms and provide much needed space for growing enterprises at Porton Down to grow and benefit from the research eco-system at the Campus

Gross employment impacts – Professional, scientific and technical activities

- 3.19 It is assumed that no gross FTE jobs would be delivered under the do-nothing option given that no new development would come forward on the site in the foreseeable future in the absence of GBB funding.
- 3.20 Under the £2m GBBF option the building will be directly delivered by the Council and will open in February 2022. GBB funding will thereby directly deliver the jobs and GVA outputs associated with this second phase of development at the science park. Under this option the estimated gross employment stands conservatively at 200 new jobs in the professional, scientific and technical activities SIC. This estimate has been provided by McAvoy as the professional design team appointed by the council to undertake the detailed design of the building (now at RIBA Stage 3) and it is based on the net floor area which will be employed. This estimate has therefore been provided directly by the technical design team as a realistic estimate of the employment potential of the building which is a more accurate approach than relying on more generic HCA Employment Densities.
- 3.21 In terms of the timing of output delivery, it is assumed that the second phase building will be opened in February 2022. A 50% void has been assumed in year 3 (opening year). A 20% running void has been assumed from year 4 onwards (i.e. 80% occupancy from then on). This equates to a total of 160 gross jobs with the assumed running void from year 4 onwards accounted on floorspace reducing the total number that could be accommodated by the centre by 40.
- 3.22 A number of adjustments have been made to the above gross employment figure to calculate the number of net additional jobs created by the scheme. Leakage has been included at a rate of 22% based on the quantity of floorspace designed and intended to accommodate researchers residing in areas which will likely be outside of the Swindon and Wiltshire target area, for example academics working for Higher Education Institutions outside of the area. Displacement has been accounted for at a rate of 25%, a low level of displacement as per the 2014 HCA Additionality Guide. The specialist nature of the building for which there is a recognised lack of supply in the target area justifies this approach. While it is accepted that some displacement effects are to be expected, these will only be to a limited extent. This reflects the lack of multi-user lab wet lab space particularly within the SWLEP area (but also across the country more generally especially given the growth in demand as a result of the growth in the life science sector, likely to continue as a result of Covid19) – the project will deliver a genuine new product to the market and so the propensity for displacement will be minimal as a result. A multiplier rate of 1.46 has been applied based on the 2014 HCA Additionality Guide for Research and Development.
- 3.23 A nil deadweight position is assumed as explained in the options description above, given the assumed do-nothing Business As Usual scenario which has been modelled as the counterfactual do nothing option. This also supports the justification presented for preferential treatment to be given to the additionality approach for evaluation the value for money of the scheme. Evidence in support of this is offered below:
- The council has a waiting list comprising enquiries from a total of 18 companies in the research and development sector for the Beech-Allen building, of which 3 have been able to be accommodated within the first phase building, and of which two are engaged with

the council in discussions about occupying the Collaborative Innovation Centre. The council will be actively engaging with the remaining companies as part of its marketing plan for the Collaborative Innovation Centre.

- Of the companies currently occupying the Beech-Allen building, four are known to have growth plans which will lead them to need new space to expand into in the coming years. The second phase building would provide Grow-On space enabling the growth of these businesses and their retention within the Swindon and Wiltshire area.
- The SWLEP’s programme of inward investment activity has generated significant interest in the science park particularly from the USA.
- With specific respect to the new collaboration facilities including meeting space, demand for the sole shared meeting space at the Beech-Allen building has been very high with bookings being accepted on a nearly daily basis. Centre management have also had to turn down some meetings as the room can only support up to 20 people. In response to this, to make new office space available to a new occupier on the waiting list, and taking advantage of “downtime” as a consequence of Covid-19 restrictions on in-person meetings, the council has invested in a new replacement meeting space in the Beech-Allen building alongside new washroom facilities. This will be a larger meeting space able to accommodate at least double the number of people that the former meeting room was able to. It is nonetheless expected that this will only partially satisfy demand for collaborative space outside of the secure wire at Porton Down and it is further expected that it will need to be repurposed again in the future to accommodate the growth needs of the occupiers of the Beech-Allen building. There is therefore clear demand for meeting and collaborative space outside of the wire at Porton Science Campus, and that the space proposed within the Collaborative Innovation Scheme will not be subject to displacement or deadweight impacts in this regard as there is a clear case that this is a supply-side intervention responding to existing excess demand in the area.

3.24 The above adjustments generate a net additional FTE employment figure of 137 (from year 4 onwards – year 2 of building operation post PC), inclusive of a 20% running void allowance in relation to the E(g)(ii) floorspace.

	E(g)(ii)
Gross direct jobs	160
Less leakage	35
Gross local direct jobs	125
Less displacement	31
Net additional local direct jobs	93
Plus supply / income multiplier effects	43
Net additional local jobs	137
Less deadweight	-
Total net additional local jobs	137

Construction Job Outputs

3.25 The project will generate construction jobs through the development of the new Phase 2 building.

- 3.26 The construction job estimate has been made by the council's build programme manager based on professional expertise, comparable direct experience of building the first Phase Beech-Allen Building at Porton Science Park, and knowledge of the design of the building at RIBA Stage 3 and the manufacturing and building processes which will be used in the construction of the Phase 2 building.
- 3.27 The estimate is 75 FTE construction jobs per year for the assumed approximately 1-year build programme between April 2021 and February 2022.
- 3.28 We apply a relatively high level of leakage of 50% to this gross figure because of the modular construction techniques being utilised by the main build contractor which means that a proportion of the construction jobs will originate from outside of the target area (SWLEP area). However, the local supply chain will be utilised where it is appropriate. We assume a low level of displacement of 20% as per the HCA Additionality Guide and a multiplier factor of 0.29 based upon the 2014 HCA Additionality Guide at a sub-regional level.
- 3.29 These adjustments generate a net additional construction jobs figure of 39 FTEs per annum for the 1 year construction period as a consequence of the GBBF expenditure.
- 3.30 Under the no GBBF funding scenario, it is assumed there would be no construction jobs as a result of the fact that the scheme is assumed to not be delivered.

Net Additional Gross Value Added (GVA) impacts

- 3.31 The net additional GVA impacts of the scheme can be presented on the basis of applying relevant annual GVA per worker output assumptions to the above net additional FTE jobs created by the scheme. Given the lack of any new net additional jobs under the do-nothing option, the GVA impacts of this will be nil. Under the £2m GBBF option, the GVA impacts are presented below.
- 3.32 GVA impacts generated by the construction jobs related to the scheme have prudently not been included within the net additional GVA figures calculated below.

Professional, scientific and technical impacts

- 3.33 We propose the basis for average annual GVA per FTE worker output in the relevant SIC Division for the professional, scientific and technical sector (M) to be £60,500 based BRES and ONS data and on the advice of SWLEP economic intelligence.
- 3.34 It is assumed that GBB funded delivery will complete in February 2022, with scheme construction commencing in 2021. It is assumed that 50% of the floorspace will be let upon practical completion and that this would increase to 80% by year 2 of the centre operations and then remains at this with a prudent 20% running void then allowed for from then onwards. This equates to a gross cumulative GVA impact of £41.338m assuming a 5 year persistence of benefits period. This has been discounted at a rate of 3.5% per annum in line with HM Treasury Green Book guidance, generating a present value GVA impact of £35.609m.

Private Sector Leverage

- 3.35 While the Phase 2 Collaborative Innovation Centre is not intended to directly leverage any private sector investment directly for the reasons set out in the options analysis above, it is anticipated that it will be an important new attractor for private sector investment in the future development of the 8 ha science park land. This has been previously value to have a potential

£70m - £80m Gross Development Value potential, which may be higher in practice given increases in build costs since the delivery of the first phase building.

- 3.36 The Council is working with SWLEP and the Porton Science Campus partners to market the science park opportunity and identify the most suitable option to procuring private sector investment towards the further development of the science park.

GBBF Costs

- 3.37 The requested £2m GBBF grant will be directly utilised towards the construction of the Phase 2 Collaborative Innovation Centre. 25% optimism bias has been applied to the GBBF costs (and indeed the Council/ERDF funded costs) based on a view of the cost risk at this stage for this kind of project in accordance with the HMT Supplementary Green Book Guidance on Optimism Bias. It has been assumed that all GBBF costs will be incurred between 2020 and 2022, the GBBF costs of the scheme have therefore been discounted to present day values at (2020/21) at a discount rate of 3.5% in line with HM Treasury Green Book guidance. No sunk costs have been paid for via GBB Funding. This generates a total discounted GBBF cost including optimism bias of £2.436m million (no discounting applied to the base year). The total PV public sector cost (including GBB) with OB is £11.271m.

Value for Money Assessment

- 3.38 Assessing the value for money (VFM) of public sector investments is a core component of the economic case. A VFM assessment is presented below for the two shortlisted options – i.e. the do nothing and the £2m GBBFF option, based on the GBBF cost per net additional job and the Benefit Cost Ratio of the scheme.

	Do nothing	£2m GBF option
New floorspace E(g)(ii) (sqm, GIA)	0	3,576
Gross new direct permanent FTE jobs (excluding running void)	0	200
Gross new direct permanent FTE jobs (with 20% running void on E(g)(ii)) (from year 2 of opening onwards)	0	160
Net additional new direct FTE jobs (with 20% running void on E(g)(ii))	0	94
Net additional new indirect FTE jobs (utilising HCA guidance multiplier of 1.46)	0	43
Total new net additional FTE jobs	0	137
Gross direct construction job years	0	75 construction job years over approximately 1-year construction period
Net additional direct construction job years	0	38 construction job years over approximately 1-year construction period

Undiscounted cumulative GVA relating to permanent net additional FTE jobs (5-year persistence of benefits period)	0	£41,338,440
Discounted cumulative GVA relating to permanent net additional FTE jobs (5-year persistence of benefits period)	0	£35,609,340
GBF Costs (undiscounted, excluding optimism bias)	0	£2,000,000
GBF costs (discounted, including optimism bias)	0	£2,436,594
Benefit Cost Ratio	0	14.6

Given that the whole of the £9.5 million project will be funded by public resources, it is appropriate to appraise the benefit cost ratio on the basis of the overall public sector funding budget as well. Applying the same optimism bias and NPV calculation to the £9.5 million budget less sunk costs provides an adjusted figure of £11,271,600. This results in a **Benefit Cost Ratio of 3.2** which represents high value for money based on national VFM benchmarks and exceeds the LEP Assurance Framework threshold of 2 by some margin.

- 3.39 Given the fact that no net additional economic outputs are assumed under the do-nothing option, no VFM analysis is presented for this option and a zero-deadweight position is assumed for the preferred option.

Sensitivity Analysis

- 3.40 A sensitivity has been modelled which tests the impact of a reduction in anticipated GVA per FTE of 20% across the appraisal period. This results in a reduced PV cumulative GVA of £28.487m and a BCR against GBBF investment only of 11.7 and against the overall public sector costs of in excess of 2.5. This demonstrates that even discounting the high productivity value generally associated with new direct job outputs in the scientific research and development sector, the scheme would still deliver excellent value for money from a public sector investment perspective and well exceed the LEP Assurance Framework BCR threshold of 2.

Qualitative Economic Appraisal

- 3.41 In addition to the monetised economic benefits above, the scheme will also deliver a number of wider non-quantifiable benefits, none of which are assumed to come forward under the do-nothing scenario which would result in the site remaining 'as is' for the foreseeable future. These are set out below.
- 3.42 While we do not claim, and therefore do not monetise, that the second phase building will automatically result in further private sector investment and development in the wider science park at Porton Down, it should be recognised that the proposed second phase of delivery will be significant and have an appreciable positive effect on the promotion and marketing of the science park as a Life Science Opportunity Zone.
- 3.43 The second phase Collaborative Innovation Centre is designed, more so than the initial phase Beech-Allen building has been, to facilitate productive research collaboration between the

government research institutions at Porton Down, Higher Education Institutions and business. It will provide space for conferencing, meeting and networking which are not currently accessible at Porton Down outside of the secure wire, and this is envisaged to be an important next step in creating a positive ecosystem at the science park for scientists from the public and private sectors to engage in collaborative research.

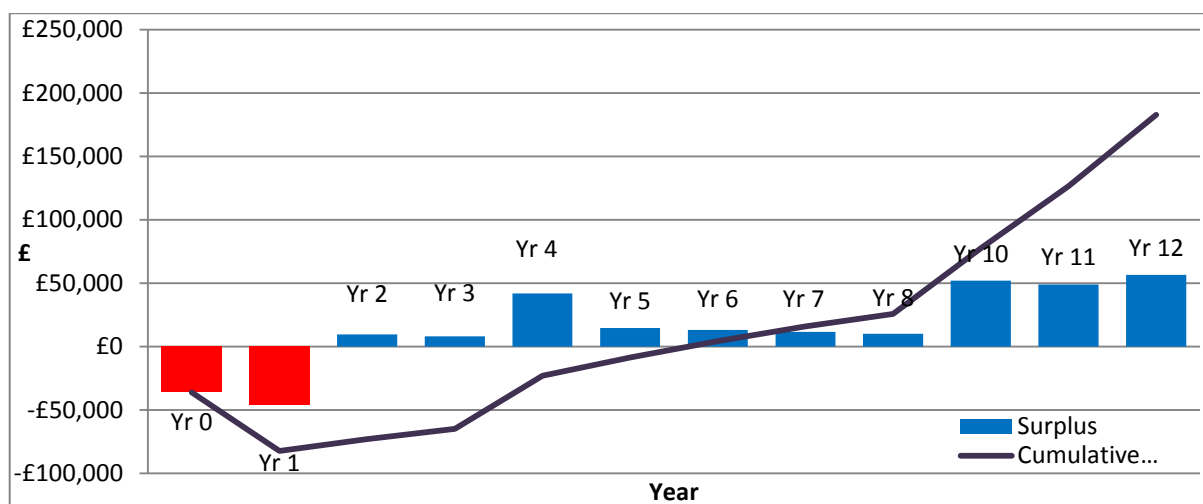
- 3.44 The scheme responds in a positive way to economic recovery locally following both the recent and ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the 2018 Novichok incident in Salisbury. By providing new employment space for high value job creation in science and technological research and development, this project will deliver significant GVA outputs which will mean an increase in disposable income in the region and therefore wider economic growth stimulus.
- 3.45 The GBBF investment will be towards a project which meets Very Good BREEAM standards for building sustainability and the design and build contract has been let on the basis of achieving net carbon neutrality. The building will therefore not make any negative impact on the environment and will stand as a further exemplar for environmentally sustainable development at Porton Science Park.

4. Commercial Case

- 4.1 The commercial case for Getting Building Fund investment in the Collaborative Innovation Centre is presented below in accordance with HM Treasury Green Book/Five Case methodology.

Commercial viability

- 4.2 The requested Getting Building Funding will be used to fund a comprehensive package of works which will deliver the Collaborative Innovation Centre. The appendix F Commercial Analysis demonstrates that once the Centre has been delivered, within six years it will be viable to generate income to cover the costs of maintenance and management, with a surplus that can be reinvested into the Science Park. The initial appraisals undertaken by the council’s professional advisors demonstrate that this scheme is in principle commercially viable. Therefore, with the benefit of the GBF investment, the economic benefits that will be brought in the Health & Life Sciences and associated sectors can be realised and are commercially viable.
- 4.3 Summary of commercial model



Procurement Strategy

- 4.4 Any future procurement processes will comply with the Best Value processes as set out in the Wiltshire Council Procurement Manual. To support this, early advice and support will be sought from Wiltshire Council’s Strategic Procurement Hub to ensure that the procurement process meets the expected high standards routinely demonstrated by Wiltshire Council. The council will also ensure that any further procurement of services is undertaken in accordance with these established approaches.

Asset ownership

- 4.5 The entirety of the project will be in the ownership of Wiltshire Council.

State Aid compliance

- 4.6 The council has sought professional legal advice from Bevan Brittan to confirm State Aid compliance and this is appended at **Annex C**.

Charging mechanism / accountancy procedures

- 4.7 Wiltshire Council acts as the Accountable Body for the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership through which GBF funding is being sought. Getting building Fund payments are

made to the Accountable Body through payments from Central Government and are held in a separate Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership account stream within the Accountable Body accounting arrangements. This ensures a robust and transparent accountancy procedure that will be subject to full internal and external auditing procedures at regular intervals in accordance with Council, LEP and Government regulations.

- 4.8 The Accountable Body provides the accountancy function for Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership financial business activity. Monitoring and recording of spend against submitted cost profiles will be conducted through this function. The Wiltshire Council Section 151 Officer is responsible for the release of funding in collaboration with the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Board and Commissioning Group. All accounting activity is also undertaken in accordance with the LEP’s approved Growth Deal Assurance Framework.

Risk management and transfer

- 4.9 As the delivery agent, Wiltshire Council will be responsible for the identification, management and mitigation of all risks associated with the project. The Wiltshire Council Risk Management Strategy outlines the processes and responsibilities that the organisation upholds when delivering projects and/or services, whether these be threats to delivery or opportunities to improve delivery.
- 4.10 Contingency provisions have been made according to best industry practices in the cost assessment and defining the project budget.
- 4.11 A risk register has been developed for the scheme and this is described within the management case section of this Outline Business Case and provided at **Annex H**.

Key milestones

- 4.12 The key milestones for this project are set out below:

Milestone	Date
Procure Building Contractor/design team for Stage one (RIBA stages 1-4 and Pricing)	June 2020
Contract Building contractor for stage two	February 2021
Start of construction work	March 2021
Procure Business support provision	July 2021
Building handover	February 2022
Launch of Business support provision	February/March 2022
End of defects liability and retention due	February 2023
Practical completion of business support outputs	June 2023

5. Financial Case

Project Costs

- 5.1 Current forecast Project Cost at this stage is £9,267,723. This leaves 232,277 for the associated visitor carpark (awaiting estimated costs) and potential unexpected underground discoveries, alongside the 3% contingency built into the programme.

Forecast Construction costs, incl. design fees	8,434,744
Carbon Consulting fees for BREEAM assessment	19,560
Site investigation works	19,375
Fees (client side)	92,848
Statutory planning/building control fees	20,000
FF&E, IT and allowance for Lab Gases/Alarms	120,000
Works costs	8,706,527
Construction contingency @ 3%	261,196
Total construction works	8,967,723
Business support provision	300,000
Current Forecast Project Costs	9,267,723

- 5.2 This forecast is based upon the McAvoy updated RIBA Stage 2 cost plan issued on 20/10/20 with the RIBA Stage 3 report, in line with advice from Faithful & Gould who are the externally appointed Quantity Surveyors for this project. A more granulated cost breakdown won't be available until the end of RIBA stage 4. The 3% contingency is a flat risk uplift provided by the Council's external professional costs consultant. This has been reduced based on professional advice following surveys and ground inspection, from 5% to 3%, and is deemed appropriate for a new build scheme at this stage. The build is modular based, with the structures being produced in factories and then brought to site; therefore, the risk of additional costs is deemed low.

Project Funding

- 5.3 Wiltshire council have agreed to provide £5m to fund the Collaborative Innovation Centre, with additional Grow-on space to enable an economy of scale. £2.5m of European ERDF grant has been allocated towards the Collaborative Innovation Centre and Business Support package, which realises a budget of £7.5m.
- 5.4 In order to reduce the overall financial risk to the council, the project is following a two-stage process. The first stage was to enter into a pre-construction services agreement with McAvoy, with two outputs: Firstly, to carry out design works across RIBA stages 1 to 4, and secondly to provide a lump-sum fixed price to build the proposed Innovation Centre. On acceptance of the design and the price, we will then look to award the contract for stage two and begin construction work.
- 5.5 Without the Getting Building Fund support it is considered that:
- The Collaboration Innovation Centre will not go ahead due to lack of funds
 - The ERDF grant will not be drawn down and £2.5m will be re-allocated out of the Swindon and Wiltshire area
 - Further development of the Porton science park will be severely set back

GBF expenditure and funding profiles

- 5.6 The current programme assumes that 100% of the requested GBF contribution is drawn down on a defrayed expenditure basis during FY 2021/22 with all spend incurred by February 2022; the proposed date for handover of the building.

Revenue costs / incomes

- 5.7 An NPV cashflow has been completed for the Centre, and forecasts that the site can breakeven in year 6 28/29. From year 28/29 the site can cover all forecast operational running costs and generate an average return of £72k per year. Modelling has been based on reaching 80% capacity by year 24/25.
- 5.8 Until the Centre is in a position where it can cover all its running costs, Wiltshire Council will support the Centre, balancing revenue requirements with borrowing costs. Based upon our experience of demand for the existing building at Porton science park, we do not foresee any long-term negative impacts on public sector finances.

Capital cost over-runs

- 5.9 The risk of significant cost over-run is considered low to medium. This is due to the fact that we cannot be sure there won't be any un-charted services or hazardous items that require remediation. However, the council is working closely with Dstl and the area has been classified as low risk.
- 5.10 The Council will only proceed with construction once a fixed price, based on the extensive RIBA stage 1-4 work, has been agreed. The current gap in funding is due to additional options that have been selected as part of the design stage.

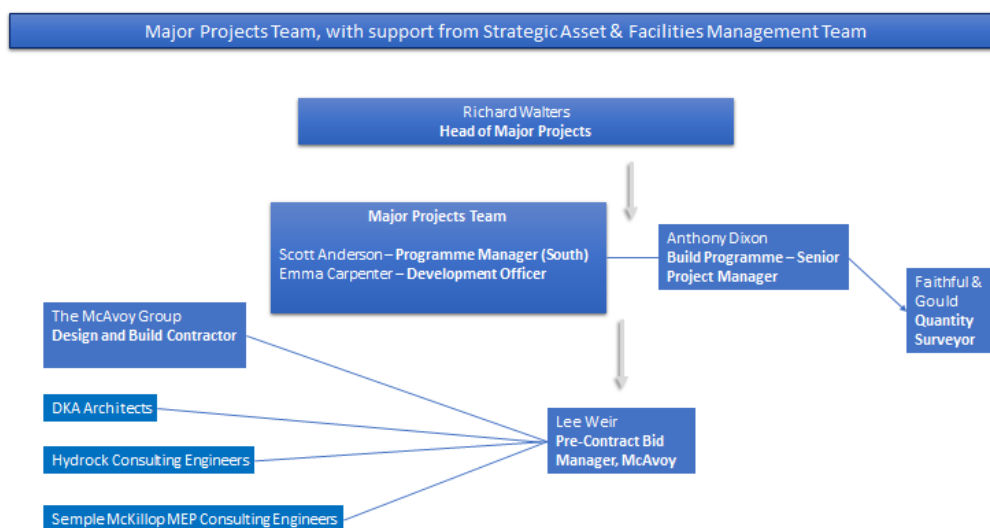
Financial risks

- 5.11 Other financial risks will be identified and included within the risk register in line with the risk management processes described in the Management Case.

6. Management Case

Project governance and management arrangements

- 6.1 The delivery and implementation of this project will be governed and managed by Wiltshire Council, as the applicant and lead project sponsor. The Council is highly experienced in the delivery of capital projects and major redevelopment schemes and has a dedicated Major Projects Service. This service will be responsible for the overall project, with day to day management of the build provided by Wiltshire Council’s Build Programme Senior Project Manager from the Strategic Asset & Facilities Management Team. The Head of Service for Major Projects will be the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) and have oversight of the project and report progress to the Porton Science Park Steering Group. Executive decision making for the project shall be Wiltshire Council’s cabinet and, where appropriate under the council’s constitution and scheme of sub-delegation, the Executive Director for Growth, Infrastructure and Place.
- 6.2 An organogram identifying key lines of responsibility and reporting is presented below, and a more detailed version is provided at **Annex I**.



- 6.3 The day to day project management lead from Wiltshire Council will be Anthony Dixon.
- 6.4 The council’s Major Projects service will be responsible for all elements of engagement with the LEP and monitoring expenditure and output delivery against targets.

Approvals Procedures

- 6.5 This section only pertains to the council’s approvals procedures and treasury management and the process in place to secure approval to spend the ERDF.
- 6.6 Council approval to proceed with the project and enter into contract for the design and build of the Collaborative Innovation Centre was secured at its meeting of cabinet in January 2020. At this meeting the allocation of council capital funding towards the scheme was also endorsed and that funding allocations exists on the council’s capital programme. The council’s capital funding towards the scheme is governed by its Treasury Management rules.

- 6.7 Scrutiny functions are now being undertaken. The project will be presented in December to the following of the council's Overview and Scrutiny committees:
- Financial Planning Task Group
 - Environmental Select Committee
- 6.8 Delegated authority to enter into funding contracts for both ERDF and GBF will be sought at Wiltshire Council's cabinet committee meeting on 5 January 2021.
- 6.9 In parallel all remaining pre-contractual conditions will be discharged with respect to the ERDF allocation enabling the funding agreement for ERDF to be signed with MHCLG by the end of February 2021 at the very latest.

Delivery programme

- 6.10 The delivery programme is provided at **Annex D**.

Project monitoring and evaluation

- 6.11 The Council has committed to undertaking project monitoring, reporting and evaluation as part of the management of this project, in line with ERDF requirements. The delivery and implementation of this project will be governed and managed by Wiltshire Council, as the applicant and lead project sponsor. The council is highly experienced in the delivery of capital projects and has well established working relationship with all local stakeholders. An indicative delivery programme is provided alongside this business case which demonstrates that the building will be completed in February 2022 and the Centre will open to the public/tenants in March 2022.
- 6.12 The council has established monitoring and evaluation procedures in place, and a live risk register with mitigation measures which is reviewed regularly at the CEMs (Client Engagement Meetings). A set of project tolerances have been developed regarding time, cost and quality issues. Clear processes are in place to inform relevant stakeholders in the event of a project tolerance breach which ensures early and necessary action can be taken to rectify any issues and mitigate any further issues arising. A change control management system has been developed to ensure that the relevant authorisations are sought in the event of unexpected changes to cost, time and quality during project delivery.
- 6.13 Wiltshire Council has been working closely with the LEP in developing the SWLEP Assurance Framework and as the accountable body for the LEP has agreed to provide an Accountable Body Monitoring Officer. The Assurance Framework identifies that scheme promoters must monitor and evaluate their scheme's progress in line with the SWLEP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. It also identifies that for the allocation of funding, clarity of responsibilities for delivery and monitoring will be specified in writing from the Accountable Body to scheme promoters and that this will include the requirement for quarterly provision of delivery and performance information from programme managers in line with the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Implementation Summary Reports and compliance to relevant legal agreements.
- 6.14 The purpose of this is primarily to monitor spend to budget, time and to scope of inputs by project. The Assurance Framework states that in relevant circumstances, the role of Accountable Body and Wiltshire Council as a scheme promoter will need to be kept strictly independent of each other to provide assurance that there is no conflict of interest. It states

that the Section 151 Officer of Wiltshire Council will specify the procedures for ensuring no conflict of interest and clarity of roles, responsibilities, communications, monitoring and reporting as per the arrangements set out in the Accountable Body Legal Agreement. Advice from the Section 151 Officer will be sought as part of this.

- 6.15 The Council will maintain monthly monitoring reports, which it will share with the LEP and Monitoring Officer, of project progress which will highlight progress, risk management, expenditure, change management and benefits realisation. These reports provide a constant and consistent method of report and monitoring the project between programme management and the SWLEP governance process. After a reasonable timeframe post project completion, to be agreed with the Monitoring Officer, the Council will commission an independent evaluation of the project, focusing on the extent to which it has achieved its proposed objectives and outputs.

Benefits realisation strategy

- 6.16 Wiltshire Council will be responsible for monitoring and recording the benefits of the project with the support and guidance of its Strategic Procurement Hub. The quantifiable outputs and outcomes to be monitored will include the following in accordance with the project's SMART objectives:

- 160 researchers working in improved research infrastructure facilities
- 58 enterprises receiving support
- 10 enterprises cooperating with research entities
- 3576 sqm of commercial laboratory, office and ancillary space built

- 6.17 The benefits to be monitored and recorded will be established as part of the monitoring and evaluation procedure identified above.

Change management process

- 6.18 Wiltshire Council will be responsible for the monitoring and report of changes to project scope, scale and cost. This will be recorded in a Change Register. The SWLEP Delivery and Performance Team has developed a process of change management based on best practice methodology and PRINCE2 project management processes.

Risk analysis and risk management

- 6.19 Wiltshire Council will be responsible for the identification, management and mitigation of all risks associated with the project. The Wiltshire Council Risk Management Strategy outlines the processes and responsibilities that the organisation upholds when delivering projects and/or services, whether these be threats to delivery or opportunities to improve delivery. Wiltshire Council has an excellent track record of delivering capital projects of a similar scope and scale and is therefore experienced at managing risk and the transfer of risk in project delivery.

- 6.20 As part of this outline business case a risk register has been developed and is provided at **Annex H**. The risk register will, in accordance with Wiltshire Council Corporate Policy, be monitored and updated on a regular basis throughout project development and delivery.

- 6.21 The main strategic risks associated with the project at this stage include:

- Matched funding is not secured

- Lack of market demand for proposals
- Costs exceed the updated RIBA Stage 2 cost plan issued on 20/10/20 impacting viability
- State Aid and/or procurement issues delay or prevent scheme delivery
- Lack of capability/capacity within the council to deliver the project

6.22 Further details of these and associated mitigation measures are presented in the appended risk register.

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: Allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy Funding to manage phosphates in the River Avon Special Area of Conservation

Cabinet Member: Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment

Key Decision: Key

Executive Summary

Approval is sought to ring fence and use money from the Community Infrastructure Levy strategic fund to demonstrate the Council's commitment and ability to secure in perpetuity phosphate mitigation measures in the catchment area of the River Avon (Hampshire) Special Area of Conservation (SAC), an internationally important wildlife site protected by law.

The funding will be directed to delivering a strategic programme that will be managed and monitored by a dedicated project officer. This will deliver long-term strategic measures to ensure phosphate neutrality in perpetuity, such as large-scale habitat schemes, which will in time replace the current less efficient approach of incrementally identifying small scale measures (e.g. woodland or wetland creation).

For planning applications that could adversely affect the SAC (in this case where it would lead to a further decline in water quality through phosphates entering the River Avon via sewerage treatment works), appropriate assessments must be carried out by Wiltshire Council in line with the Habitats Regulations. To enable such applications to be approved and appropriate assessments concluded favourably, it must be certain that phosphate neutral development will be delivered. A similar issue relates to nitrates in the internationally important wildlife sites in the Solent and the need to secure nitrate neutral development.

A formal undertaking by the Council to commit sufficient resources to develop and deliver a strategic programme is essential to provide the certainty that is needed for these assessments. Such an approach will support the council's ability to unlock the current embargo on development in part of the county.

Proposal(s)

That Cabinet:

- (i) Confirms that the Council will, until such time as the responsibility falls to others, adopt a strategic approach to secure in perpetuity measures to ensure development is phosphate neutral in the catchment for the River Avon (Hampshire) Special Area of Conservation; including short term temporary measures followed up by long term strategic mitigation measures, such as a large scale habitat creation scheme, to ensure in perpetuity phosphate neutrality;

- (ii) Confirms that the strategic approach will include monitoring with annual reporting, to take an evidence led approach to ensure that phosphate offsets arising from the measures secured keep pace with permissions granted;
- (iii) Agrees to ring-fence and commit an initial fund of £850,000 from the Community Infrastructure Levy strategic funds for the delivery of off-setting measures to achieve phosphate neutral development and fund a project officer to oversee delivery, monitoring and reporting; and
- (iv) Delegates authority for the Interim Corporate Director of Place and Environment in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment and Interim Corporate Director of Resources to oversee the spending of this fund.

Reason for Proposal(s)

To demonstrate the Council's commitment to the delivery of, and allocation of funding for, a strategic solution to secure phosphate neutral development including a dedicated project officer; unlocking development in the catchment of the River Avon (Hampshire) Special Area of Conservation. The project officer will also have the capability to help address similar issues of nitrate neutrality for development in the catchment of the River Test that affects wildlife sites in the Solent.

Terrence Herbert
Chief Executive

Subject: Allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy Funding to manage phosphates in the River Avon Special Area of Conservation

Cabinet Member: Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Spatial Planning, Development Management and Investment

Key Decision: Key

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - (i) Confirm the Council's strategic approach to securing phosphate neutral development in the catchment area of the River Avon (Hampshire) Special Area of Conservation to support delivery of development, particularly new homes; and
 - (ii) Agree to ring-fence and commit a sum of money from the Community Infrastructure Levy strategic funds accrued for the delivery of mitigation measures to secure phosphate neutral development in the period to 2026.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. The Business Plan 2017-2027 'Forward Thinking' seeks to create strong communities. Delivery of new homes where they are needed through implementation of the Wiltshire Core Strategy in a way that protects the environment forms part of the priority 'Growing the Economy'.

Background

3. The Council as Local Planning Authority is required under the Habitats Regulations to ensure that any adverse impacts arising from development can be mitigated to avoid harm to internationally important nature conservation sites, which are protected by law. This is at both the plan-making and decision-taking stage. Ecologists use 'Appropriate Assessment' to test whether proposals meet the requirements in the Habitats Regulations. It is unlawful for the Council to permit planning applications unless these assessments can be concluded favourably.
4. The Council as competent authority under the Habitats Regulations, must consult Natural England and have regard to their advice in preparing assessments.
5. In preparing the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (adopted February 2020), the Council made assurances through a [memorandum of understanding](#) with Natural England, Environment Agency and other Local Planning Authorities that development would be phosphate neutral to ensure no adverse impact on the River Avon (Hampshire) Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In addition to direct delivery of on-site mitigation by developers where necessary, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) would be the appropriate means of funding the delivery of off-site mitigation

measures. The Council's prioritisation process for CIL spending recognises that habitat mitigation measures would need to be prioritised ahead of other infrastructure because without it development cannot proceed.

6. Phosphate neutral development means that any residual phosphates from foul water discharge arising from occupation of residential developments (e.g. that which can't be stripped out at sewerage treatment works (STW)) can be off-set through mitigation to reduce phosphates entering the watercourse upstream of the point at which the relevant STW discharges into the river. Such mitigation measures include for example, wetlands and woodlands creation. A similar newly arising issue relates to nitrates in the internationally important wildlife sites in the Solent and the need to secure nitrate neutral development in the small part of Wiltshire in the River Test catchment area.
7. In [December 2018](#) Cabinet delegated authority to the Director for Economic Development and Planning (in consultation with the Cabinet Member and Director of Finance) to approve the allocation of CIL funding towards mitigation projects relating to protected sites, as and when required, to support efficient and effective decision making. However, this anticipated a piecemeal approach of a series of projects for phosphate mitigation that individually related to a cost of circa £20k. To date the services of Entrade have been commissioned to run auctions with farmers to find suitable land for mitigation measures, some small wetland projects are being progressed as a result of this.

Main Considerations for the Council

8. Until such time as alternative solutions are found to improving water quality in the River Avon SAC and the responsibility falls to others, for example increased phosphate stripping at source from sewerage treatment works or greater controls exerted over farming to prevent phosphates entering the watercourses, planning decisions will need to ensure phosphate neutrality.
9. Natural England has raised concerns about the Council's approach to securing phosphate neutral development, seeking greater certainty on in perpetuity measures, and as a result there is in effect a current embargo on related planning permissions. To provide the certainty that is needed for Appropriate Assessment to conclude favourably, it is considered that the Council needs to demonstrate that it is firmly committed to the delivery of, and has allocated the funding for, a strategic programme approach to secure phosphate neutral development in the River Avon SAC catchment area. This commitment includes the appointment of a dedicated project officer to oversee delivery, monitoring and reporting of measures to ensure they keep pace with development and sufficient offsets are secured into the future.
10. The strategic programme approach involves the development of a large-scale strategic project(s), referred to as a habitat creation schemes, which can ensure phosphate neutrality in perpetuity and be created over several years providing a long-term solution. Many authorities are now taking this approach. Such projects take time to deliver and in the short term the current piecemeal approach of identifying small scale projects that may have a limited lifespan will need to continue, as a bridge, while the long-term strategic solution is put in place.
11. Recent discussions have confirmed that such an approach would be supported by Natural England.
12. As the current Local Plan period is to 2026, an initial cost for mitigation measures has been calculated based on projected housing delivery over this period and local evidence on the costs of wetland projects being progressed through Entrade. This

together with the costs of a project officer is estimated to be around £850,000. See risks and financial implications below.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

13. No engagement has been undertaken with the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function.

Safeguarding Implications

14. There are no safeguarding implications associated with the proposal.

Public Health Implications

15. There are no direct public and health wellbeing implications associated with the proposals. However, the ability to secure provision of housing while protecting the integrity of wildlife sites helps meet the needs of a growing population in a sustainable way supporting the well-being of communities.

Procurement Implications

16. Procurement will be undertaken in line with corporate procedures.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

17. There are no equalities impact implications in relation to the proposal.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

18. The proposal will ensure that there are no adverse effects from phosphates on the integrity of internationally important wildlife sites. Land secured for phosphate strategic mitigation may also be used to meet other local and central government objectives unrelated to phosphates e.g. securing biodiversity net gain, natural flood management, carbon sequestration or public open space to avoid recreational pressures on other wildlife areas.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

19. There will be insufficient certainty that phosphate neutral development can be achieved and the Council, as Local Planning Authority, will not be able to approve planning permissions within the River Avon SAC catchment.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

20. The costs to deliver mitigation can only be estimated at this time and will need to be monitored. This will be the role of the project officer, who will report annually. Should a need for further funding be identified, a report will be brought back to Cabinet in a timely way to allow for further funding to be released.

Financial Implications

21. It is estimated that around £850,000 should initially be ring fenced from the existing strategic CIL fund that has accrued, to ensure that permissions for the period up to 2026 will be phosphate neutral in perpetuity through the delivery of a programme of mitigation solutions. This includes the costs of a project officer over a period of 5 years. This sum represents a relatively small proportion of the

strategic CIL fund, which at September 2020 was approximately £25.7m and is accruing with the delivery of new developments.

Legal Implications

22. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017 as amended), referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations' place significant responsibilities on the Council as competent authority for the protection of ecology. Regulation 63 requires competent authorities to undertake an 'Appropriate Assessment' before granting an authorisation for planning permission if it is likely to have a significant effect on a site protected under the Habitats Regulations.
23. Such sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated to conserve important and rare habitats. Significant effects on designated sites can be caused through a number of impact pathways such as direct/indirect habitat loss, and increased water pollution.
24. The Appropriate Assessment is a technical analysis of the potential impacts of proposals on the integrity of the site in the light of the best scientific knowledge. Authorisation may only be granted if the competent authority can determine there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the site where the test is 'no reasonable scientific doubt as to the absence of adverse effects.'
25. Where it cannot be concluded that there will be no adverse effects on a sites integrity mitigation measures can be taken into account if they meet certain tests. If mitigation measures are not available or sufficient to avoid an adverse effect in perpetuity, then the competent authority cannot conclude the Appropriate Assessment favourably as per paragraph 24 above. It is unlawful for the Council to permit planning applications without a favourable Appropriate Assessment.

Workforce Implications

26. To date work on phosphate neutral development has been undertaken by staff in the Spatial Planning service supported by officers in legal and procurement. There is insufficient capacity for this to continue and a dedicated specialist post is needed to drive this forward, providing the certainty that the habitat regulations require.

Options Considered

24. One option considered is to continue the current approach, which involves an on-going programme of identifying small scale solutions. This has proved to be resource intensive and does not provide the opportunity to secure additional benefits, such as those identified in paragraph 18. Also, it is likely that the Council in preparing the Wiltshire Local Plan Review, which plans to 2036, will need to be able to demonstrate to Natural England the deliverability of a longer-term strategy for phosphate neutral development. The option set out in this paper of delivering a large-scale mitigation project for the longer term is therefore considered to be the optimal way forward.

Conclusions

27. The Council will, until such time as the responsibility falls to others, need to secure phosphate mitigation measures in perpetuity, supplementing on site measures where they cannot be achieved. Ensuring phosphate neutral

development in perpetuity will support the delivery of the current Local Plan growth to 2026, particularly new homes.

28. A strategic programme approach is needed that continues to deliver small scale measures in the short term (e.g. woodland and wetland creation) to provide sufficient off setting until such time as a large scale habitat creation scheme can be put in place that would provide in perpetuity mitigation. To do this effectively and provide certainty ensuring planning applications can be supported by favourable Appropriate Assessment requires a dedicated project officer to oversee the development, delivery and monitoring of mitigation measures, and sufficient funding to be allocated to secure project delivery.

Sam Fox
Interim Corporate Director - Place and Environment

Report Author:

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Date of report

9 December 2020

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down Road Scheme

Cabinet Member: Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cabinet Member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Key Decision: Key

Executive Summary

The A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down Road Scheme is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) promoted by Highways England (HE). The scheme comprises a new dual, two-lane carriageway approximately eight miles in length with the following key features:

- A bypass to the north of Winterbourne Stoke with a viaduct over the River Till valley
- Grassland habitat creation that would allow extension of the Parsonage Down National Nature Reserve
- A new junction with the A360 to the west of and outside the World Heritage Site (WHS), with the A303 passing under the junction
- A section through the WHS with a twin-bore tunnel past Stonehenge at least 1.8 miles (2.9 kilometres) long
- A new junction with the A345 at the existing Countess roundabout to the north of Amesbury, with the A303 passing over the junction
- The conversion of the existing A303 through the WHS into a route for walking, cycling and horse riding
- New 'green bridges' to connect existing habitats and allow the movement of wildlife, maintain existing agricultural access and provide crossing for existing and new bridleways and public footpaths.

Following the statutory public consultation held between 8 February 2018 and 23 April 2018, HE undertook a further supplementary consultation between 17 July 2018 to 14 August 2018, which this Council responded to.

HE submitted the A303 Stonehenge Development Consent Order (DCO) application on 19 October 2018 and it was accepted for Examination on 16 November 2018. A panel of five inspectors was appointed as the Examining Authority (ExA) to oversee the Examination proceedings. The DCO Examination commenced on 2 April 2019 and concluded on 2 October 2019.

Following the submission of the ExA's recommendation to the Secretary of State on 2 January 2020, a decision on the scheme was expected by 2 April 2020. However, due to the Secretary of State's need to obtain further information, the decision deadline was extended until 17 July 2020 and then again until 13 November 2020. During this time, the Secretary of State sought additional information and comment on three occasions relating to the proposed Scheme and the recent archaeological finds within the WHS. The Council submitted responses to each consultation.

On 12 November 2020, the Secretary of State for Transport decided to make, with modifications, a DCO granting development consent for the proposals in the application.

The Council will have further involvement and input into the implementation of the A303 Stonehenge scheme, as secured through the DCO Examination process, and in order to fulfil its statutory duties regarding various aspects of the construction and implementation of this road improvement scheme.

Proposals

Members are asked to:

1. Welcome the Secretary of State's decision regarding the A303 Stonehenge Development Consent Order.
2. To agree the proposed recurring budget of £300,000 within the Highways budget for the A303 Stonehenge scheme until 2026/27.
3. Agree the delegation of authority to the Director Transport and Environment to:
 - a) Continue to input into the scheme by providing consultation responses to the various plans and documents being produced by Highways England for inclusion within the consultation reports to be considered by the Secretary of State.
 - b) Negotiate and agree the level of maintenance contributions associated with the de-trunked and local road elements, including public rights of way, of the scheme.
 - c) Agree the design and construction of the new local roads and rights of way, or alterations of existing arising from the scheme.
 - d) Agree and implement any associated traffic regulation measures arising from or required by the scheme.
 - e) Approve the heritage management plans, site specific written schemes of investigation and method statements for the archaeological mitigation works and to monitor and approve the archaeological fieldwork.

Reasons for Proposals

The case for dualling the A303 between Amesbury and Berwick Down has long been established through promoting economic growth in the South West, increasing safety, improving connectivity with neighbouring regions and protecting and enhancing the environment and the world heritage site.

In order to fulfil its statutory duties promptly regarding the construction and implementation of this important road improvement scheme it is considered appropriate to delegate authority to the Director Transport and Environment in connection with this scheme.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down Road Scheme

Cabinet Member: Cllr Bridget Wayman Cabinet member for Highways, Transport and Waste

Key Decision: Key

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the actions taken in relation to the A303 Amesbury to Berwick Down (Stonehenge) road improvement scheme since the previous reports set out below.
2. To confirm that the Secretary of State decided to make, with modifications, a DCO granting development consent for the proposals in the application on 12 November 2020.
3. To confirm the Council's involvement and input into the implementation of the A303 Stonehenge scheme, as secured through the DCO Examination process.
4. To agree the proposed delegated authority provision to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duties with regard to the construction and implementation of this road improvement scheme.
5. To outline the expected benefits that the A303 Stonehenge scheme will bring to residents, the World Heritage Site, Wiltshire and the south-west.
6. To agree the proposed recurring budget of £300,000 within the Highways budget for the A303 Stonehenge scheme until 2026/27.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

7. Improvements along the A303 help meet the priorities of the Council's Business Plan 2017-2027, including:
 - Growing the Economy:
 - High Skilled Jobs (Employment)
 - Transport and Infrastructure (Access)
 - Strong Communities:
 - Safe Communities (Protection)
 - Personal Wellbeing (Prevention)
 - Working with Our Partners:

- Community Involvement
- Delivering Together

Background

8. Dualling the A303 and A358 is a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) as defined by the Planning Act 2008 (the Planning Act).
9. This NSIP was promoted by Highways England under the requirements of the Planning Act to secure a DCO to allow work to begin. This process involved detailed engagement with the general public, local communities and stakeholders.
10. The DCO process and the role of Local Authorities within this process was the subject of a previous Cabinet report on 15 March 2016 ([Cabinet Papers Item 39](#)).
11. The timetable for the development of this road improvement scheme, the Council's involvement and governance arrangements established to fully engage and manage this project, and the estimated resource implications for the various professional areas were detailed in a Cabinet report considered on 11 October 2016 ([Cabinet Papers Item 118](#)).
12. The route options appraisal methodology and outcome selected by Highways England (HE) to take to public consultation, along with the Council's response to the non-statutory consultation, was contained within a previous Cabinet report on 14 March 2017 ([Cabinet Papers Item 35](#)).
13. An overview of the HE scheme upon which views were being sought at the statutory consultation stage, along with the Council's response to this statutory consultation and the proposed delegated authority provisions to enable the Council to fulfil its statutory duties with regard to the DCO process, were detailed in a Cabinet report considered on 24 April 2018 ([Cabinet Papers Item 223](#)).
14. All documents submitted by HE, Wiltshire Council and other stakeholders during the Examination of the DCO application are accessible through the A303 Stonehenge National Infrastructure Planning website ([A303 Stonehenge](#)). This includes the draft DCO, Outline Environmental Management Plan and Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy as well as a variety of documentation related to other subject areas.
15. The road improvement scheme is approximately eight miles (nearly thirteen kilometres) in length. HE's consultation booklet described the scheme as follows:

"The proposed scheme would comprise a new dual, two-lane carriageway between Amesbury and Berwick Down with the following key features:

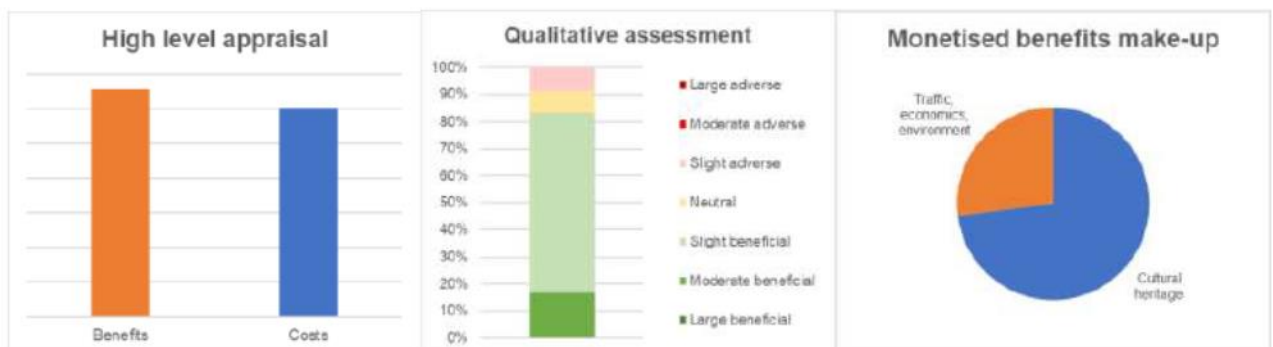
 - *A bypass to the north of Winterbourne Stoke with a viaduct over the River Till valley*

- *Grassland habitat creation that would allow extension of the Parsonage Down National Nature Reserve*
- *A new junction with the A360 to the west of and outside the World Heritage Site (WHS), with the A303 passing under the junction*
- *A section through the WHS with a twin-bore tunnel past Stonehenge at least 1.8 miles (2.9 kilometres) long*
- *A new junction with the A345 at the existing Countess roundabout to the north of Amesbury, with the A303 passing over the junction*
- *The conversion of the existing A303 through the WHS into a route for walking, cycling and horse riding*
- *New 'green bridges' to connect existing habitats and allow the movement of wildlife, maintain existing agricultural access and provide crossing for existing and new bridleways and public footpaths."*

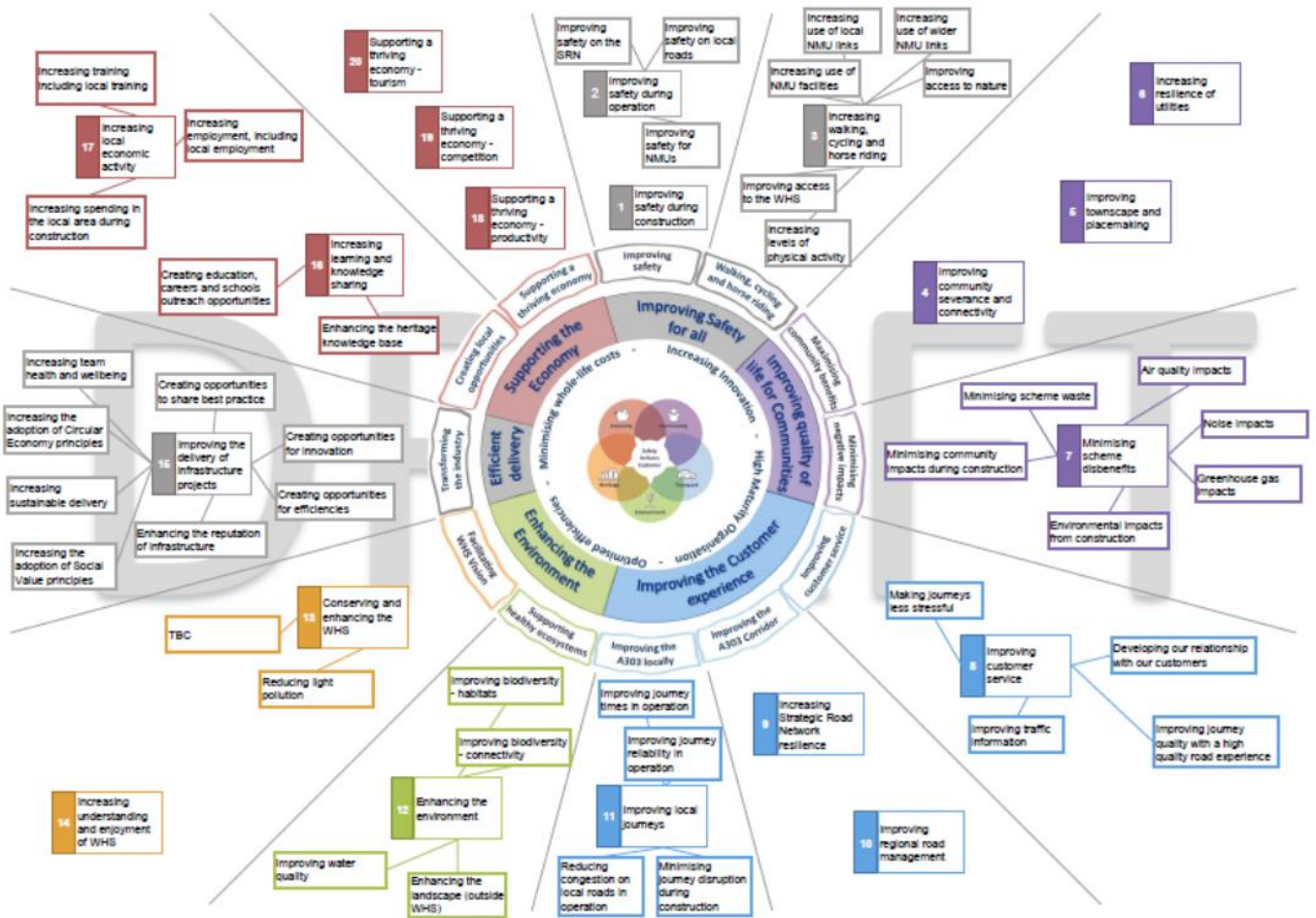
Main Considerations for the Council

A303 Stonehenge Scheme Benefits

16. HE has conducted an economic appraisal to estimate the A303 Stonehenge scheme's expected benefits. From the HE's charts below, it can be seen that the expected benefits outweigh the scheme's estimated costs, that the balance of non-monetised impacts is net positive and that cultural heritage represents the largest monetised scheme benefit.



17. There are direct benefits embedded within the scheme's design; for example, through the creation of a free-flowing route which would reduce rat-running within the surrounding communities or the removal of community severance within Winterbourne Stoke, but there are also those benefits that would be achieved through HE's intention for the scheme to leave a lasting legacy for Wiltshire. The HE's draft benefits map is illustrated below, which identifies the anticipated benefits in relation to the primary scheme objectives.



18. Appraisal and evaluation studies of the scheme’s projected benefits are ongoing and include cultural heritage evaluation studies, appraisal of non-traffic benefits, and an A303/A358 corridor appraisal.
19. The A303 Stonehenge scheme will also create a range of employment and supply chain opportunities for Wiltshire residents and businesses. HE has produced an Employment and Skills Plan for the scheme, which includes provision for between 110 and 250 headcount comprising trainees, apprentices, undergraduate placements, graduate training schemes and post graduate placements; 250 schools outreach events, workshops and presentations; work placements; targeted work placements; and a viable and sustainable ‘Overcoming Barriers to Employment’ programme. A variety of commitments have also been included within the main works contract comprising an Inclusion Action Plan, guaranteed interview scheme for military and care leavers, and active promotion of employment of military leavers, reservists, partners and dependents.
20. Discussions are also ongoing regarding supply chain opportunities for the preliminary works and opportunities for local training. It is intended for a “Meet the Buyer” event to be hosted to promote local supply chain opportunities for the preliminary works. This could include materials and labour provision, but also accommodation and hospitality services etc.

21. HE has established a Benefits Steering Group for the scheme to oversee benefit identification and realisation, which includes representatives from a variety of key stakeholders, including Wiltshire Council. A Community Forum has also been established, which has an independent chair, and comprises elected members, town and parish councils and representatives from community groups.
22. In terms of creating a wider legacy for the scheme, the A303 Stonehenge project has been successful in obtaining Designated Funds to deliver a number of strategies to date including a Connecting Communities study, a Burrowing Mammals Strategy for the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS, a Biodiversity Strategy and an Exploring the WHS and Beyond strategy which considered landscape access, sustainable transport and sustainable tourism. Additional funding has also been secured to deliver eight biodiversity projects which will create biodiversity enhancement and watercourse improvement within Wiltshire.

A303 Stonehenge Scheme Development and Examination

23. Following the statutory public consultation held between 8 February 2018 and 23 April 2018, HE undertook a further supplementary consultation between 17 July 2018 to 14 August 2018 seeking views on three proposed changes to the scheme, being to remove the previously proposed link between Byways 11 and 12 in the WHS, to widen the green bridge proposed near the existing Longbarrow roundabout and to amend the proposed modification of Rollestone crossroads. The consultation also sought to provide further clarification on the various public rights of way proposals.
24. Wiltshire Council responded to the supplementary consultation on 13 August 2018 and whilst supportive of the proposed modification of Rollestone crossroads, the Council did raise concerns relating to the removal of the link between byways 11 and 12 and some of the wider public rights of way proposals. These issues were considered further during the Examination of the scheme.
25. HE submitted the A303 Stonehenge DCO application on 19 October 2018 and it was accepted for Examination on 16 November 2018. To assist with this determination, Wiltshire Council submitted its Adequacy of Community Consultation representation on 2 November 2018, which indicated that on balance HE's consultation was considered adequate in line with Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the 2008 Planning Act.
26. A panel of five inspectors were appointed as the Examining Authority (ExA) to oversee the Examination proceedings. Wiltshire Council submitted its Relevant Representation on the A303 scheme on 11 January 2019. In total, 2,375 submissions were received, which were taken into consideration by the ExA.
27. The DCO Examination commenced on 2 April 2019 and concluded on 2 October 2019. During the course of the Examination, there were twelve

official deadlines for the submission of information to the ExA, with additional submissions also made at the close of Examination. There were eleven issue specific hearings held, as well as a compulsory acquisition hearing and four open floor hearings. Two accompanied site inspections were also undertaken, along with an additional ten unaccompanied site inspections by various members of the ExA. During the Examination, HE undertook a consultation on eight proposed non-material changes to the DCO application between 26 July and 26 August 2019. The ExA accepted these changes into Examination on 27 September 2019.

28. The Examination considered the following principal issues associated with the A303 Stonehenge scheme: agriculture; air quality, dust and other emissions; alternatives; biodiversity, biological environment and ecology; compulsory acquisition; draft Development Consent Order; flood risk, groundwater protection, geology and land contamination; health and wellbeing; heritage and historic environment; landscape and visual effects and design; noise and vibration; socio-economic effects; traffic and transportation; and waste and material management. The ExA also considered climate change effects in its recommendation report.
29. Wiltshire Council participated fully in the DCO Examination. The following notable submissions were made during the course of the Examination: Local Impact Report (18 April 2019), Written Representation (3 May 2019), Addendum to Written Representation (10 May 2019), Legal Submission on Byways AMES 11 and 12 (21 June 2019), Notification of Withdrawal of Proposed DCO Amendments relating to Byways AMES 11 and 12 (9 August 2019), Final Comments on draft DCO, Outline Environmental Management Plan and Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (2 October 2019), Final Statement of Common Ground with Highways England (2 October 2019), and Closing Statement (2 October 2019).
30. As a result of substantial changes made by HE during the Examination in response to issues raised by Wiltshire Council and other key stakeholders, Council officers considered at the close of the Examination that the majority of the concerns outlined in the Local Impact Report (LIR) had been sufficiently mitigated through provisions contained within the draft DCO (dDCO), Outline Environmental Management Plan (OEMP), Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (DAMS) and the Council's Side Agreement with HE.
31. From a cultural heritage perspective, the Council's LIR concluded that the most significant negative impact would be the new dual carriageway and cutting on the western part of the WHS. Following the review of additional photo montages and visualisations produced during the Examination, officers accepted that there would be less of an impact from the Winterbourne Stoke Barrow Group than previously thought; however, concerns remained about the visual impact on the northern part of the Normanton Barrow Group, the Diamond Group and other monuments and their settings within the visibility of the western end of the scheme. Council officers consider it a missed opportunity to significantly reduce this impact through additional cover.

However, it is thought this can be mitigated to some extent by the use of green infrastructure or other design solutions.

32. Furthermore, officers would have preferred for the junction and dumbbell roundabout replacing the existing Longbarrow roundabout to be modified to avoid impacting upon the Oatlands Hill buried archaeological remains, especially the C-shaped enclosure. However, HE could not achieve this due to site constraints. These negative impacts at the western end of the scheme will require mitigation at detailed design stage.
33. Officers were also concerned that the closure of the existing A303 and resultant loss of the travelling motorised public's ability to obtain a passing free view of the Stonehenge monument would increase use of byways AMES 11 and 12 by the travelling motorised public to an inappropriate level. If this concern does arise, the Council's existing Highways Authority powers are sufficient to deal with this and through its Side Agreement with HE, provision has been included for monitoring of traffic within these byways once the Scheme becomes operational (to avoid delays caused by evidence gathering) and for assistance with any costs associated with any resultant Traffic Regulation Orders.
34. Another fundamental concern for Council officers during the Examination was HE being the approving authority for the Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) and other documents / plans. This was considered inappropriate as HE would in effect be a judge in its own cause which may have resulted in actual or perceived bias. Following representations made by the Council, the Secretary of State's approval of these documents will now be sought following consultation with the Council and other key stakeholders.
35. In its closing statement, Wiltshire Council indicated that it considers the A303 Stonehenge scheme would achieve the objectives as set by Highways England and that it would generate benefits in relation to transport, economic growth, cultural heritage and environment, and community.

Secretary of State Consent for the Scheme

36. Following the submission of the ExA's recommendation to the Secretary of State on 2 January 2020, a decision on the scheme was expected by 2 April 2020. However, due to the Secretary of State's need to obtain further information, the decision deadline was extended until 17 July 2020 and then again until 13 November 2020. During this time, the Secretary of State sought additional information and comment on three occasions relating to the proposed Scheme and the recent archaeological finds within the WHS. The Council submitted responses to each consultation.
37. On 12 November 2020, the Secretary of State for Transport decided to make, with modifications, a DCO granting development consent for the proposals in the application.

38. It should be noted that the ExA recommended refusal of the scheme as it determined that the “adverse impacts of the Proposed Development would strongly outweigh its benefits”. These impacts predominantly relate to the historic environment and the landscape and visual amenity.
39. In his decision rationale, the Secretary of State notes that the ExA’s conclusions are “ultimately matters of planning judgement on which there have been differing and informed opinions and evidence submitted to the examination...the ExA’s view on the level of harm being substantial is not supported by the positions of the Applicant, Wiltshire Council, the National Trust, the English Heritage Trust, DCMS and Historic England.” It goes on to state “when considering the impact of the Development as a whole and the mitigation measures to be put in place, the Secretary of State is satisfied that on balance the need case for the Development together with the other benefits identified outweigh any harm”.
40. In line with legislation, whilst there is no right of appeal under the Planning Act 2008, a request for a Judicial Review of the decision can be lodged with the High Court within six-weeks of the date of decision.

Wiltshire Council’s Role and Remit During Scheme Delivery

41. The A303 Stonehenge scheme will be undertaken in two phases, being the preliminary works and main works phases.
42. The main elements of the preliminary works phase will comprise: the archaeological mitigation works; the realignment of Rollestone Crossroads; the diversion of the existing Allington Track and associated modifications to Equinox Drive and byway AMES 1; safety improvements at the Double Hedges junction; and a variety of ecological mitigation works. HE has appointed Osbourne as the civils engineering contractor for the preliminary works and Wessex Archaeology as the archaeological contractor for the scheme. Wiltshire Council Archaeology Service will however be monitoring and approving the archaeological fieldwork and subsequent reporting and publication. Work on site is anticipated to commence in spring 2021.
43. Whilst being progressed as separate packages of work, the utilities connections associated with the scheme, for example to provide power connections to the construction site compounds and tunnel boring machine, will commence in 2021. It should be noted that there could be significant disruptions on the A360 for installation of electricity supply from Wilton to the site near Longbarrow. The ESSO pipeline work is also expected to commence in 2021.

Proposed Delegated Authority Provisions

44. In order to progress matters on behalf of the Council it is proposed that delegated authority should be granted to the Director of Highways and Environment to:

- (i) Continue to input into the scheme by providing consultation responses to the various plans and documents being produced by HE for inclusion within the consultation reports to be considered by the Secretary of State.
- (ii) Negotiate and agree the level of maintenance contributions associated with the de-trunked and local road elements, including public rights of way, of the scheme.
- (iii) Agree the design and construction of the new local roads and rights of way or alterations of existing arising from the scheme.
- (iv) Agree and implement any associated traffic regulation measures arising from or required by the scheme.
- (v) Approve the heritage management plans, site specific written schemes of investigation and method statements for the archaeological mitigation works and to monitor and approve the fieldwork.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

- 45. A Briefing Note on the proposed scheme was provided to the Environment Select Committee in March 2018 in order for it to present its views to the Chairman so that they could be reflected in the Cabinet report on the scheme at the Cabinet meeting on 24 April 2018.
- 46. In addition to the ESC engagement detailed above, regular Stakeholder Engagement Meetings have been held by HE to ensure that local Members are involved in the development of this road scheme. Presentations were also delivered at the relevant Area Board meetings in Amesbury, Mere and Warminster when requested by the Chair.
- 47. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Environment Select Committee were briefed about the scheme on 15 December 2020

Safeguarding Implications

- 48. None.

Public Health and Public Protection Implications

- 49. The A303 Stonehenge scheme will deliver community benefit through the permanent reduction in community severance in Winterbourne Stoke, which will improve social cohesion. The creation of a wider restricted byway network will offer greater opportunities for access to the WHS and wider area for all non-motorised users. The scheme will also reunite the WHS landscape and reduce severance, thereby improving connectivity for walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders.
- 50. The scheme will provide a permanent improvement in access to local employment and training opportunities through improved journey time reliability, which would lead to improved health and wellbeing. The improved access to and within the WHS will also enhance learning and interpretation.

51. It is recognised that there is the potential for noise and vibration and air quality effects arising from construction activities to impact on the health of residents and local workers. However, Council officers consider that the protections contained within the draft DCO and OEMP will ensure appropriate provisions are put in place to minimise any adverse effects as far as possible.

Procurement Implications

52. None.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

53. An Equality Impact Assessment was conducted by HE for the A303 Stonehenge scheme.
54. Whilst this assessment identified a number of likely benefits, it also identified several scheme impacts which may disproportionately impact upon those groups with protected characteristics. These included increased noise levels during construction and operation for some residential properties in the area, which may disproportionately affect children and older people; temporary diversions and closures to public rights of way and footpaths as well as permanent changes to routes which may have a greater impact on people with mobility issues; and potential differential effects for drivers using the network including drivers with disabilities, young people, older people and women (including pregnant women).
55. Council officers consider that through the wealth of mitigation measures included within the OEMP and through the adoption of an inclusive scheme design, these potential adverse effects would be sufficiently minimised.
56. HE will also undertake extensive consultation and engagement activities with affected stakeholders and the local community during scheme delivery. A dedicated Community Relations Manager will be appointed through the main works contractor, and one of the overall responsibilities of this role is to ensure that the needs of groups with protected characteristics are considered during the construction process.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

57. The scheme's environmental and climate change implications have been fully assessed during the DCO Examination. For further information see the A303 Stonehenge National Infrastructure Planning website ([A303 Stonehenge](#)).
58. Wiltshire Council officers consider that there are likely to be permanent beneficial landscape and visual effects in scheme operation due to improved tranquillity, habitat creation and a reduction in landscape severance within the WHS. The creation of additional chalk grassland at Parsonage Down will also support increased populations of a wide range of chalk flora, invertebrates and small mammals. It is considered that there is potential for a net gain for biodiversity. There is also the potential to increase flood risk. The monitoring

and mitigation strategy would be set out in the groundwater management plan, flood risk management plan and associated documents.

59. Whilst the scheme is likely to have some negative impacts during construction, the protections secured within the OEMP relating to the Nile Clumps, temporary compounds, fencing, hoardings, lighting and the production of a preliminary works and main works CEMP, with the commitment to ensure that the effects of multiple CEMPs do not combine to produce adverse effects on biodiversity, mitigate these to a large extent.
60. From a cultural heritage perspective, Council officers consider that the most significant positive impacts will be the removal of the A303 from the immediate setting of Stonehenge and the eastern part of the WHS. It will also remove the existing severance caused by the existing A303 at the centre of the WHS between the proposed portal locations, which will improve the setting of key groups of monuments, which contribute to its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) and improve access and visual connectivity between them. Officers also consider that the proposed new route between Allington Track and Equinox Drive, which includes a diversion of byway AMES 1 to avoid the group of Scheduled Barrows (Ratfyn Barrows) will remove traffic from the immediate vicinity of these Barrows.
61. The greatest concerns for cultural heritage are at the western end of the scheme, which require mitigation at detailed design stage. However, as a result of the Design Vision, Design Principles and Design Commitments contained within the OEMP, officers have assurance that the detailed design will assist with conforming with the overall vision, aims and objectives of the Stonehenge and Avebury WHS Management Plan (2015) and sustain the OUV of the WHS.
62. The DAMS sets out a robust framework for the archaeological mitigation works and through the Council's approval of Site Specific Written Schemes of Investigation (SSWSIs), Heritage Management Plans (HMPs) and Method Statements (MS), officers are confident that this work can be undertaken to their satisfaction.
63. The primary source of policy guidance regarding the assessment of climate change impacts for this scheme are contained in the policies within the National Policy Statement for National Networks (NPSNN). The HE also considered the Wiltshire Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document.
64. The ExA noted that the Environmental Statement assessment addressed the effects on the climate of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions arising from the proposed development and demonstrates that the proposed development's impact as a proportion of total UK carbon emissions would be negligible.
65. The Environmental Statement indicates that the scheme will include mitigation measures to reduce energy consumption and associated carbon emissions during construction, and where practicable measures will be implemented to

use materials with lower embedded GHG emissions, sustainably resourced materials and recycled or secondary materials.

Risk Assessment

66. This is a controversial scheme and there are opposing views held by stakeholders, residents and the wider public. The Council will be required to undertake its role following a thorough assessment of the evidence available and whilst drawing on its considerable knowledge and expertise across a range of service areas.
67. The Secretary of State will approve the majority of plans and documentation associated with the methodology and implementation of this scheme. The Council, along with other key stakeholders and statutory bodies, will be able to provide comment and feedback on these documents during the minimum two rounds of consultation, which will be undertaken by HE, prior to the approval from the Secretary of State being sought. A consultation report will accompany all approval requests to the Secretary of State, which must set out where feedback from a key stakeholder has not been addressed within the submitted documentation.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

68. The Council would not fulfil its statutory obligations as stipulated by the DCO and in its role as the host local authority.

Risk that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

69. The Council will continue to work closely with HE and other key stakeholders to manage the inputs required to deliver the A303 Stonehenge scheme.
70. This scheme has the potential to cause disruption to the local road network, and consequently for residents, businesses and commuters, during its construction period. Robust traffic management arrangements will be put in place and continually monitored to minimise disruption wherever possible.
71. The development and implementation of this scheme will be quite resource intensive for the Council and therefore additional resource will be allocated or secured as necessary utilising the agreed funding from HE and the proposed A303 budget.
72. Members will be regularly updated at key stages of the A303 Stonehenge implementation programme.

Financial Implications

73. A recurring budget of £300,000 has previously been included within the Highways budget to cover the additional resource requirements for this programme until 2020/21. Additionally, the Council entered into a Planning

Performance Agreement with HE for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20 to enable it to reclaim a proportion of its resource costs associated with those aspects of scheme development, which were over and above that which the Council would normally expend on a road improvement scheme.

74. Following the Secretary of State's consent for the scheme's DCO, the Council will incur additional resource implications associated with the scheme's delivery. It is proposed that the existing £300,000 budget is continued until 2026/27 to cover these anticipated resource implications. The A303 budget would continue to be held within the Highways budget.
75. During the course of the DCO examination, the Council negotiated and entered into a Side Agreement with HE, which provides a legal framework for the Council to reclaim those costs associated with the assessment and agreement of the scheme's impact on the local roads network, including the associated contribution for ongoing maintenance. This agreement also includes provision for additional archaeological resource due to the extensive archaeological mitigation works proposed for the scheme, which the Council will oversee and approve.
76. A Section 8 agreement under the Highways Act has also been put in place with HE which provides a mechanism for the Council to undertake work on HE's behalf through its term contract providers. Any agreed expenditure for work undertaken through this agreement would be reimbursed by HE.

Legal Implications

77. It is HE that is the lead body in the application for a DCO. The role of the Council within this process is as a statutory consultee (and one of the principal consultees).
78. As well as its role as a consultee the Council is also the local highway authority and will become responsible for the sections of road de-trunked in connection with the scheme and the new roads provided under the Preliminary Works contracts.
79. The DCO process is designed to be a one stop process for addressing all of the various regulatory requirements that will normally accompany a significant infrastructure project. Those regulatory requirements also include matters for which the Council has oversight including as Land Drainage Authority, Local Planning Authority (including cultural and heritage) Highway Authority, and principle authority for the area etc.
80. In this case after a detailed examination the Secretary of State has made the Development Consent Order on 12 November 2020 which provides the framework to ensure that these regulatory requirements can be complied with.

81. The details provided and delegations sought within this report are consistent with the Development Consent Order as made and will allow the Council to carry out its operational regulatory functions based on the specialist professional judgment, knowledge and skills of the various services within the Council in an efficient and effective way and is consistent with the Council's constitution.

Workforce Implications

82. The A303 Stonehenge scheme requires input from a variety of Council services and disciplines. A multi-discipline team is in place comprising representatives from highways, archaeology, landscape, ecology, public rights of way, flood and drainage, network management, legal, development management, public protection, community engagement, communications, finance, employment and skills and the corporate programme office.
83. Additional resources and specialist input may be required during scheme implementation and to ensure that the full benefits of the scheme are embedded and realised.
84. Upon receipt of the scheme's detailed delivery programme from HE, the full anticipated resources requirements will be ascertained and secured to ensure that the Council's obligations can be met.

Options Considered

85. None.

Conclusions

86. The case for dualling the A303 between Amesbury and Berwick Down has long been established through promoting economic growth in the South West, increasing safety, improving connectivity with neighbouring regions and protecting and enhancing the environment.
87. Wiltshire Council participated fully in the DCO Examination. As a result of substantial changes made by HE during the Examination in response to issues raised by Wiltshire Council and other key stakeholders, Council officers considered at the close of the Examination that the majority of the concerns outlined in the LIR had been sufficiently mitigated through provisions contained within the dDCO, Outline Environmental Management Plan (OEMP), Detailed Archaeological Mitigation Strategy (DAMS) and the Council's Side Agreement with HE.
88. The Council will continue to input into the scheme by providing consultation responses to the various plans and documents being produced by HE for inclusion within the consultation report to be considered by the Secretary of State.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Date of report: 5 January 2021

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices

None

**Wiltshire Council
Cabinet
5 January 2021**

Subject: Procurement of framework contract for temporary agency staff

Cabinet Member: Cllr Richard Clewer Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities

Key Decision: Key

Executive Summary

The council's current contract for the supply of agency staff was awarded in 2017 for three years plus an optional extension year. The extension year was utilised in 2019 giving a contract end date of 21 September 2021.

The tender will be run against an Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) framework that replaced the one under which we previously procured the current temporary agency contract.

The requirement has been designed to assist the council in managing its temporary worker requirements as efficiently and effectively as possible, as well as mitigating any risks of fines associated with using personal services companies, commonly known as IR35. This risk is in relation to the proper payments of taxes due to HMRC based on their status in relation to employment rather than contracted services.

Proposal

This report recommends that Cabinet agree the following proposals:

1. That officers continue to undertake the tender programme, award and implement a new contract to replace the existing contract expiring on 21 September 2021.
2. That following this tender programme, that Cabinet delegate the subsequent authority to award a new contract for a duration of three years with an optional additional extension year, with a total estimated value of £24 million to the Director for HR&OD following consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance and the Director for Legal & Governance.
3. That Cabinet delegate the authority to approve any subsequent optional extension periods to the Director for HR&OD, subject to satisfactory performance and following appropriate consultation with the Cabinet member for Finance and the Director for Legal and Governance.

Reason for Proposal

The Council has an ongoing requirement for temporary agency staff to deliver its business and a contract to ensure a supply of temporary agency staff meets this need.

**Terence Herbert
Chief Executive**

Subject: Procurement of Framework contract for temporary agency staff

Cabinet Member: Cllr Richard Clewer Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Heritage, Arts & Tourism, Housing and Communities

Key Decision: Key

Purpose of Report

1. To seek Cabinet approval to proceed with a procurement for the supply of temporary agency staff, and following this procurement process, to delegate the award of the subsequent contract and potential extension (if utilised) in line with the proposal set out in this report.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. A contract to manage the council's temporary agency supply will support all Business Plan outcomes as agency workers provide the council with the people resources to deliver services where there are gaps in the established workforce.
3. We anticipate that as part of the organisational recovery programme the use of agency staff will reduce as we are better able to deploy our own workforce in a more flexible and agile way and use new approaches to ensure an improved internal supply of resource to fill current "hard to fill" roles in the future.

Main Considerations for the Council

4. The Council is required to re-tender for a Managed Service Provider (MSP) to supply its entire temporary labour and where required the MSP will source permanent employees that if engaged by the council i.e. pass probation, will be subject to a fixed fee. Conversion of temporary labour to permanent will incur no fees.
5. The award of a new contract will secure access to a service for the planned use of temporary workers that provides the council with workforce flexibility whilst delivering best value for money.
6. Any future solution will need to integrate with the new ERP system which is likely to be implemented end 2022/early 2023.
7. The Council has a current vendor neutral solution with Matrix which was awarded through MSTAR (Managed Services for Temporary Agency Resources). A vendor neutral solution is one in which the supplying agency does not directly supply/employ the temporary staff, but sources them from other agencies, maximising access to the supply chain. The current contract with Matrix is due to expire September 2021.

8. The main considerations in the procurement of a new contract are to;
 - a. Provide a simple to use, efficient and compliant portal for managers that need to hire high quality temporary workers.
 - b. Secure high-quality management information to enable the council to manage its temporary staff requirements, working with the successful supplier.
 - c. Build in the ability to integrate information from the provider's system with our current SAP and going forward any new ERP solution to ensure we can provide a holistic overview of total workforce costs.
 - d. Enable an effective competition, the details of what is required need to be clear and as accurate as possible and where relevant include the necessary statistics for role usage to enable projections for future temporary labour requirements.
 - e. Direct all agency, spend through the framework wherever possible and appropriate to continue to keep 'off-contract' spend to the absolute minimum.
 - f. Ensure services are resourced at a level that maintains service delivery balanced with the financial impact of Covid-19 and reduced funding from Central Government.
 - g. Address internal constraints of, for example, recruitment freezes.
 - h. Continue to support and develop the local economy using SMEs (small and medium enterprises).
 - i. Provide scope to enable temporary agency to permanent employment conversion without incurring significant fees.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

9. A briefing will be offered to the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Financial Planning Task Group prior to Cabinet, and their comments will be reported at the Cabinet meeting.

Safeguarding Implications

10. The specification used for the procurement of the new contract will include clear requirements to adhere to the Council's safeguarding policies and procedures for the supply of all temporary agency workers to the council.
11. The requirement will include the audit of all agencies used by the MSP in the supply of temporary agency workers to ensure that the council's safeguarding policies and procedures are met. There was also a requirement to outline the processes involved should any agency fail an audit.

Public Health Implications

12. None

Procurement Implications

13. It is proposed that the procurement is processed as a further competition through the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) framework for Managed Services for Temporary Agency Resources (MSTAR) reference 653F_19.
14. The benefits of this methodology are as follows:
- a. The pre-selection of suppliers has already been completed, meaning the suppliers on the framework have been pre-qualified as meeting the minimum capacity and capability for the contract. This also reduces the resource for the Council to carry out these checks internally.
 - b. The framework submissions include capped hourly rates for the job roles required, meaning that excessive hourly rates have already been removed from the process. As this framework is available to multiple public sector agencies there are also anticipated cost benefits from aggregation of demand.
 - c. This methodology allows the Council to complete a competitive process that is compliant with Wiltshire Council policy under the constitution for competition and compliant with the Council's obligations regarding procurement law under PCR 2015.
 - d. This methodology allows for timescales and resources to be applied effectively, as the minimum timescales under PCR 2015 for open or restricted procedures do not apply, and the framework provider has designed templates to allow efficient competition to take place with support throughout the process as required.
15. This requirement will pass Gateway 1 approval processes via Commercial Board, chaired by the corporate director of resources prior to issue.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

16. Equality and diversity are embedded throughout the ESPO MSTAR2 framework and suppliers must reflect this requirement within their tenders. By signing up to the framework, MSPs and consequently all agencies supplying temporary labour to the council will have to agree to the equality and diversity requirements set out within the framework agreement. This addresses our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirements under the Equality Act.
17. On-going contract management will also address any equality and diversity considerations when relevant to ensure the Council's obligations under the PSED are met.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

18. None are considered to apply.

Risk assessment

19. No risks identified.

Financial Implications

20. There has been a continued business need under a contractual arrangement over the previous three years for temporary agency labour with spend levels as detailed below:
- a. The average monthly category spend on agency is £418,000 for 2020/2021
 - b. Category spend on Agency of £6,370,000 for financial year 2019/20
 - c. Category Spend on Agency of £8,000,000 for financial year 2018/19
 - d. Category spend on agency of £4,730,000 for financial year 2017/18

Legal Implications

21. A robust procurement process (which is PCR 2015 compliant) should take place under the ESPO framework - with the council's legal department engaged to support the strategic procurement hub on this procurement.
22. A legal review of the ESPO framework and its terms and conditions should take place. It should be noted that the terms and conditions of the framework are mandatory for use for in a future contract. However, there remains the ability for the Council to add specific clauses and schedules that meet its specific needs. A final internal legal review should be requested on completion of these specific additions prior to contract award.

Workforce Implications

23. Under the Council's organisational recovery programme, the aim is to increase the agility and flexibility of the Council's workforce to enable us to more effectively deploy staff, meet business requirement and to fill vacancies internally wherever possible.
24. In addition, activity is already taking place to implement "grow your own" schemes in areas where we find it most difficult to recruit and retain experienced staff (e.g. social care) which is where our reliance on agency staff (75% of all agency placements are within social care) is currently highest.
25. Longer term we anticipate this may reduce agency spend and any procurement will need to ensure that this is built into our approach. However, we are likely to always have some reliance on agency staff to deliver business critical services.
26. The hiring of agency workers is often needed when there are business critical resource issues (e.g., social work - 47% of agency placements are within children's social care and 28% within adult social care) and lack of capacity within the permanent workforce. Without an MSP in place, there is the potential for delays in the hiring process, impacting on delivery of services and on the health and well-being of the permanent workforce.

Options Considered

Do Nothing

27. Doing nothing is not a viable option at this time as this will lead to the expiry of the existing contract in September 2021 with no service to replace it. Without the provision of this service the Council would be required to source individual

temporary staff on an ad hoc basis. This will lead to greater use of internal resource to manage many more contracts, lack of consistency, reduced value for money, and could result in breach of procurement regulations by the disaggregation of spend.

Wiltshire Council procurement

28. It is possible for the Council to proceed based on bespoke procurement rather than utilising a public sector framework to compliantly source this service. However, this type of process would require additional resource from both HR&OD and the strategic procurement hub. This would also add considerable time to the process as PCR 2015 minimum timescales would need to be followed and there would likely be a very high interest from suppliers which would need to be effectively managed. It would also not benefit from the advantages set out in procurement implications above.

ESPO Procurement

29. As outlined in the “procurement” section above there are significant benefits to following a compliant route via the ESPO framework. This route is therefore recommended.

Joanne Pitt
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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2020/21 Q1-2, 6 Month Report

Cabinet Member: Cllr Laura Mayes Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills

Key Decision: Non Key

Executive Summary

It is a statutory requirement that the Families and Children's Service provides regular assurance reports to the Council regarding its responsibility for the adoption of children. The main mechanism is the provision of the annual year-end report which is supported by a brief six-month update report relating to Quarters 1 and 2 of the financial year.

For this reporting period, the main area of focus is in relation to the Service and outcomes for Wiltshire's children who need to be adopted, ensuring that appropriate matches are made and that children move to live with their adoptive families in a timely way. In doing this, it is necessary to consider the effectiveness of Adoption West, the partnership organisation that has responsibility for recruiting, assessing and approving adopters for our children.

As indicated in the Annual Report for the year 2019/20, 22 adoption orders were granted, and 21 families living in Wiltshire were approved as suitable to adopt, 85 in the overall Adoption West area. In Quarters 1-2 of 2020/21, 12 adoption orders were granted, 9 Wiltshire children were placed for adoption and overall 12 families were approved as suitable to adopt. A further 2 children have been matched at matching panel in October and November.

Wiltshire Council remains committed to achieving best outcomes for children in care, including those for whom adoption is considered to be in their best interest. There is a close working relationship with Adoption West, the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) that was launched on 1st March 2019. Adoption West is a partnership organisation working with six local authorities.

Annual comparative performance is measured using the Adoption Scorecard which, for Wiltshire Council, shows overall continued improvement and is included within this report for information.

The 2019/20 Annual Report described continuing good progress in developing the collaborative arrangements to ensure effective adoption practice and to improve overall adoption performance.

The Ofsted inspection of Wiltshire Council Families and Children's Services carried out in June 2019, graded as Good in all domains, said:

"The arrangements for finding children adoptive parents are a strength. The new relationship with Adoption West...is working well and has been seamless for both children and carers. Children in Wiltshire are waiting less time than ever to move in with their adoptive family. The scrutiny of the performance of the RAA [Regional Adoption Agency] is thorough and challenging."

Cabinet has previously received detailed information regarding Adoption West and the role, responsibility and accountability arrangements that are in place.

Proposal(s)

It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and accepted.

Reason for Proposal(s)

Wiltshire Council is an Adoption Agency registered with Ofsted. The 2014 Adoption Minimum Standards (25.6) and 2013 Statutory Guidance (3.93 and 5.39) describe the information that is required to be regularly reported to the executive side of the local authority to provide assurance that the adoption agency is complying with the conditions of registration whilst being effective and achieving good outcomes for children and service users.

**Chief Executive
Terence Herbert**

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

5 January 2021

Subject: Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2020/21 Q1-2, 6 Month Report

Cabinet Member: Cllr Laura Mayes Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills

Key Decision: Non Key

Purpose of Report

1. This report provides an interim six-month report to Cabinet regarding adoption performance within the Families and Children's Service of Wiltshire Council. It is a requirement of the condition of registration as described in 2014 Adoption Minimum Standards and 2013 Statutory Guidance that Cabinet is satisfied that the Service complies with the conditions of registration, is effective and is achieving good outcomes for children.
2. Cabinet received the Annual Report for 2019-20 in July 2020, covering the period from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.
3. For this interim reporting period, the main area of focus is in relation to the Service and outcomes for Wiltshire's children who need to be adopted, ensuring that appropriate matches are made and that children move to live with their adoptive families in a timely way. In doing this, it is necessary to consider the effectiveness of Adoption West, the partnership organisation that has responsibility for recruiting, assessing and approving adopters for our children.
4. This report includes brief information regarding the management of the Service, children who require adoptive placements and those who are placed, the recruitment and approval of adopters, the disruption of placements, children where the plan for adoption changes and the work of the Adoption Panel. This includes information about the effectiveness of Adoption West.
5. It is recommended that the contents of this report are noted and accepted.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

6. The adoption work of Wiltshire Council Families and Children's Service supports a central priority of the Wiltshire Council Business Plan, to protect those who are most vulnerable. Two specific actions are:
 - To develop an outstanding Adoption Service for all children for whom adoption is in their best interest, and

- To work with voluntary sector partners to ensure that we offer and deliver a comprehensive array of adoption support services.
7. Adoption West became an Ofsted registered Adoption Agency in October 2018 and became fully operational in March 2019. The responsibility for care planning and casework for the child remains with the local authority. All activity relating to the recruitment, assessment and approval of adoptive parents is with Adoption West. The matching of children with adopters happens at Adoption West Adoption panels with reporting and attendance required of Wiltshire Council children's social workers. The Wiltshire Agency Decision maker has the final say for children's matches.

Main Considerations for the Council

8. The main consideration for the Council is to be assured about statutory compliance and the effectiveness of the Service. In 2019/20 22 children were adopted (it was 33 in the previous year and 22 in the year before that). Of these, 6 (27%) were placed within 12 months of the decision that adoption was in their best interest being made. In 2019/20 84 families were approved as suitable to adopt by Adoption West. A focus is maintained on ensuring a sufficiency of adopters to meet the needs of Wiltshire's children with any Adoption West approved family being potentially available to be considered.
9. In Quarters 1-2, 12 children were adopted, of whom (83%) were placed within 12 months of the decision being made that adoption was in their best interest. In this time, 12 families were approved as suitable to adopt. On average, 25 children have been adopted each year over the past 3 years and so on this basis, that average will be met again in 2020/21. The current score card shows Wiltshire is at the lower end of the statistical neighbour range.
10. Wiltshire's current Adoption Scorecard, published in 2020, is available on-line. The key measure indicating timely outcomes for children being adopted are:

A1: the average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family, for children who have been adopted:

- The local authority three-year average for 2016-19 is **314** days (2015-18 was **397** days). This is significantly shorter than the England three-year average for 2016-19 of **376** days. The Scorecard shows steady improvement over time.
- The local authority figure for 2019 is **289** days, down from **342** days in the previous year.
- The Statistical Neighbour three-year average is **348** days and the 2019 average is **289** days.
- Local monitoring indicates that this performance measure has declined in 2020-21 and now stands at **423** for the year to date and **366** for the period 2018-21.

A2: the average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family:

- The local authority three-year average for 2016-19 is **154** days (2015-18 was **173** days). This is less than the England three-year average for 2016-19 of **178** days. The Scorecard shows steady improvement over time.
- The local authority one-year figure for 2019 is **100** days, the same as in 2018-19. In 2017-18 the figure was **132** days.
- The Statistical Neighbour three-year average is **173** days and the 2019 average is **176** days.
- Local monitoring indicates that performance has remained stable in 2020-21 and now stands at **156** for the year to date and **123** for the period 2018-21.

A3: the number of children who waited less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family:

- This is no longer reported upon in the Scorecard.
- In the three-year period 2015-18, there were **76%** (99) of children who waited less than 14 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family. This remained at the same level as in the previous cycle. The last time this data was published in the adoption scorecard, the England three-year average (2015-18) was **56%**.

11. It is important to recognise the reason for the increase of the A1 measure in Q1-2. As has been reported in previous annual and interim reports, Wiltshire Council is ambitious for children who cannot remain living safely with their families and need to have legal permanence through adoption. This means that where we are sure that the plan for adoption is right, we will continue to search for an adoptive family. In this reporting period, the number of children in this overall cohort is small so there is disproportionate impact on performance when it takes longer to identify adopters for these children. The cohort of 12 children includes sibling groups aged 6 and 4, 3 and 1, 8 and 3 and a 10 year old. This shows that a relatively high proportion of harder to place children affects the measure; once these children are adopted, we will see the measure improving over time once again. There have also been some court delays due to the closure of Courts and the delayed submission of specialist reports because of the Covid-19 pandemic, meaning that for some children Care Orders, Placement Orders and Adoption Orders have not been made in a timely fashion, all three orders having a direct bearing on his measure. This situation is now improving and will be monitored for continuing impact; full analysis of this will be included in the Annual Report for 2020/21 as the pandemic and its impact continues.

12. There is robust tracking of children (both within the local authority and Adoption West) who require decisions that they Should be Placed for Adoption, through to family finding, matching and the application for Adoption Order. This occurs monthly within the local authority and no recent significant unreasonable delays have been identified. We can see that early family finding is identifying adoptive families quickly, that transitions are happening when required and that adopters are not inappropriately waiting before they make the Adoption Order application.

13. The increased number of adoptive families being found for children across the Adoption West area is encouraging (85 families approved in 2019-20, an increase from 65 in the previous year). It remains challenging within Adoption West (and the wider region) to maintain the pool of families who want to adopt children, particularly siblings, and so it is an Adoption West priority to formulate and implement an effective recruitment strategy. The national trend is a slow increase of adopter numbers. Adoption West works nationally with other RAAs and the RAA Leaders' Group regarding national campaigning to recruit more adopters for children.
14. Processes are strongly embedded to ensure that family finding starts at the earliest opportunity and that all activities are monitored and completed in a timely fashion. Adoption West has family finding practitioners within the organisation, recognising and building on best practice and delivering good outcomes for Wiltshire's children and those across the Adoption West area.
15. The full Scorecard is as follows:

Select LA:

Wiltshire

Select indicator(s) to display on graph:

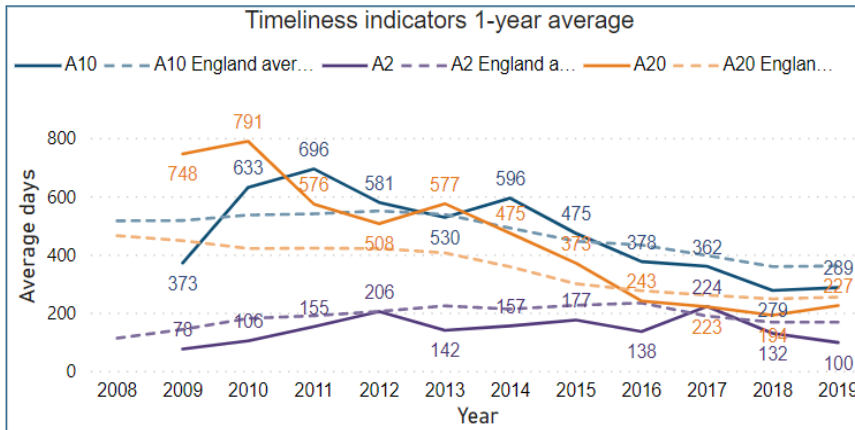
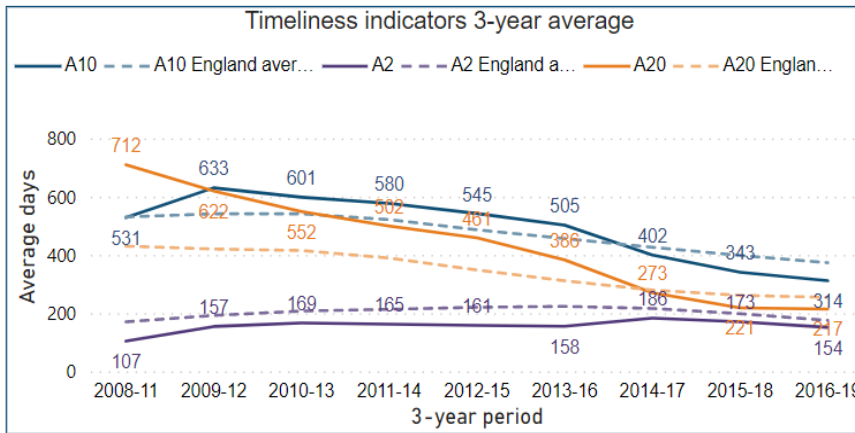
- Select all
- A10
- A10 England average
- A2
- A2 England average
- A20
- A20 England average

Select indicator(s) to display on graph:

- Select all
- A10
- A10 England average
- A2
- A2 England average
- A20
- A20 England average

RAA this LA is in:
(Blank)

Local Authority (LA): Timeliness Indicators



A10: Average time (in days) between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family adjusted for foster care adoptions:

2019 average days:	2019 England average:	Average time in 2019 was longer than in 2018	2016-19 average days:	2016-19 England average:
289	363		314	376

A2: Average time (in days) between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family:

2019 average days:	2019 England average:	Average time in 2019 was shorter than in 2018	2016-19 average days:	2016-19 England average:
100	170		154	178

A20: Average time (in days) between entering care and placement order:

2019 average days:	2019 England average:	Average time in 2019 was longer than in 2018	2016-19 average days:	2016-19 England average:
227	256		217	257

Matching and Recruitment (at 31 March 2019)

A14: Number of children waiting to be placed with a placement order:	12
A11: Number of approved adoptive families waiting to be matched:	20
A13: Number of applications of adoptive families still being assessed:	25

Please see ASGLB local level files for further adopter measures. Where a LA is part of a RAA they will show as N/A for the A11 and A13 indicators.

Related information - 2019

A15: Number of ADM decisions:	A16: Number of new placement orders granted:	A17: Number of children in a FFA/Concurrent Planning foster placement:
29	26	c

Additional information - 2016-19

A5: Number of children for whom permanence decisions have changed away from adoption:	Number of adoptions:	Number of adoptions: BME:	Number of adoptions: Aged 5 or over:	Number of children starting to be looked after: Under the age of 5
9	89	c	17	186

16. Wiltshire Council Families and Children's Service retains responsibility for the children who need adoptive families. Each child has an allocated Social Worker with responsibility of ensuring that the plan for permanence through adoption is achieved whilst it remains appropriate for the child. There are robust management and reviewing arrangements in place for each child.
17. Management arrangements and staffing within Adoption West and the Local Authority have remained broadly as described in the Annual Report and are compliant with regulation in terms of qualification and experience. A Service Director leads Adoption West, supported by a Service Manager, Business Manager and Team Managers working in each of the three hubs.
18. Three aspects of services are delivered by Adoption West in relation to Wiltshire Council's children:
- The recruitment, preparation, training and approval of adopters
 - The provision of Adoption Support, including through the Adoption Support Fund
 - The matching of children with adopters (carried out in conjunction with the child's Social worker)
19. In addition, Adoption West is responsible for providing an intermediary service for adopted adults and birth relatives wishing to trace family members, for those wishing to trace adopted children, support for non-agency adoptions (typically step-parents wishing to adopt), and those wishing to adopt children from overseas. This will include people who live in Wiltshire.
20. Adoption West has its own governance arrangement. There is a Board of Directors in place, an Adoption West Scrutiny Board and a Service Leads Group. The agency has its own development plan.
21. The key objectives as described in the Adoption West Statement of purpose are:
- More children will be identified earlier for an adoption plan
 - We will recruit a larger pool of adopters with diverse skills and abilities including more adoptive parents able to consider "hard to place" children
 - Fewer children will wait more than 6 months for an adoptive family
 - Children will experience fewer moves before being settled into a permanent home
 - Our adopters will be better prepared with relevant training and support
 - There will be fewer disrupted adoptions
 - We will be more efficient with our resources to achieve best value
 - An increased range of post-adoption services will reach more adoptive families to improve the quality of family relationships
 - Children and young people will have a strong sense of their identity.

22. As required to be provided to Cabinet, brief performance information and commentary relating to Quarters 1-2 in 2020 is as follows:

Profile of children waiting for an adoptive placement (at end of period)

Legal status	2018/19	2019/20	Q 1-2 2020/21
Section 20	0	7	3
Interim Care Order	19	5	9
Care Order	0	5	0
None	2	0	3
Total	21	17	15

Ethnic Origin	2018/19	2019/20	Q 1-2 2020/21
White British	20	16	9
Mixed/Other	0	0	0
White Irish	0	0	0
Other Ethnic Group	1	1	6
Total	21	17	15

Age	2018/19	2019/20	Q 1-2 2020/21
0-11 months	3	3	2
12-23 months	2	1	4
2-4 years	6	7	4
5-10 years	10	6	5
11 and over	0	0	0
Total	21	17	15

23. To be noted is that some children may have remained at home with birth family whilst subject to care proceedings with a care plan for adoption. For those children, other permanence options (such as Special Guardianship Orders) will be considered by the court. In this reporting period 3 children ended up subject to Special Guardianship Orders.

Wiltshire Children adopted

Age	2018/19	2019/20	Q 1-2 2020/21
0-11 months	4	2	1
12-23 months	15	12	4
2-4 years	9	6	3
5-10 years	5	2	4
11 and over	0	0	0
Total	33	22	12

Rescissions of Placement Orders and Disruptions

24. In 2019-20, 5 rescissions were made where the plan for the child moved away from adoption, leading to the rescission of Adoption and Placement Orders. Wiltshire Council applies rigorous scrutiny to care planning and it is inevitable that there will be developments in a case or a child's situation that means that adoption is no longer in that child's best interest; this does not mean that an incorrect decision

was initially made about the care plan but that situations change over time. For example, a family member or parent can resume the care of a child where it had not previously been envisaged, a court may not grant a Placement Order but make a Special Guardianship Order instead or a plan will move to long term fostering, particularly for older children. In Q1-2, 2 rescissions were made and there are a further 3 children who are currently in this rescission process. Of these children 3 will live with family members under Special Guardianship Orders and 2 will be in long term fostering arrangements. This is broadly in line with previous years, reflecting a continuing ambition for Wiltshire's children, and more detail will be included in the annual report. The rescissions do not impact upon the scorecard measures as the children do not meet the definitions of the cohorts.

25. During 2019-20, there were no adoption placement disruptions notified to the Council before an Adoption Order was made. In Q1-2, there have been no disruptions.
26. Details of the recruitment and assessment activity of Adoption West is available in their Annual Report and so is not included here. However, Cabinet requires assurance of sufficiency for Wiltshire children and so, in summary, at 31st March 2020, Adoption West had approved 84 families in the year of which 21 lived in the Wiltshire area. In Q1-2, a further 14 families were approved as suitable to adopt with 26 families currently in assessment through the Trowbridge hub. As indicated above, the challenge is to find adopters for older children and siblings and so this must be reflected in the Adoption West adopter recruitment strategy.
27. One principle of Adoption West is that there will be more people becoming approved as adopters who are more immediately accessible to social workers looking for families for Wiltshire children. It is not necessarily the case that these children will be placed with adopters living in Wiltshire as the match with the family best placed to provide permanence through adoption, and meet the needs of the child, is paramount. The wider access to adopters will support children where there are concerns about the proximity of birth parents and families to adopters' homes. It is nationally recognised that it is more challenging to find placements for children with complex needs, older children and sibling groups and so a larger pool of prospective adopters, who Adoption West knows well, is a benefit.
28. There were 6 Wiltshire children with Placement Orders waiting for placements at the end of Q2. Of these, a sibling group of two (waiting a year) plus two one-year olds will be matched at Panel in November. Another child has a potential link with an adopter. Of the remaining two children, one is aged seven and had been waiting for a year and one is two and has been waiting six months. These situations are regularly reviewed through the child's review and Permanency Options Meetings to ensure that decisions remain appropriate and in the best interest of the child.

Financial summary of the agency

29. The 2019/20 financial summary of the Adoption Service within Wiltshire Council was reported to Cabinet in the last Annual Report. The annual summary for 2020/21 will be reported to Cabinet in the Annual Report to be presented in July 2021. The table below indicates the current budget for the financial year 2020/21:

Adoption Team	2020/21 Budget (£)	Actuals to 30th Sept 2020 (P6)	2020/21 Forecast (£)	2020/21 Forecast variance (£)

Contract Value with Adoption West	764,960	0	764,960	(32,740)
Adoption Support	329,750	141,597	350,000	20,250
Adoption Allowances	368,590	147,125	334,020	(34,570)
Residence Orders	87,520	29,548	68,653	(18,867)
Special Guardianship Allowances	1,833,190	890,888	2,086,233	253,043
Adoption income (from interagency placements)	0	(41,333)	(41,333)	(41,333)
Total	3,384,010	1,167,825	3,562,533	145,783

30. The net overspend in the table above largely relates to an overspend on Special Guardianship Allowances. The number of such orders has grown over recent years and the complexity of the children and their support needs is reflected in the allowances that are paid. (All such plans require agreement from a senior manager before implementation and are subject to regular review to ensure that they remain required and appropriate.) This includes transitional payment arrangements where guardians who have previously been approved as foster carers receive payments that reflect fostering allowances which then reduce over time.

31. With effect from 1st April 2019, there has been a contract for services with Adoption West which is currently managed by the appropriate Director and scrutinised internally and through the work of the Board of Governors and the Scrutiny Board. It provides value to the Council by ensuring that adoptive families are found for Wiltshire Council's children, utilising the increased options for family finding presented by Adoption West.

32. Adoption Panel

	2018/19 (Wiltshire)	2019/20 (Adoption West)	Q 1-2 2020 (Adoption West)
No. Panels held	18	56	66
Adoptive families considered	26	30	84 approved of which 21 live in Wiltshire
Matches considered	32 (24 Wiltshire children and 8 from other AW local authorities)	90 (21 Wiltshire children)	105 (25 Wiltshire children)
Relinquished Children	0	0	0
Reviews of Adopters notified	0	0	0

36. Adoption Panels are fully within the remit of Adoption West. As indicated in the Annual Report, the Adoption Panel complied with Regulation: appraisals for members have been held and Adoption West Training days are implemented. Panel matching and suitability recommendations are

considered by the local authority and Adoption West Agency Decision Makers (ADM) respectively. Arrangements are robust within Wiltshire Council as there is a rota of three ADMs.

Next Steps and Recommendations

37. As can be seen from the scorecard, overall performance trajectories have remained positive following the implementation of Adoption West in March 2019. To continue the positive outcomes for Wiltshire children who require adoptive families, actions were indicated within the Annual Report and these continue to be relevant and will be reviewed at the time of the Annual Report. Additional measures are needed to manage the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic:
- Continue to robustly track the adoption journeys for Wiltshire's children to ensure that the impact of Covid-19 is recognised and reduced in terms of adoption delay for children, liaising with the courts, including the Children's Guardians, where necessary to mitigate against delay
 - Recognising the performance of A1, ensure that the Adoption West adopter recruitment strategy recognises the need for adopters who can look after older children and sibling groups, including those of older children
 - Use a range of management and performance information to track the effectiveness of adoption practice in terms of children requiring adoptive families to be confident that the work the Families and Children's Service and the partnership with Adoption West has positive impact on outcomes for Wiltshire's children
 - Through the Board of Directors and the Service Leads Group, maintain a high level of involvement and challenge with Adoption West; meeting the needs of Wiltshire's children through ensuring good matching and support of adopters
 - Use the scrutiny and challenge of the Adoption West Joint Scrutiny Panel to improve outcomes for Wiltshire's children
 - Regularly convene operational and strategic meetings between Council staff and Adoption West staff regarding the decision-making processes for children
 - Have an officer within the Senior Management Team of the Families and Children's Service to be the lead on adoption and to be the link manager to Adoption West
 - Through specific discussion and regular liaison meetings, continually work with the local judiciary to further improve the way that the courts deal with care cases in a timely manner, recognising the potential delays for children where additional family members (sometimes multiple) may be considered as carers late in proceedings or where additional assessments are indicated
 - Provide Early Permanence placements for our children via Adoption West
 - Work closely with Adoption West to ensure proactive and effective family finding practice to bring about timely identification of potential adoptive matches for children who require adoption

- Provide training, led by Adoption West, for children's social workers in writing Child Permanence Reports which are used in court, to match children to adopters and to be the central component of their life story
- Hold Adoption West to account to ensure a sufficiency of adopters who can meet the diverse needs of the population of children requiring adoption in Wiltshire. A strong pool of approved adopters allows matching to begin early in the process, often before a Placement Order is made.
- In cases where it is recognised that the agency may struggle to match children with in-house prospective adopters, request Court consent to feature the children's profiles beyond Wiltshire's boundaries and, through Adoption West, be pro-active in referring children to regional and national family finding services once a Placement Order has been granted (sooner with the consent of the court)
- Ensure that where required and appropriate, match funding is applied to ASF applications to provide high quality support to adoptive families
- Hold formal Disruption Meetings where adoption placements breakdown before Adoption Orders are made to consider key learning to inform whole service improvement.

Background

38. The Wiltshire Council Families and Children's Service provides permanency for children who are no longer able to live safely with their parents or other family members. This may be achieved through several routes, one being the provision of quality adoptive placements for children who live in Wiltshire and where a decision has been made that adoption is in their best interest. These adoptive families are assessed and approved by Adoption West.
39. The fundamental requirement of the Service is that children are placed with families who have been assessed as being suitable to adopt. A recommendation of suitability is made by the Adoption West Panel and this is ratified as a decision by the Agency Decision Maker (ADM). Through this process, there is rigorous assurance that approved adopters can provide safe, secure and enduring family placements for this vulnerable group of children. This allows the children to grow, develop and thrive in a nurturing, supportive and loving family environment, removed from the stigma of being Looked After by the local authority.
40. To do this, there must be an appropriate range of enduring adoption placements to meet the assessed needs of children who need permanent adoptive families. These families must promote stability, safety and positive outcomes for children by working in partnership with all agencies as required.
41. The legislative basis of this work is the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the accompanying 2005 Regulations. Adoption West is the Regional Adoption Agency; Wiltshire retains the functions of an Adoption Agency that relate directly to children's planning.
42. The local authority, through reporting to Cabinet, must be assured of regulatory compliance and effectiveness through performance monitoring, challenge and improvement planning.

43. The Families and Children's Service, working in partnership with Adoption West, continues to provide adopters for infants and younger children. Through a programme of recruitment, Adoption West maintains the pool of adopters, including for those who can provide permanence for children who may be considered "harder to place". This group includes older children, sibling groups and children with disabilities. Adoption West is part of the South West Adoption Consortium (SWAC) which works regionally to identify matches for children across the area. Adoption West subscribes to Link Maker, a national online adopter-lead resource to help adopters be linked with children.

44. Adoption West is a Regional Adoption Agency involving six local authorities and a small number of locally operating Voluntary Adoption Agencies. This provides a single Adoption Agency for the region in line with government requirement. Adoption West will have significant impact on outcomes for Wiltshire's children as it will deliver a more effective regional response to adoption and the needs of children.

Safeguarding Implications

45. The adoption of children is carried out within the Families and Children's Service, in conjunction with Adoption West. The work of the Service is delivered in accordance with Wiltshire Children's Services Policy and Procedures, overseen by the Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Panel. The local authority has clear and effective safeguarding procedures in place for children and vulnerable adults.

46. This report is for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

Public Health Implications

47. Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

Corporate Procurement Implications

48. Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal (detailing conclusions identified from Equality Analysis, sections 4 and 5)

49. Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

50. Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

Risk Assessment

51. Risks that may arise if the performance and management of the Families and Children's Service (and Adoption West) regarding the adoption of children is not effective and it does not achieve good outcomes for children:

- Safeguarding risk to looked after children if they are placed with adopters who have not been fully assessed, prepared and supported. Safeguarding is considered a high-level risk within the corporate risk register.
- That the governance and scrutiny arrangements of Adoption West are not robust, impacting upon outcomes for Wiltshire's children.
- An inadequate supply of adopters to meet the needs of Wiltshire children requiring permanence through adoption.
- Reputational risk for the Council if the Agency (and Adoption West) is not effective and does not achieve good outcomes for children who require adoption.
- Reputational risk if statutory timescales are not meet regarding adoption.
- Reputational risk if the Service is rated as Inadequate through inspection.
- Financial risk if placements are made, are unstable and subsequently breakdown leading to children returning to local authority care.

Effective delivery of the Service in relation to adoption and the effectiveness of Adoption West, the improvement plan, reporting and challenge will mitigate these risks.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

52. See above. Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

53. See above. Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

Financial Implications

54. The budget and forecast expenditure are included above, the service is forecasting an overspend which is 8% of the net budget. This pressure relates to packages of adoption support and Special Guardianship support (there are complex children made subject to SGOs and being adopted and when adoptive parents return to seek support from the local authority after Adoption Orders have been granted, sometimes after a number of years, there are increasingly complex packages of support required to support the, now older, children in question).

55. The cost of supporting an adopted child is less than the average cost of looking after a child in the care system and is often time limited as opposed to costs of care which extend to 18 years old and beyond. Cabinet has previously received information relating to the financial implications of Adoption West and the contribution that the Council makes to the organisation. This interim report relates to the work of the families and Children's Service in relation to adoption and *not* Adoption West.

Legal Implications

56. It is a requirement of registration as an Adoption Agency that the Executive side of the Council receive regular written reports regarding the effectiveness, compliance and management of the Agency. It has been agreed that this will be in the form of an annual report and interim report

and so it ensures that legal requirements are met. There are no additional legal implications arising.

Options Considered

57. Not applicable - for note by Wiltshire Council Cabinet.

Conclusion

58. Recent years have seen considerable change within the world of adoption and a focus on improving adoption performance. This has led to the need to review and develop services, amend policy and practice and so increase the effectiveness of the Wiltshire Adoption Service. The implementation of Adoption West has built upon, and taken forward, this overall improvement trajectory, as evidenced in the Scorecard information. At the heart of this is the belief that, for some children, adoption is the best route to legal permanence, security and the opportunity to achieve their potential. Wiltshire Council is committed to improving service delivery and, therefore, outcomes for children. Adoption West brings further significant change and improvement. The Council is an Adoption West partner, working collaboratively and regionally to ensure a whole service approach to prevent delay in securing appropriate adoptive placements for children in a timely and safe way.

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November 2020

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices

None

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