AGENDA

Meeting: Environment Select Committee

Place: Kennet Room - County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

Date: Thursday 11 January 2024

Time: 10.30 am

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Ellen Ghey - Democratic Services Officer of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718259 or email ellen.ghey@wiltshire.gov.uk

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

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Membership:

Cllr Jerry Kunkler (Chairman)	Cllr Ian McLennan
Cllr Bob Jones MBE (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr Dr Nick Murry
Cllr Tony Jackson	Cllr Tom Rounds
Cllr Mel Jacob	Cllr Iain Wallis
Cllr Dr Brian Mathew	Cllr Derek Walters
Cllr Charles McGrath	Cllr Stuart Wheeler

Substitutes:

Cllr Brian Dalton	Cllr Dr Mark McClelland
Cllr Matthew Dean	Cllr Stewart Palmen
Cllr Ross Henning	Cllr Ricky Rogers
Cllr Jon Hubbard	Cllr Bridget Wayman
Cllr Jacqui Lay	

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AGENDA

PART I

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

1   **Apologies**

To receive any apologies or substitutions for the meeting.

2   **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** *(Pages 7 - 16)*

To approve and sign the minutes of the Environment Select Committee meeting held on 7 November 2023.

3   **Declarations of Interest**

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

4   **Chairman's Announcements**

To receive any announcements through the Chair.

5   **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so **at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting.** Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. Please contact the officer named on the front of the agenda for any further clarification.

Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution.

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than 5pm on **Thursday 4 January 2024** in order to be guaranteed of a written response. In order to receive a verbal response, questions must be submitted no later than 5pm on **Monday 8 January 2024.** Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6   **Speed Limit Assessments**

The issue of speed limit assessments was raised and discussed at Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee on 15 November 2023 and was referred to the Environment Select Committee. The Committee will receive a verbal update regarding speed limit assessments.

7   **Public Transport Review** *(Pages 17 - 62)*

This report provides the Select Committee with an update on the outcomes of the public consultation that took place between October and November 2023 on the draft revised public transport policy. The consultation focused specifically on Wiltshire's bus policy and the supported bus network.

8   **Executive Response to the Report from the Housing Allocations Policy Task Group**

To receive the Executive Response to the Report of the Housing Allocations Policy Task Group.

Please note that the supporting papers will follow in an Agenda Supplement.

9   **Wiltshire Council Housing Board Annual Report** *(Pages 63 - 90)*

A report updating the Select Committee regarding the activities of Wiltshire Council's Housing Board between October 2022 and November 2023.

This report will go to Cabinet in February 2024.

10   **Updates from Task Groups and Representatives on Programme Boards** *(Pages 91 - 94)*

To receive any updates on recent activity for active Task Groups and from Members of the Environment Select Committee who have been appointed as Overview and Scrutiny representatives on Programme Boards.

An update from the Climate Emergency Task Group is attached.

11   **Forward Work Programme** *(Pages 95 - 104)*

To note and receive updates on the progress of items on the Forward Work Programme.

Under the revised Overview and Scrutiny (OS) arrangements there is now a single OS work programme controlled by the OS Management Committee, linked to priorities in the Business Plan.

Therefore, it should be noted that, whilst any matters added by Members are welcome, they will be referred to the OS Management Committee for approval before formal inclusion in the work programme for the Environment Select Committee.

A copy of the Overview and Scrutiny Forward Work Programme for the Environment Select Committee is attached for reference.

12   **Urgent Items**

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

13   **Date of Next Meeting**

To confirm the date of the next scheduled meeting as 6 March 2024.

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Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 NOVEMBER 2023 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Jerry Kunkler (Chairman), Cllr Bob Jones MBE (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Tony Jackson, Cllr Dr Brian Mathew, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Tom Rounds, Cllr Tony Trotman, Cllr Iain Wallis, Cllr Derek Walters, Cllr Stuart Wheeler, and Cllr Stewart Palmen (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Phil Alford, Cllr Nick Holder, Cllr Tamara Reay, Cllr Jonathon Seed, and Cllr Graham Wright (Virtual)

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62   **Apologies**

Apologies for absence from Members were received from:

- Councillor Charles McGrath
- Councillor Mel Jacob, who was substituted by Councillor Stewart Palmen

Further apologies were noted from Councillor Caroline Thomas, Cabinet Member for Transport, Street Scene, and Flooding.

63   **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2023 were considered. Following which, it was:

Resolved:

The Committee approved and signed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 September 2023 as a true and correct record.

64   **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

65   **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

66   **Public Participation**

There were no statements or questions submitted.

67   **Fleet Strategy 2023-2030**

Adrian Hampton, Head of Highways Operations, alongside Samantha Howell, Director of Highways and Transport, updated the Committee on the Fleet Strategy 2023 – 2030.

It was noted that the Fleet Strategy was based upon the Council's pledge to deliver carbon neutrality by 2030, and detailed how the Council would use, run, manage, and optimise the fleet vehicles owned or leased by the Council. The new strategy priorities were then listed as per the slides within the Agenda Pack.

It was then explained that officers were intending on moving to the electrification of vehicles where possible as it was felt that this was the best and most cost-effective way to deliver the Council's carbon neutral objectives. Despite this, it was explained that other alternative fuels such as Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) had to be used and considered to ensure business continuity across services such as road gritters, while the infrastructure to support increased electrification across the network advanced. As such, it was highlighted that it was crucial that the Fleet Strategy directly interlinked with the Depot Strategy.

It was further noted that as the majority of vehicles were not fit for purpose, there would be challenges and costs involved, and therefore additional funding would be needed to deliver against both the Council's financial requirements and carbon neutral pledge. As such, officers explained that there was funding allocated until 2025, with further growth and capital bids being made for future years, all of which would be developed in tandem with the Finance Team.

Further data and performance driven decisions were detailed including using telematics in vehicles, dash-cams to monitor route efficiencies, and reducing the number of vehicles, all of which would provide further data to support officers in deciding where the maximum benefits lay, and to maximise the use of storage space. Members were then informed that a three-year review into how services should be delivered was in process, which was being undertaken with the support of the Energy Saving Trust. During this review, it was noted that if more innovative methods came into effect and/or further opportunities for cost savings or increased efficiency was identified, they would be duly considered, and the strategy could be updated accordingly.

Finally, the table within the report was explained in detail for Members.

During the discussion, points included:

- The possibility of using methane to power vehicles akin to other Local Authorities in the Country. Officers assured Members that it had and

would continue to be considered, with the decision to use a combination of electric vehicles (EVs) and HVO as an alternative fuel arising from a review carried out 3 years ago by the Council alongside the Energy Saving Trust. It was highlighted that the vast majority of waste collection, highways, and streetscene vehicles were operated by the Council's contractors and therefore, further conversations were needed with these departments and companies to discuss alternatives.

- Members queried the decision to reduce the baseline number of vehicles when considering the possibility that waste collection vehicle numbers could increase pending a decision from the Government to consider including food waste into the existing waste collection regime. It was emphasised that waste collection vehicles were subject to a separate review, currently being undertaken in the Waste Management department and as such, were not included within the Fleet Strategy. However, these vehicles were recognised in respect of their carbon output and achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

- The launch of the Demand Responsive Transport Project was raised, and officers reiterated that the current infrastructure system was insufficient to support moving these vehicles to EVs due to the range of travel needed.

- Despite the number of vehicles reducing across the fleet, it was explained that it would not create any landscape that could be built into cost savings. It was further explained that as officers were anticipating the number of waste collection vehicles increasing, these space savings would be mitigated by said increase due to the size of those vehicles. However, it was reiterated that both the Fleet and Depot Strategies would be interlinked and as such, officers would be considering how best to manage those depots in order to maximise the spaces available.

- It was highlighted that both the Highways and Streetscene contractors had been tendered and carbon neutrality requirements had been built into both contracts. Therefore, although those vehicles would sit outside of the remit of the Fleet Strategy, their carbon output had been recognised when considering how to meet the Council's carbon neutrality pledge.

- It was confirmed that 90 EVs and charging points would be delivered by the end of the financial year. In response to a question with regard to the intention to increase the amount of EVs across the fleet, officers emphasised that business continuity and resilience was a priority and as such, it was not feasible to be entirely reliant on EVs at present, hence the need to continue considering more sustainable alternative fuels. Furthermore, although officers could not guarantee the electrification of all vehicles by 2030, they stated that the Fleet Strategy would deliver carbon neutrality alongside those vehicles within other directorates. It was acknowledged that once the provision of funding was secured, the infrastructure system could be improved which when taken in tandem

with the Depot Strategy, would allow officers to consider delivering more EVs.

- It was explained that to ensure resilience within the gritting services across the network, the Council provided the vehicles and salt for Milestone staff members to deliver the service which was noted as being as competitive as other commercial operators.
- Finally, officers were thanked for their presentation and hard work in developing the strategy.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1) **The Committee noted the briefing.**

2) **The Committee requested that an update on the delivery of the Strategy be brought to the Committee in 12 months' time.**

68   **Wiltshire Housing Development Partnership**

Councillor Phil Alford, Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfer, alongside Richard Walters, Head of Service – Major Projects, and Claire Moore, Housing Enabling Lead, updated the Committee on the Wiltshire Housing Development Partnership.

An introduction to the Partnership was given, where it was explained that it acted as a forum for the Housing Enabling Team and various Registered Providers of Affordable Housing (RPs) to discuss shared practices, ways to overcome challenges, and how to achieve the delivery of an average of 650 affordable houses per year. Officers noted that in 2022/23, 643 Affordable Homes were delivered in Wiltshire, with only 235 homes delivered by the end of Q2 2023/24, showing a marked decrease in delivery and presenting a challenge in achieving the average annual target.

It was explained that the Partnership worked together to ensure that the delivery of Affordable Housing met demonstrable need within Wiltshire. As such, the two main tenures delivered at present were Affordable Rented Housing allocated to households on Wiltshire's Housing Register, and Shared Ownership Housing sold to eligible households with a household income of less than £80,000. It was noted that it was still to be determined which rented tenure officers would be encouraging until the Local Plan was finalised, although when considering both the Local Housing Needs Assessment and Viability Assessments of relevant policies, officers were anticipating a move towards more social rented houses rather than Affordable Housing.

Officers noted that soon Affordable Housing provision would include an element of First Homes as required by a change in Government Policy. It was also

highlighted that officers had noticed a trend in which RPs were moving towards more land-led schemes as it allowed for greater control over the delivery and quality of Affordable Homes.

It was explained that by adopting a more formal approach to selecting RPs, the Housing Enabling Team could ensure that the right partners were chosen to assist in focusing on the Council's key priorities. Partnership meetings were held quarterly, were well attended by senior RP management, and ran more focussed sessions in which certain Council teams attended, such as the Climate Team.

Finally, officers felt confident that subject to the continued commitment of the Council and RPs, the Partnership offered the potential to continue assisting the Council in working towards its key priorities and meeting the housing needs of Wiltshire residents.

During the discussion, points included:

- The definition of Affordable Housing.
- The number of houses being disposed of by RPs per year and if those figures were being monitored by officers. In response, it was explained that officers only monitored those houses being disposed of by the Council as monitoring those by RPs was the responsibility of the Regulator of Social Housing. However, officers noted that they could retrieve and provide the data for Members outside of the meeting.
- It was noted that officers were seeing that developers were experiencing significant amounts of stock and as such, were looking to sell properties to RPs to be used as Affordable Homes outside of Section 106 (S106) agreements. Therefore, in addition to those S106 properties already agreed, officers were anticipating a rise in the number of Affordable Homes across the County.
- Members sought clarification on Paragraph 9, bullet-point 3. Officers explained although the S106 units were provided by developers, they were continuing to encourage RPs and others to achieve EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) A and B ratings for those homes. However, it was emphasised that any energy efficiency measures could only go at the same pace that Government changes and regulations came into effect. Despite this, officers highlighted that with any Council stock, existing homes were being retrofitted to EPC standards and any later land-led schemes were being developed in line with zero carbon standards. Furthermore, it was reiterated that the Partnership was an effective forum for joint problem solving, to exchange ideas, encourage improvements, and share best practices in order to deliver better quality homes and higher environmental standards.
- Although officers emphasised that it was a priority to support tenants with regard to rising utility bills. However, it was highlighted that retrofitting came with high costs and the necessity to undertake any works during the void process led to subsequent impacts on business plans, extended

void periods, a reduction in the ability to allocate people to homes, and a reduction in the amount of rent payments.

- It was highlighted that the standards on EPC engineering had not changed since they were set 22 years ago.
- In respect of any submitted planning applications, officers confirmed that they engaged with developers from pre-application stages onwards and could therefore ensure that those developments provided an adequate housing mix that met the demonstrable need with regard to considerations such as unit sizes and adaptable units.
- It was further confirmed that a large part of the Wiltshire Council House Build Programme to date had been through the acquisition of properties as able, alongside the increase of land-led schemes through the HRA (Housing Revenue Account) by purchasing S106 properties. However, it was explained that although S106 properties were generally cheaper, they were negotiated on an affordable rent basis which then impacted on the wider business plans.
- The role of the Stone Circle Housing Company's programme was explained, and Members were encouraged to attend shareholder meetings if they had any specific questions.
- With regard to any data in relation to void properties, Members were informed that it was not within the remit of the Partnership, and any questions should therefore be directed to the Allocations Team.
- It was explained that Affordable Housing could not be achieved in all schemes, therefore the Local Housing Needs Assessment would consider proposed schemes in line with the finalised Local Plan.
- Members were informed that although Shared Ownership sales had slowed down, they were still a popular option as it provided a choice with regard to which level buyers could purchase a home at. Furthermore, it was noted that the Local Plan would not include as many Shared Ownership homes due to the introduction of the Government's First Homes Scheme and therefore, the split between Shared Equity, Affordable, and Social Rented Homes would vary on a site-by-site basis.
- Finally, officers were thanked for their presentation and time.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was:

Resolved:

1) **The Committee noted the contents of the report.**

2) **The Committee requested that an update on the Partnership be brought to the Committee in 12 months' time.**

69   Report from the Housing Allocations Policy Task Group

Councillor Jonathon Seed, Chairman of the Housing Allocations Policy Task Group, presented the findings and recommendations of the Task Group for endorsement by the Committee.

The background and Terms of Reference of the Task Group alongside an overview of Housing Allocation policies and relevant evidence were detailed as per the report, and the various witnesses who provided information and supported Members in their decision-making were thanked, with particular thanks given to Nicole Smith, Head of Housing, Migration & Resettlement, and her team.

The conclusions and then each of the 13 recommendations were summarised, and thanks were given to the Members of the Task Group and Simon Bennett, Senior Scrutiny Officer, for his support and hard work throughout the process.

During the discussion, points included:

- Under occupation was raised and it was confirmed that the Task Group had deliberated upon providing incentives to downsize for applicable occupants. If an incentive scheme was developed and accepted by tenants, officers could then enable a better use of the housing stock by providing more suitable homes for those in housing need.
- Recommendation 8 was raised, and it was further explained that as discussed in detail with officers, such multi-tenancies could be an option for individuals that had particular personal needs.
- It was highlighted that one of the aims of the Task Group was to encourage housing providers to consider implementing certain policy areas in tandem with the Council.
- Paragraphs 15, 16, and 53 were highlighted and Members were reassured that officers would continue striving to increase the number of people housed from the housing register. It was further noted that any tenants that wished to bid for a Shared Equity House were required to be on the housing register. As such, within the total amount of people on the housing register, there would be a significant number of those that would not qualify for social housing.
- It was confirmed that the figures as specified in Paragraph 20 were as up to date as officers could provide at the time of the Task Group's deliberations. Members noted that the breakdown of figures was useful when considering planning applications and housing needs within different areas. It was highlighted that in order to understand those needs further, Housing Need Assessment Surveys could be conducted to provide better insight when considering any planning applications.
- Table 5 of the report under Paragraph 31 was raised, with Members expressing concerns as to the high level of people fleeing domestic abuse. It was confirmed that those applications verified under the exclusions criteria were a priority for housing, and it was highlighted that

there had been a concerted effort to encourage people to report domestic violence, therefore better reporting may have led to such a figure.

- Councillor Seed, other Members of the Task Group, and associated officers were commended for their hard work and effort throughout.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was:

Resolved:

The Committee endorsed the report of the Task Group and refers it to the Cabinet Members for Housing, Strategic Assets, Asset Transfer, for response at the Committee's next meeting.

70   **Updates from Task Groups and Representatives on Programme Boards**

Councillor Graham Wright, Chairman of the Climate Emergency Task Group, presented an update on the Task Group since 19 September 2023.

The recent activities of the Task Group were detailed, namely:

- A meeting held on 9 October 2023 in which the Task Group considered the update on the Council's response to the Climate Emergency and the revised Environmental Policy, and raised questions as per Paragraph 11 of the report.
- The Chairman of the Task Group with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Environment Select Committee met with the Cabinet Member for Environmental and Climate Change on 20 October 2023 to discuss the Forward Work Plan in relation to climate change.

Appendix 1, the Forward Work Plan, was briefly detailed and it was noted that Members of the Task Group were looking forward to working with officers to help achieve the Council's pledge of carbon neutrality by 2030. Thanks were given to Simon Bennett, Senior Scrutiny Officer, for his continued hard work and support.

Following which, it was:

Resolved:

1) **The Committee noted the update on the Task Group activity provided.**

2) **The Committee noted the Climate Emergency Task Group's Forward Work Plan in Appendix 1.**

71 **Forward Work Programme**

The Committee received the Forward Work Programme for consideration.

The Rights of Way item due for discussion was raised, and it was noted that further conversations were needed with the Legal Team on the point of potentially inviting a specific member of the public to deliver a presentation at the relevant meeting.

Additionally, Members queried the length of time it took for certain reports to reach the Committee for scrutiny, particularly around climate change. In response, it was suggested that Members contact the relevant Cabinet Member for further information when required, but it was also confirmed that the point would be raised between relevant officers outside of the meeting.

Following which, it was:

Resolved:

The Committee approved the Forward Work Programme.

72 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

73 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 11 January 2024.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.05 pm)

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Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

11 January 2024

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Public Transport Review

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Executive summary

This report provides an update on the outcomes of the public consultation that took place between October and November 2023 on the draft revised public transport policy. The consultation focused specifically on Wiltshire's bus policy and the supported bus network.

Local Transport Plan (4) is currently in development and once finalised, this policy will also be incorporated into the LTP4 Public Transport Strategy. As such, both the challenges and objectives being developed as part of the LTP4 are reflected in this policy document, particularly with regard to future-proofing transport, rurality, decarbonisation, economic growth and tacking social inequalities.

The current bus policy no longer reflects the travel patterns of passengers which have changed significantly over recent years, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, there is a need to ensure that the bus policy is helping to support the decarbonisation agenda whilst also making sure that the bus market in Wiltshire is adapting to new transport technologies available.

The analysis of the consultation responses has shown that there is broad support for the policies and as such, it is felt there is no need to amend any of them. The next step is to therefore begin work, to develop implementation plans for the bus network, which reflect the new policy.

Proposal

That the Committee:

(i)   Notes the progress being made on the Bus Network review.

Reason for proposal

Information update report, as requested by the Committee.

Author: Jason Salter, Head of Service Passenger Transport
Contact details: Jason.salter@wiltshire.gov.uk 01225 713334

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

11 January 2024

## Public Transport Review

Purpose of report

The report provides an update on the draft revised public transport policy following the public consultation that has recently been carried out.

Background

Public Transport Policy and Bus Network Review

1. Wiltshire Council are working in partnership with consultants Integrated Transport Planning (ITP) to undertake an evidence-based review of Wiltshire's bus policy and its supported bus network. The aim is to have a new policy and network for implementation from April 2024 and a framework within which evidence-led decisions can be made regarding investment in the bus network.

    1.1 The new policy will seek to ensure we are providing value for money to the public purse whilst delivering on our Business Plan priorities and working towards the objectives of the National Bus Strategy. It will also seek to achieve objectives set out in our Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme and Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) with the key aim being to increase bus patronage. The policy will also be incorporated into Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) when that is produced.

    1.2 The current policy no longer fully represents the travelling habits of passengers. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed how people travel, and we need to review our policy to ensure it is valid for the LTP4 period 2026 – 2038.

    1.3 Bus usage at both the national and local level has struggled to return to pre-covid levels and only in some limited areas of the country is bus patronage returning to levels seen before the pandemic.

    1.4 The Department for Transport have been supporting the bus market since the pandemic with initiatives such as the £2 single fare and more recently BSIP+ funding given to many Local Transport Authorities (LTAs), intended to restimulate the market by funding improvements in the provision of public transport.

    1.5 A nationwide shortage of bus drivers has been a contributing factor to declining bus availability and therefore usage, as many bus services have had to be cancelled over the past 2 to 3 years. This has caused considerable uncertainty for bus users and has further reduced passenger numbers.

1.6   Contract prices for supported local bus services have also increased significantly since 2021, as the costs of operation, have risen. This has been exacerbated by the national shortage of bus drivers with operators having to raise wages to attract more drivers to the bus sector. The reduction in the amount of travel by bus and associated loss of fare income has caused financial difficulties for bus operators, while the cost to the council for tendered services has increased significantly**.**

1.7   The review of the Public Transport Policy was conducted in a number of stages which are as follows and shown here as **Figure 1**:
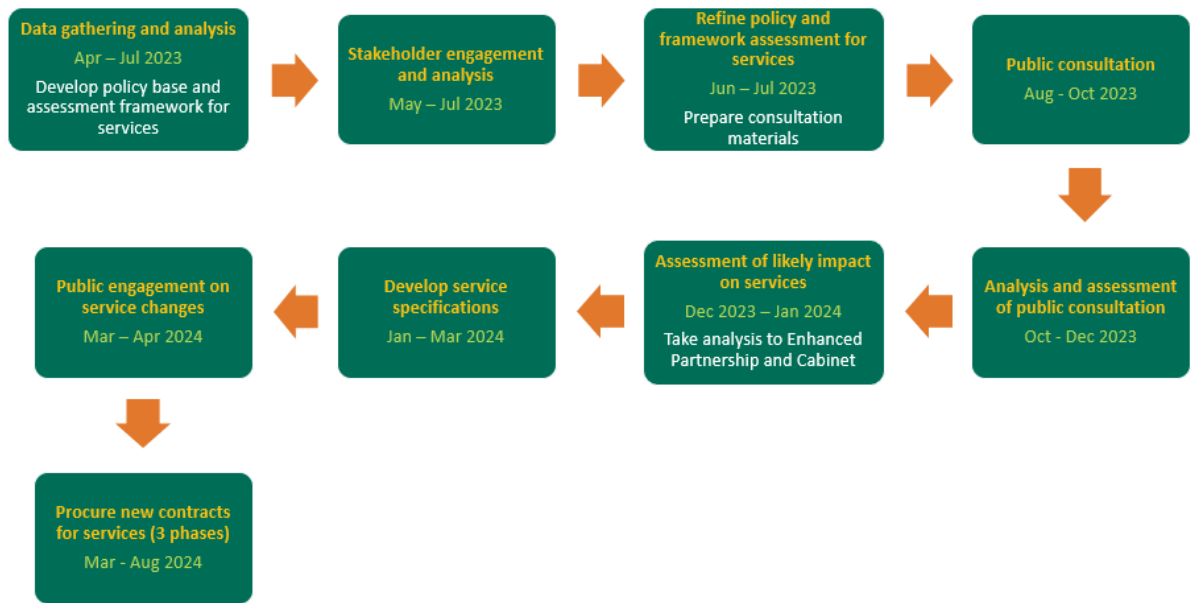
- Data gathering – passenger usage, types of places served (employers, colleges, rail stations etc), population statistics (deprivation, car ownership etc) and subsidy cost.
- Creation of a model/assessment tool with the data above which helps to prioritise where to invest in supported bus services.
- Stakeholder engagement on a revised policy – we received 163 responses to our engagement survey in June 2023.
- Refinement of the policy and framework assessment for services to enable us to focus on questions for the public consultation
- Public consultation – ran for six weeks to 10 November. We received 1,565 responses, the majority online.
- Analysis and assessment of public consultation responses Oct – Dec 2023.

1.8   The outcome of the public consultation analysis and assessment is set out in the following section. In summary, this shows that there is broad support for the policies set out. As such, the next steps are:

- To assess the likely impact of the new policies on service provision throughout the county

- Take consultation analysis and our recommendations to Enhanced Partnership and Cabinet – Jan and Feb 2024
- Develop service specifications Jan – Mar 2024
- Public engagement on service changes Feb – April 2024
- Procure new contracts for services (3 phases) Mar – Aug 2024

Stakeholder Consultation Results

2.   A stakeholder consultation was undertaken prior to the public consultation to help define the policies that should be taken forward. 163 responses were received from a wide range of stakeholders. The results showed that there was universal recognition of the importance of the bus (now and in 10 years) and 96% of respondents agreed that WC should continue support for buses. 69% also felt the levels of financial support should increase.

2.1   In terms of policy priorities for supported bus services, it was felt that providing travel opportunities for those with no alternative means of transport was crucial as well as being able to offer a sustainable mode of transport that is better for the environment. In terms of bus policy priorities overall, stakeholders felt that the key objectives of providing bus services should be to provide transport for those with no alternative available, to enable access to key services such as education, employment and healthcare services and to tackle congestion.

Public consultation results

3.   **Figure 2** Represents a summary of the policies that the public were asked to consider.

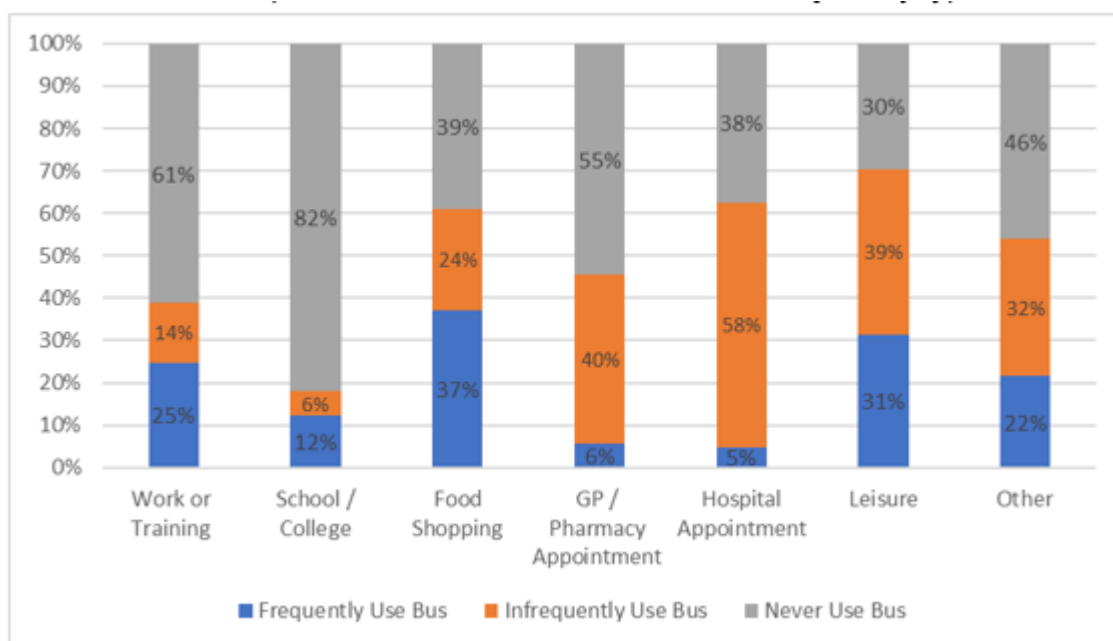| Policies	
P01 The Council will encourage public transport operators to meet the access needs of the county on a commercial basis	P07 - The Council will work to improve interchange between transport modes (such as rail and bus) to increase travel by public transport
P02 The Council will encourage residents and visitors to use public transport whenever possible	P08 – The Council will encourage the use of low and zero emission vehicles on commercial public transport services (and move towards low emission vehicles on supported services) to improve air quality across the county

P03 The Council will work to ensure that long-term, cost-effective access by public transport is planned in to new developments and financial contributions are secured from developers to support that provision	P09 The Council will promote concessionary travel to encourage elderly and disabled customers to access local facilities and services by bus
	P10 Where residents are not able to access public transport services, the Council will champion independent living among residents by encouraging use of community transport
P04 – The Council will consider the role of demand responsive transport services, financially supporting and promoting them as appropriate to complement mainline public transport services	P11 The Council will prioritise support for public transport which provides access to employment and training, education, essential shopping and healthcare
P05 –The Council will work with bus operators to ensure that public transport information is up to date, clear and accurate, and available via a wide range of printed and digital sources, including the Council's sustainable travel website www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk	P12 The Council will ensure that the public transport it supports offers value for money for the county's taxpayers
P06 – The Council will explore options for implementing high frequency, high quality bus services on key corridors in the county	P13 The Council will ensure that cross-boundary services form an important element of the county's public transport network

3.1 A public consultation survey ran for 6 weeks from September until the end of October 2023. 1565 responses were received; people mainly responded online although approximately 100 respondents returned a hard copy of the questionnaire.

3.2 87% of respondents were Wiltshire residents and included town/parish councillors whilst others were mainly visitors or. 64% of respondents were regular bus users while 36% used a bus less than once a week.

3.3 69% of respondents thought the Council should increase the amount spent on buses and 23% thought the amount should stay the same. Other key results included:

- 48% of respondents were either very satisfied or satisfied with bus services in Wiltshire whilst 33% gave a neutral response, with the remaining proportion providing a negative response.
- Respondents were asked how easy they would find it to complete particular journeys if they did not have access to any bus services. The journeys which respondents would find 'not at all easy' to make were hospital appointments and school / college journeys. 'Other' journeys included a

combination of the journey types listed, as well as visiting friends and travelling to other towns.

- Respondents were asked how often they use a bus for a range of purposes (**Figure 3**).   37% of respondents frequently used the bus to go food shopping, while 31% frequently used the bus to make leisure journeys and 25% frequently used the bus to access work or training.

**Figure 3**: How often respondents use the bus for different journeys

3.4   There was broad support for the majority of policies proposed, as shown in **Figure 2** . The policies are set out in full in **paragraph 6 of Appendix 1**. Respondents were asked to explain their reasoning for not supporting any particular policies. The policies with the least support were:

- Policy one - 'The Council will encourage public transport operators to meet the access needs of the county on a commercial basis' - respondents were concerned about the focus on commercial needs and value for money rather than necessity of service or any associated social benefits.

- Policy four – 'The Council will consider the role of demand responsive transport services*, financially supporting and promoting them as appropriate to complement mainline public transport services' - as they felt DRT offered poor value for money, had failed in other areas, and was not a viable alternative to car travel.

- Policy 10 – 'Where residents are not able to access public transport services the Council will champion independent living among residents by encouraging use of community transport'. It was felt that community

transport could not necessarily meet the needs of many residents, with a preference for regular, scheduled public transport services.

Figure 4: Policy support
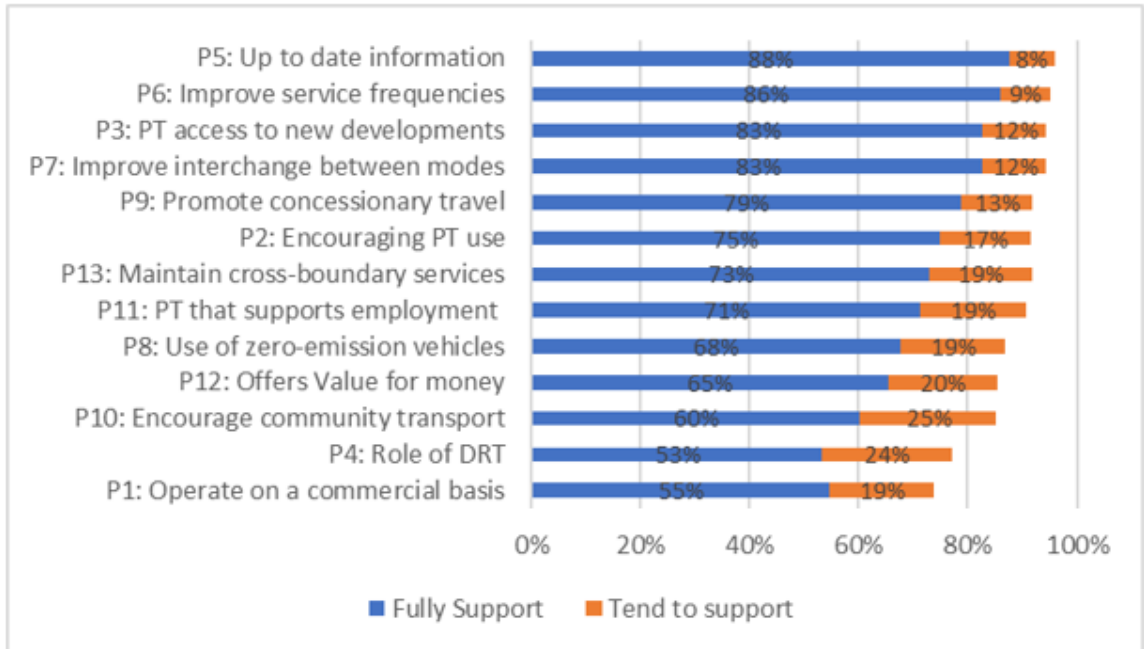
3.5 Just over 50% of respondents agreed that the Public Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for **priority journeys**, although only 15% strongly agreed with this. 'Priority journeys' were defined as those for employment and training, education, essential shopping and healthcare. The most popular reasons amongst respondents who agreed were that public transport is essential to those without alternative means of travel; and that it is important to encourage public transport use as an alternative to car travel. Among those who disagreed, the most popular reasons were that they were not convinced the policy would be delivered/be successful based on the state of current bus services; they felt there was a need for a higher frequency of services, as well as better coverage across the whole county; and they felt services need to stop being terminated.

3.6 Almost half of respondents (48%) considered that young people should be eligible for cheaper travel up to the age of 18, while 17% of respondents considered travel should be cheaper up to the age of 16. With regard to the level of discount that should be applied to young people's fares, the majority of respondents (60%) considered it should be half the adult fare.

3.7 Respondents were asked what else the Council could do to provide value for money public transport services. The most popular response was to improve service frequencies. There was also support for:

- continuing the current £2 single fare (42 respondents)
- improving service coverage across the county (39 respondents)
- improving service reliability (38 respondents)

- provision of real time information, at bus stops and/or through an app (29 respondents)
- Availability of through tickets for different operators and modes (21 respondents)
- Cheaper fares (20 respondents)

3.8 Respondents were asked if they had any other comments, including on other elements of the Public Transport Policy. 382 respondents answered this question. There was some duplication with responses to Question 12 (above) for example, the most common response was to increase bus frequencies, raised by 63 respondents. Other responses were:

- Increase rural service frequencies (32 respondents)
- Improve overall service reliability (26 respondents)
- Provide more frequent off-peak services (23 respondents)

3.9 As there was broad support for the policies, it is felt there is no need to amend them and that Wiltshire Council should now adopt these and begin to develop the strategy for implementation.

3.10 In accordance with the process set out in Figure 1, the next steps will involve assessing the likely impact of the new policies on bus services, then developing bus service specifications in line with these new policies.

3.11 In addition, it is useful to note that improving bus frequencies is continually cited as one of the most popular responses on many questions. As such, it needs to be a priority consideration how this can be incorporated into new or amended service specifications going forward.

3.12 Up to date public transport information was also the most fully supported policy, suggesting that much could still be done by Wiltshire Council and our Enhanced Partnership to improve transport information provided to the travelling public.

Environmental impact

4. Wiltshire Council has declared a climate emergency, and it is imperative that the new bus policy reflects the objectives of the Council's new climate strategy. Buses are an environmentally friendly way to travel Effective public transport services are necessary to encourage a model shift away from individuals traveling in cars and if achieved, can be better for the environment; a greater shift from journeys by private car to public transport is better for the environment. Increasing the number of passenger trips made by public transport will contribute significantly to the Council's overall pledge for Wiltshire Councils operations to be carbon neutral and in doing so will demonstrate how other large employers in Wiltshire could do the same to be carbon neutral as buses save millions of tonnes of carbon and pollutants and can help reduce traffic jams.

Equality and diversity impact

5.   The following protected characteristics have been identified in an Equality Evidence Analysis:
   - Age
   - Disability
   - Low Incomes
   - Rurality
   - People with no access to private transport
   - Military status
   - Pregnancy and Maternity
   - Race
   - Religion and Belief
   - Sex
   - Shift / Part-time workers
   - Carers

5.1   The first six characteristics are likely to be most impacted and the following is a short summary for each of these six protected characteristics:

   - *Age* - Younger and older people are more reliant on bus services and less likely to have access to a car. Also, fewer young people now hold driving licences and we live in an increasingly 'ageing society'. Younger people need affordable bus services to enable them to take up opportunities in education and work, and to increase their independence. Research has shown that many older people place particular value on 'local' and 'daytime' travel and predominantly travel for shopping, to access key services (notably healthcare) or to visit family and friends. Both groups also benefit from the health benefits of using public transport through encouraging outside activity and mobility. Adoption of the policies set out should provide better access to key services, therefore benefitting this group.
   - *Disability* - People with disabilities are less likely to drive and therefore could become marginalized from the wider community and more reliant upon support services without independent travel options, such as supported bus services to provide them access to employment opportunities and essential services or, to visit friends and family. Some disabilities are also likely to need more trips to GPs and hospitals for regular medical appointments. Again, the policies should ensure better access to key services that are used by this group.
   - *Low incomes* - People on low incomes are particularly reliant upon local public transport services and a lack of available and adequate services can be a significant barrier to accessing employment opportunities and essential services. Public transport can also provide health benefits (as people walk more and drive less) which can be particularly beneficial for people from socio-economically deprived areas which typically have lower levels of health. The policy

looks to address value for money in relation to bus fares so there may be some benefits for lower income groups.

- *Rurality* - In rural areas, settlements are dispersed, and homes, jobs and services are scattered – access to everyday opportunities and services can therefore be challenging. Rural bus services can help combat social exclusion by enabling non-drivers to access shops, education, training, and essential services. They are also important for the local economy; small businesses in rural areas need good accessibility for their employees and rural buses can encourage visitors and tourists. The policy looks at the alternatives available, such as DRT, to service rural communities.

- *People with no access to private transport* - are particularly reliant upon local public transport services and a lack of available and adequate bus services can be a significant barrier to accessing employment opportunities and essential services. The key policy priority is helping to provide services for those with no access to private transport.

Risk assessment

6. Not applicable.

Financial implications

7. Price inflation in public transport contracts is a major concern. Some retendering costs on like for like contracts have increased by c45%. Wiltshire was granted £2.1m BSIP + funding this year to improve and maintain bus services across Wiltshire, with a further £2.1m pledged for 2024/25. Some of this money will be used to support those inflation pressures, but this is not sustainable in the long term and reflects the need for a revised public transport policy to ensure funding targets, value for money.

Legal implications

8. Not applicable.

Options considered

9. Not applicable.

Conclusion

10. Members are invited to review this information report and note the findings made. The public consultation demonstrates that there is broad support for the policies and as such, it is felt there is no need to amend any of them. Wiltshire Council should now adopt the policy and begin to develop a strategy for implementation.

Background papers

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

None

<u>Appendices</u>

Appendix 1: Draft Wiltshire Council Public Transport Policy

A**ppendix 2: Public Consultation results summary**

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Wiltshire Council
Public Transport Policy

August 2023

Wiltshire Council

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Foreword

Foreword

Good public transport links are vital for the success and prosperity of Wiltshire's communities, allowing access to our towns and city, schools and colleges and places of work and leisure. They also help support our Business Plan goals for vibrant, well-connected communities and help us in meeting our climate change objectives, by supporting both the decarbonisation of existing transport and increased use of public transport options.

Whilst the Wiltshire bus service network has remained similar in structure for some years, the market for bus travel has changed significantly as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Hybrid working practices have affected the demand for travel at peak times, while bus use by concessionary pass holders remains below pre-Covid levels, which has affected the demand for off-peak travel. These significant changes mean a review is necessary to assess if the bus service network is now fit for purpose.

The Council has prepared this revised public transport policy to ensure that we continue to meet our statutory duties whilst delivering value for money public transport services for Wiltshire residents, in line with the objectives of our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). Our aim is to have a revised policy and a re-evaluated network in place next year. Your input is essential to inform our final approach.

1. Introduction

1.1 Wiltshire Council ('the Council') recognises the essential role public transport plays in enabling all sectors of society to access jobs, education, healthcare and other facilities and services, as well as reducing congestion and improving air quality in our towns and cities.

1.2 This document, which has been prepared in response to the priorities set out in the Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan, sets out the overall Policy for the Council in relation to public transport. The Policy is in line with the Council's Business Plan outlined in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 below.

1.3 The overall aim of this Policy is to provide a framework within which evidence-led decisions can be made regarding investment in public transport to:

- ensure that residents in Wiltshire can access the facilities and services which enable them to enjoy a good quality of life, in support of sustainable economic growth

- encourage residents to choose public transport for journeys to and from work

- enable visitors to explore the many attractions that the beautiful county has to offer, without the need to rely on travelling by private car

1.4 This Policy will, once adopted, replace the Public Transport Strategy contained within the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP3), which itself will be superseded by LTP4 in the coming months.

1.5 The Council declared a climate emergency in February 2019 and we committed to becoming carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030. Our Climate Strategy highlights transport, including a shift to more sustainable modes of travel, as important in meeting the county's net zero ambitions.

1.6 The Policy outlines our principles for promoting and supporting public transport in all its forms across the County.

2. National Context

2.1 The Public Transport Policy reflects a range of national strategies:

National Bus Strategy 2021

2.2 In March 2021 the UK Government published the National Bus Strategy (NBS)[1] 'Bus Back Better', which outlined long-term ambitions for the bus industry in the wake of challenges resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. The NBS set out the vision and opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered.

2.3 The NBS outlined the need for closer partnership working between each Local Transport Authority and the bus operators in its area, including on infrastructure, network development, marketing and branding.

2.4 In accordance with the NBS, the Council prepared a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) for the county and has established an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with local bus operators which is working hard to improve bus services and enhance infrastructure in the county. The Enhanced Partnership made an Enhanced Partnership Plan in March 2022 which outlined how the partners will work together to improve public transport in Wiltshire.

2.5 Although the Council was not successful in securing funding from the original BSIP awards, it was allocated funding via the Government's 'BSIP Plus' funding round which was announced in May 2023. This funding will assist us to deliver more of the elements contained in the BSIP whilst continuing to support bus services in the county. The Enhanced Partnership will review its Enhanced Partnership Plan to improve its chances of securing funding in future funding rounds.

Decarbonising Transport – A Better, Greener Britain

2.6 In July 2021, the Department for Transport also set out its ambitions to decarbonise the nation's transport in its Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP)[2]. The TDP set out what government, business and society needs to do to reduce transport emissions in order to achieve net zero emissions across all transport modes by 2050.

2.7 The TDP recognised the role of public transport to help achieve this net zero target. The first of the Plan's six strategic priorities focusses on 'accelerating modal shift to public and active transport'.

2.8 This Public Transport Policy aims to address some of our key carbon neutral goals, focussing on vehicle emissions and modal shift towards public transport.

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[1] Bus back better - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[2] Transport decarbonisation plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Inclusive Transport Strategy

2.9   Published in 2018, this Strategy set out the Government's plans to make the country's transport system more inclusive and to make travel easier for disabled people[3]. By focussing on the inclusion of disabled people, many of the improvements will also benefit other travellers.

Future of Mobility – Urban Strategy

2.10   Published in March 2019, the UK Government's 'Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy' outlined the government's approach to maximising the benefits from transport innovation in cities and towns. It set out the principles that will guide government's response to emerging transport technologies and business models[4].

Rural Mobility Strategy

2.11   The Department for Transport launched a call for evidence in late 2020 to inform the preparation of a future of mobility strategy for rural areas[5]. Although the strategy has yet to be published, the evidence identified digital demand responsive transport (DDRT) as a means of catering for the needs of areas where a viable commercial model for a transport network may not exist[6]. This Public Transport Policy recognises the roll of DDRT in addressing the access challenges of some of its more rural areas.

Unleashing Rural Opportunity

2.12   In June 2023, the UK Government released a policy paper entitled 'Unleashing Rural Opportunity' to outline how it plans to support growth and prosperity in rural areas. One of the areas outlined for action in the paper is 'building connections through improved digital connectivity and transport options'. The paper highlights the aim to improve access to public transport in rural areas and refers to a forthcoming 'Future of Transport Rural Strategy' which will set out principles to support new innovative technologies in improving access to services, tackle isolation and increase access to jobs in rural and remote areas. We will ensure that the principles in the Rural Transport Strategy are reflected in our proposals to improve access for rural communities.

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[3] The Inclusive Transport Strategy: achieving equal access for disabled people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[4] Future of mobility: urban strategy - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[5] Future of Transport: rural strategy – call for evidence - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[6] Future of Transport: Rural Strategy Call for Evidence (publishing.service.gov.uk)

3. Local Policy Context

3.1 This Public Transport Policy is designed to contribute to delivering a number of the Council's objectives:

Wiltshire Council Business Plan

3.2 The mission of the Council's Business Plan[7] is to ensure:

- **Empowered People** - the people of Wiltshire are empowered to live full, healthy and enriched lives
- **Resilient Society** – our communities continue to be beautiful and exciting places to live
- **Thriving Economy** – our local economy thrives and is supported by a skilled workforce
- **Sustainable Environment** - We lead the way in how councils and counties mitigate the climate challenges ahead

3.3 Public transport has a key role to play achieving each of these four objectives of the Business Plan:

- **Empowered People** – public transport enables people to access the facilities and services that enable them to lead a full life
- **Resilient Society** – communities that are supported by reliable public transport service are likely to be more inclusive and balanced, with all members able to fully participate
- **Thriving Economy** – public transport assists people to access jobs and training opportunities within and beyond the county boundary, enabling them to contribute to the local and regional economy
- **Sustainable Environment** – good quality public transport contributes to reducing the number of cars on the road and emissions will continue to fall as older buses are replaced with low and ultimately zero-emission models

Wiltshire Climate Strategy

3.4 The Council declared a climate emergency in February 2019 and committed to becoming carbon neutral as an organisation by 2030. Our Climate Strategy (2022 - 2027)[8] highlights transport, including public transport, as essential in meeting the county's net zero ambitions. The key objectives in relation to public transport are:

- To achieve a transport system in Wiltshire that has zero carbon emissions, acknowledging the different solutions for our towns and city versus rural villages

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[7] BusinessPlan.pdf (wiltshire.gov.uk)
[8] Wiltshire_Council_Climate_Strategy_2022.pdf

- Creating the infrastructure for increased walking, cycling, shared and public transport and use of alternative fuels, including electric vehicle charging points
- Achieving high-quality public transport and transport hubs that offer a pleasant and convenient way to get around, and seamless combined journeys

3.5 These climate objectives have informed this Public Transport Policy.

Air Quality Strategy

3.6 Covering the period 2019 – 2024, the Air Quality Strategy[9] focusses on improving air quality in Wiltshire, as well as seeking to prevent any future deterioration and encourage interventions that will reduce nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates across the county.

3.7 There are currently eight Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in Wiltshire. Three are in Salisbury and the others are one each in Bradford on Avon, Calne, Devizes, Marlborough and Westbury.

3.8 This Public Transport Policy will help to achieve air quality improvements by delivering attractive public transport services that offer a viable alternative to travel by car. The increased use of low and zero-emission buses in the county will also help to improve air quality.

Local Transport Plan (LTP3)

3.9 The long-term transport vision as set out in LTP3 (2011 – 2026) is:

To develop a transport system which helps support economic growth across Wiltshire's communities, giving choice and opportunity for people to safely access essential services. Transport solutions will be sensitive to the built and natural environment, with a particular emphasis on the need to reduce carbon emissions

3.10 Although LTP3 will be replaced by LTP4, the principles of access to essential services and the need for carbon emission reductions remain relevant.

3.11 In addition, our vision for 2026 in the Public Transport Strategy contained within LTP3 is for:

a public transport system that provides the level of access that people across the county need in order to allow them to lead satisfying and fulfilling lives, and that in and between the main centres of population provides an attractive alternative to the private car that is able to make a major contribution to achieving sustainable transport objectives

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[9] Appendix 1 Wiltshire Air Quality Strategy Document.pdf

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP)

3.12 Published in 2021, the BSIP for Wiltshire has a clear vision:

With investment and a process of positive, sustained improvements in our bus services, infrastructure, information and ticketing offer, we aim to achieve a virtuous circle of investment and passenger growth. We recognise that increasing bus use for everyday journeys will contribute to achieving a wide range of our policy objectives, such as decarbonising transport, reducing inequalities and using our transport network and road-space much more efficiently.

3.13 The BSIP is consistent with LTP3 and will be reflected in the emerging LTP4. This Policy supports how we will work through the Enhanced Partnership to deliver on the priorities of local residents and businesses to encourage more use of the bus[10]:

- More frequent buses
- Real time bus information at bus stops
- Buses in the evenings

3.14 The BSIP outlines the Enhanced Partnership's intention to work to improve bus service provision in line with a priority route hierarchy, based on frequency and demand, of:

- Superbus routes, including routes in Salisbury
- Interurban routes
- Town networks
- Rural routes

3.15 'Superbus' is the name given to the network of key routes in the county which the Council intends to prioritise for improvement, by enhancing service frequencies and upgrading infrastructure in order to grow patronage and enhance the customer experience.

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[10] As part of the public consultation undertaken in advance of preparation of the BSIP, respondents were asked: 'What would encourage you to use the bus?'

4. Setting the Scene

4.1 The latest Census showed that in 2021, the population of Wiltshire was 510,300 - an increase of 8.4% from 470,981 in 2011[11]. Wiltshire is a predominantly rural county, with a population density less than half the national average. 47.5% of residents live in rural areas compared with 17.1% across England as a whole. Beyond the rural centre of the county, Wiltshire is home to a large number of urban areas. There are 13 settlements with a population of more than 10,000 people. Salisbury is the largest city in Wiltshire (home to just over 46,000 people), followed by the towns of Trowbridge (45,000) and Chippenham (35,000)[12].

4.2 Although the Wiltshire bus service network has remained similar in structure for some years, the market for bus travel has changed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2021, there were 12.9 passenger journeys made on local bus services per head of population in the county, compared to 19.7 in 2018/19[13].. The emergence of hybrid working policies has affected the demand for travel at peak times[14], while concessionary travel remains well below pre-Covid levels, affecting demand for off-peak travel.

4.3 Pre-Covid, the majority of daytime bus services in the Salisbury area, were run with a view to making a profit. Services within the city generally run every 15–30-minutes during the day. At night and on Sundays these services only run once per hour and are mostly financially supported by the Council.

4.4 Outside the Salisbury area, only 30% of the bus network is run commercially (with a view to making a profit) and, in many cases, the profitability of the service is heavily influenced by the carriage of school and college pupils. On supported services (those that are financially supported by the Council), buses tend to operate hourly or less, which is not sufficient to attract mode shift. Some services run less often at weekends, with very few services outside Salisbury operating in the county on Sundays.

4.5 The Council financially supports the remaining 70% of the bus services in the county at a cost of £5.75m per year[15]. Some services are fully supported by the Council, others are partially supported. There is concern among bus operators that services which were profitable before Covid may not return to profitability, which could place further pressure on the Council's limited bus budget.

4.6 Against the backdrop of increasing demand for public funding, the Council is committed to facilitating and supporting a mix of public transport services which reflects the differing geographies of the county and offers an attractive alternative to the private car.

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[11] 2021 Census - Wiltshire Council
[12] Wiltshire_and_Swindon_Needs_Analysis_2021_OCSI_WCF.pdf (wiltshirecf.org.uk)
[13] bus01.ods (live.com)
[14] Our changing travel – how people's travel choices are changing (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[15] 2022/23 figures

Bus operations in Wiltshire

4.7 Four main bus operators provide commercial services in Wiltshire:

- Go South Coast (operating mainly as Salisbury Reds in South & East Wiltshire)
- Stagecoach West (North and East Wiltshire)
- Faresaver (an independent operator in West/North Wiltshire)
- First which operates between Bath and West Wiltshire

4.8 These operators also operate services that are financially supported by the Council in the same areas, along with several other smaller bus operators and community transport providers in Wiltshire.

Demand Responsive Transport

4.9 Demand Responsive Transport or 'DRT' is the collective name for a range of bus and taxi services which operate in response to bookings received. Services may operate on a fully-flexible basis without any timetable or there may be timetabled services which will deviate off route in response to bookings. Services operate using physical bus stops or 'virtual' bus stops – agreed stopping points where there is no formal bus stop. A door-to-door service would only be offered to passengers with mobility difficulties. Historically, 'Connect2Wiltshire' was the name for these types of bookable bus and taxi service in Wiltshire. 'Wiltshire Connect' is the new name for dynamic DRT (DDRT) in the county, whereby bookings may be made in advance and in real time. Services operate in several rural areas, including Mere, the Vale of Pewsey and the Woodford Valley. Further information about these services is available at www.wiltshireconnect.co.uk

4.10 The Council was successful in securing funding from the Department for Transport's Rural Mobility Fund (RMF) to enhance the DRT service and vehicles deployed in the Vale of Pewsey.

Park & Ride

4.11 Salisbury is the only settlement in the county served by Park & Ride services. There are five Park & Ride sites on the outskirts of the city (see Figure 4-1[16]), three of which – Beehive, London Road and Petersfinger - are owned by the Council. The sites at Britford and Wilton are leased until 2063. Beehive, London Road and the Wilton site form part of the existing commercial bus network in Salisbury. At Britford and Petersfinger there is a dedicated bus service for the sites. All sites permit members of the public to travel to Salisbury by car, park for free in secure car parks and complete their journey into the city centre by bus.

4.12 The bus contract for the Park & Ride sites is currently held by Go South Coast (Salisbury Reds). Since the opening of the first site in 2001, the Park & Ride service

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[16] Salisbury Park&Ride Services - Salisbury Reds

has always required subsidy from the Council. Before the Covid pandemic, at four of the sites (excluding Petersfinger), the Park and Ride bus service ran approximately every 12-15 minutes for most of the day, Monday to Saturday. However, due to Covid and significant changes to working and leisure patterns, passenger numbers have remained well below pre-Covid levels. In addition, services have been running to a reduced 30-minute frequency, mainly due to bus driver shortages – an issue which is affecting bus services both locally and nationally.

Figure 4-1 Park & Ride sites in Salisbury
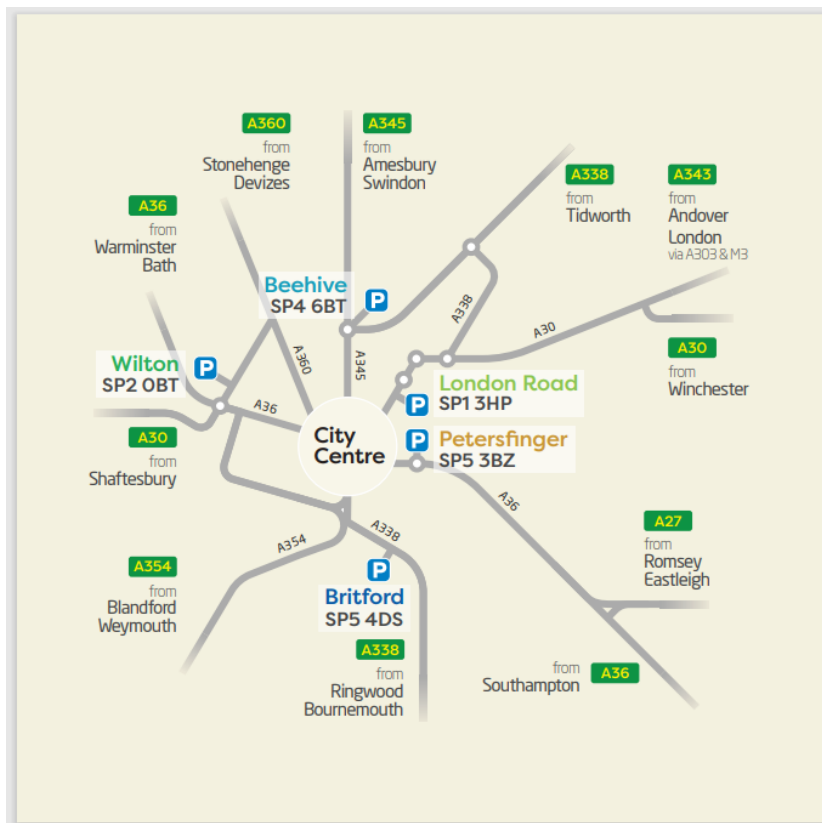
Community Transport

4.13 Community Transport is the name given to any type of transport run on a not-for-profit basis to assist people who cannot access private or public transport, owing to lack of available public transport, health, disability or mobility problems, cost factors and other personal reasons. Community First runs 42 link schemes and 21 local minibus groups across Wiltshire and Swindon, with 2,000 volunteers involved in supporting the service.

4.14 Link schemes are volunteer-led services which aim to improve the quality of life for disadvantaged, elderly or disabled people by helping them access important local services including medical appointments. As the transport service is provided by volunteers using their own cars, passengers are invited to give a donation to cover the

cost of running the service. Local Link Schemes are run by a group of volunteers managed by a Link Coordinator who helps to connect passengers with volunteers.

4.15   Community Minibus Groups in Wiltshire and Swindon run transport services for the benefit of the local community on a not-for-profit basis. The majority of vehicles are wheelchair accessible and offer regular day trips or routes at affordable rates. Many Community Minibus Groups are registered charities and mostly volunteer-led, but some use a mixture of paid and volunteer drivers.

4.16   Community First is supported by a small grant provided by the Council each year. These schemes are mainly aimed at elderly and less mobile residents who would struggle to use conventional public transport services.

5. Purpose and Scope of Draft Policy

5.1   The draft Policy sets out the objectives and supporting principles that guide the Council's support for public transport services in Wiltshire.

5.2   The Policy focusses on road-based public transport services operating in Wiltshire. These include conventional 'big bus' services and other public transport solutions using a range of smaller vehicles. The Policy excludes rail (other than connectivity to rail stations); commercial taxis and private hire services; dedicated home to school provision (services supported by the Council where there is no option for students to be carried on the local bus network); and specialist transport services for education and social care purposes.

Statutory duties

5.3   The Policy meets the statutory duties placed on the Council by the Transport Act (1985), which made bus service operation a profit-driven business. The 1985 Act requires the Council to have regard to the needs of its residents. The Council may decide to step in to support services, however, the duty is to consider need, not to support services. The Act also includes a specific requirement to consider the needs of older and disabled people, with powers to provide funding for service provision such as Community Transport.

5.4   The Transport Act 2000 (amended in 2008) introduced the means for local authorities and bus operators to enter into bus quality partnerships. It also required authorities to consult on, and determine, what local bus information should be made available to the public and the way in which it should be made available. Where satisfactory arrangements for information provision cannot be made with operators, authorities are required to make information available.

5.5   The Bus Services Act (2017) provided additional powers enabling us to form a formal partnership with bus operators to improve transport networks, as well as offering the option to pursue franchising. The Council formed an Enhanced Partnership in April 2022 to enable us to deliver on the priorities contained within the BSIP, subject to funding.

6. Policies and Links to Business Plan

6.1 Based on feedback from local stakeholders and good practice in the delivery of public transport services, the following policies aim to improve public transport provision in the county and deliver on the Council's strategic objectives as outlined in its Business Plan, alongside its BSIP priorities.

Policies	Links to Business Plan Mission
P01 The Council will encourage public transport operators to meet the access needs of the county on a commercial basis	• Empowered People - increased awareness will encourage more use of bus services, enabling people to access jobs, training, education, health and other facilities and services
P02 The Council will encourage residents and visitors to use public transport whenever possible	• Resilient Community – residents will be able to make informed decisions about how they travel, rather than feel that they have to use a car for all journeys • Sustainable Environment – fewer cars on the road will have positive benefits for air quality and contribute towards the council's net zero targets • Sustainable Environment – tourists making informed travel choices will have a less damaging impact on the county's air quality
P03 The Council will work to ensure that long-term, cost-effective access by public transport is planned in to new developments and financial contributions are secured from developers to support that provision	• Thriving Economy – residents and employees of new developments will be able to access jobs, training, education, health and other facilities and services by means other than a car • Sustainable Environment – new developments will be better connected to the local area, minimising the number of car journeys generated

P04 – The Council will consider the role of demand responsive transport services, financially supporting and promoting them as appropriate to complement mainline public transport services	• Empowered People – people will be able to travel at times to suit them • Resilient Society – communities that may not have had a bus service will have more choice about how they travel • Thriving Economy – more connected communities will be better able to access jobs, training, education health and other essential services
P05 –The Council will work with bus operators to ensure that public transport information is up to date, clear and accurate, and available via a wide range of printed and digital sources, including the Council's sustainable travel website www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk	• Empowered People – people will be able to make informed decisions about how they travel before they begin a journey, as well as having reassurance during a journey
P06 – The Council will explore options for implementing high frequency, high quality bus services on key corridors in the county	• Empowered People – people are more likely to use buses which are frequent and reliable • Resilient Society – people will be able to make decisions about how they travel to access essential facilities and services based on the availability of high frequency, high quality bus services • Thriving Economy – people will have better access to employment and training opportunities
P07 - The Council will work to improve interchange between transport modes (such as rail and bus) to increase travel by public transport	• Resilient Society - people will be able to complete journeys by public transport without the need for a car • Thriving Economy – people will have access to a wider range of employment opportunities • Sustainable Environment – better interchange will result in fewer cars on the county's roads
P08 – The Council will encourage the use of low and zero emission vehicles on commercial public transport services (and move towards low emission vehicles on supported services) to improve air quality across the county	• Sustainable Environment – fewer diesel buses on the road will have positive benefits for air quality and contribute to the council's net zero targets

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P09 The Council will promote concessionary travel to encourage elderly and disabled customers to access local facilities and services by bus	• Empowered People – concessionary travellers will be able to lead a full life by using the bus to access local facilities and services • Thriving Economy – more concessionary travellers will assist operators to continue to provide commercial bus services as well as support the local businesses that those passengers frequent
P10 Where residents are not able to access public transport services, the Council will champion independent living among residents by encouraging use of community transport	• Empowered People – all residents will be able to access the facilities and services they need, including those who are less mobile • Resilient Society – community transport will provide a safety net to enable people to live independently for longer
P11 The Council will prioritise support for public transport which provides access to employment and training, education, essential shopping and healthcare	• Thriving Economy – people will have access to a wider range of employment opportunities • Sustainable Environment – fewer people commuting by car at peak times will have positive benefits for air quality and contribute towards the council's net zero targets • Empowered People – school pupils will learn independence skills by travelling by bus • Resilient Society – school pupils who travel by bus are more likely to use the bus outside of school and become bus-using adults • Resilient Society – residents will be able to retain their independence and have access to services outside of the home
P12 The Council will ensure that the public transport it supports offers value for money for the county's taxpayers	• Resilient Society – the Council will ensure that the services that it supports meet its key objectives and aspirations for the county • Sustainable Environment – the Council will support bus services where there is sufficient demand and consider alternative provision in areas where demand is lower to avoid underuse of vehicles

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P13 The Council will ensure that cross-boundary services form an important element of the county's public transport network	• Thriving Economy – the Council will support cross-boundary services as appropriate to extend Wiltshire's employment market beyond the county boundary

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Summary of Responses to Public Consultation on Wiltshire's Public Transport Policy

1. Introduction

1.1　This report provides a summary of the results of a public consultation exercise to determine views regarding the Council's proposed new public transport policy.

2. Respondent Population

2.1　In total,1,565 people responded to the survey, the vast majority of whom completed the survey online.

2.2　Table 2-1 summarises the breakdown of respondents by type (Question 1). The majority (87%) of respondents were Wiltshire residents. Just under 2% of respondents (29 respondents) were Parish, Town, District or County Councillors. Over 7% of respondents highlighted 'other' as their respondent type; very few were specific about the capacity in which they were responding, although a small number indicated that they were resident of neighbouring counties.

Table 2-1: Respondent type

Respondent Role	Number of Respondents	% of respondents
Resident of Wiltshire	1361	86.96%
Visitor to Wiltshire	27	1.73%
District or parish / town councillor	20	1.28%
Wiltshire County councillor	9	0.58%
Member of Wiltshire Council staff	7	0.45%
Representative of another voluntary sector organisation, charity or community group	7	0.45%
Other public transport service operator / employee or volunteer	5	0.32%
Commercial bus operator / employee	3	0.19%
Representative of another public sector organisation	1	0.06%
Other	119	7.60%
Not specified	6	0.38%
Total	**1565**	

3. Frequency of Bus Use

3.1　Respondents were asked how often they used different modes of transport to get about in Wiltshire (Question 3). In relation to bus travel, of the 1471 respondents, 64% (934

respondents) were frequent bus users – i.e. they used the bus at least once a week (blue bars in Figure 3-1). The remaining 36% (537 respondents) used the bus less than once a week including 'never' (green bars in Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1: Frequency of bus use to get about in Wiltshire
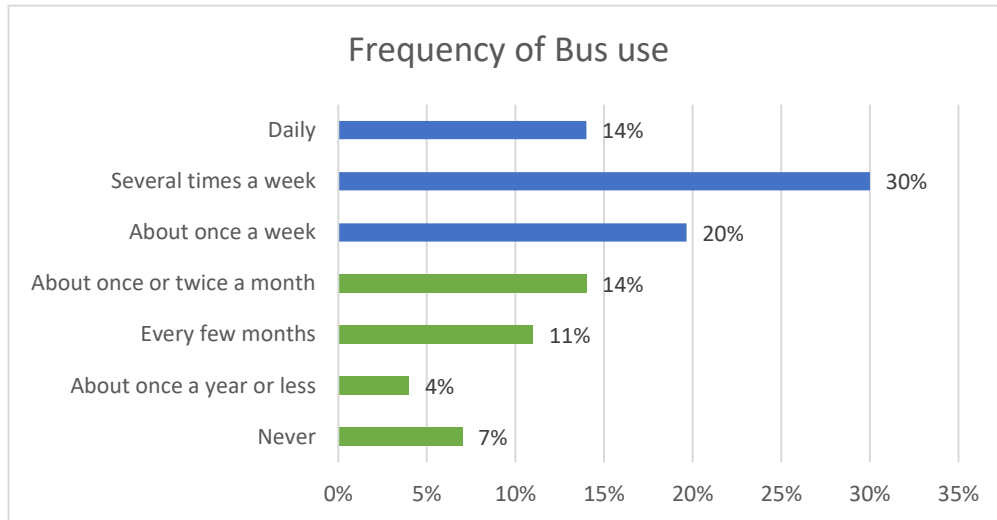
4. Satisfaction with Bus Services in Wiltshire

4.1   Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with bus services provided in Wiltshire from 1 - very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied (Question 4). Overall, 25% of respondents rated their satisfaction with services as either 4 or 5, compared to 29% for frequent bus users and 19% for infrequent users (see Figure 4-1). Similarly, infrequent users were more than twice as likely to be very dissatisfied with services (rating services as 1), than frequent users.

Figure 4-1 – Satisfaction with Current Bus Services Provided
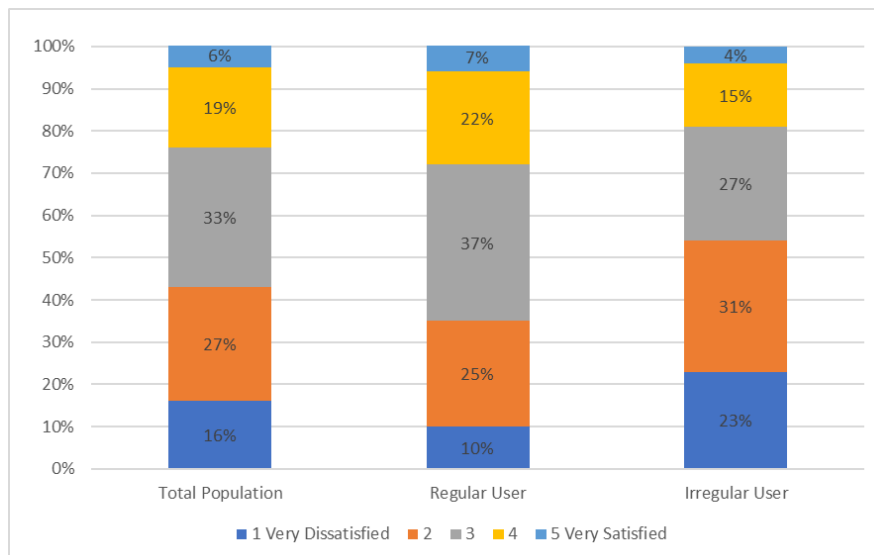
5. Ease of making journeys without access to any bus services

5.1   Respondents were asked how easy they would find it to complete particular journeys if they did not have access to any bus services (Question 5).

5.2   The journeys which respondents would find 'not at all easy' to make were hospital appointments and school / college journeys (Figure 5-1). 'Other' journeys included a combination of the journey types listed, as well as visiting friends and travelling to other towns.

Figure 5-1: Ease of making particular journeys without access to any bus services
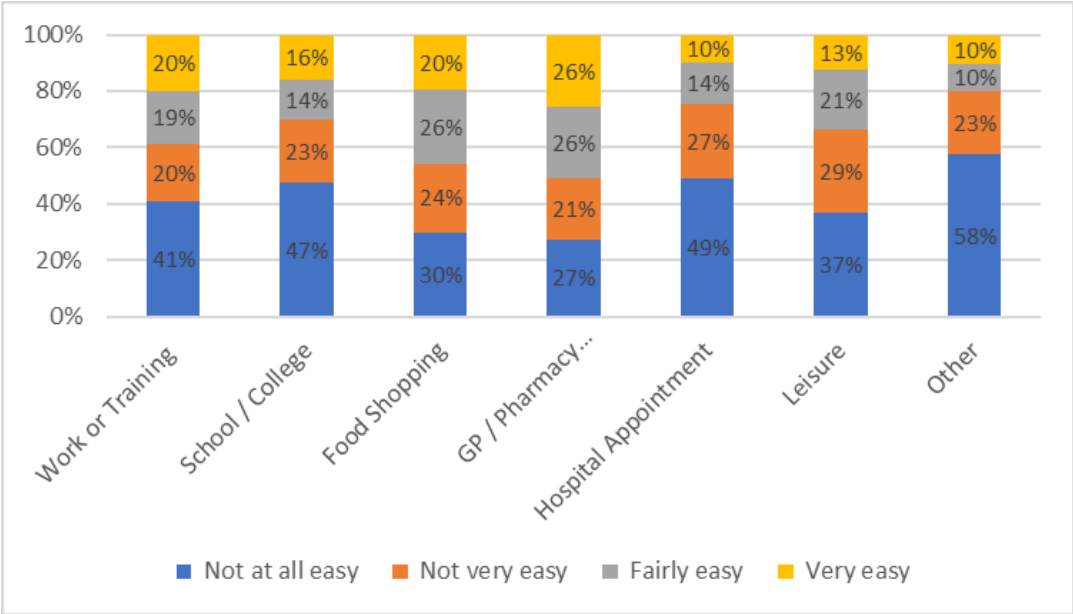
6. Frequency of bus use for different types of journey in Wiltshire

6.1   Respondents were asked how often they use a bus to make a range of journeys (Question 6). 37% of respondents frequently used the bus to go food shopping, while 31% frequently used the bus to make leisure journeys and 25% frequently used the bus to access work or training (Figure 6-1). 58% of respondents infrequently used the bus to attend hospital appointments (58%), 40% infrequently used the bus to access GP / Pharmacy appointments (40%) and 39% used the bus infrequently to access leisure. The majority of respondents indicated that they never used the bus to access work or training (61%) or a GP / Pharmacy appointment (55%). 82% of respondents never used the bus to access school or college, reflecting the age profile of the respondent population.

Figure 6-1: How often respondents use the bus service for different journey types

Figure 6-1: How often respondents use the bus service for different journey types
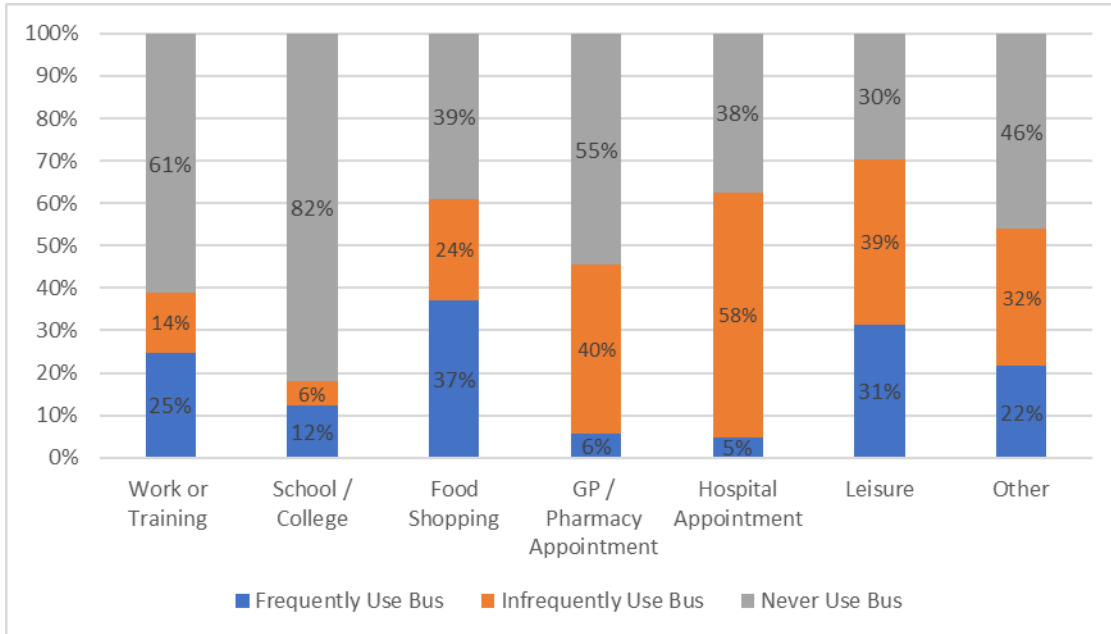
7. Support for Policy Measures

7.1   Table 7-1 summarises the 13 policies which are included within the draft Passenger Transport Policy.

Table 7-1: Policies contained in draft Passenger Transport Policy

Policy No.	Policy detail
P1	The Council will encourage public transport operators to meet the access needs of the county on a commercial basis
P2	The Council will encourage residents and visitors to use public transport whenever possible
P3	The Council will work to ensure that long-term, cost-effective access by public transport is planned in to new developments and financial contributions are secured from developers to support that provision
P4	The Council will consider the role of demand responsive transport services*, financially supporting and promoting them as appropriate to complement mainline public transport services
P5	The Council will work with bus operators to ensure that public transport information is up to date, clear and accurate, and available via a wide range of printed and digital sources
P6	The Council will explore options for implementing high frequency, high quality bus routes in the county
P7	The Council will work to improve interchange between transport modes (such as rail and bus) to increase travel by public transport
P8	The Council will encourage the use of low and zero emission vehicles on commercial public transport services (and move towards low emission vehicles on supported services) to improve air quality across the county
P9	The Council will promote concessionary travel to encourage elderly and disabled customers to access local facilities and services by bus
P10	Where residents are not able to access public transport services the Council will champion independent living among residents by encouraging use of community transport
P11	The Council will prioritise support for public transport which provides access to employment and training, education, essential shopping and healthcare
P12	The Council will ensure that the public transport it supports offers value for money for the county's taxpayers
P13	The Council will ensure that cross-boundary services form an important element of the county's public transport network

7.2   There was broad support for the majority of policies in the Public Transport Policy as shown in Figure 7-1. Respondents were asked to explain their reasoning for not supporting any particular policies. In relation to Policy one - 'The Council will encourage public transport operators to meet the access needs of the county on a commercial basis' - respondents were concerned about the focus on commercial needs and value for money rather than necessity of service or any associated social benefits. In addition, respondents expressed concerns regarding Policy four – 'The Council will consider the role of demand responsive transport services*, financially supporting and promoting them as appropriate to complement mainline public transport services' - as they felt DRT offered poor value for money, had failed in other areas, and was not a viable alternative to car travel.

Figure 7-1: Extent of support for policies within Public Transport Policy
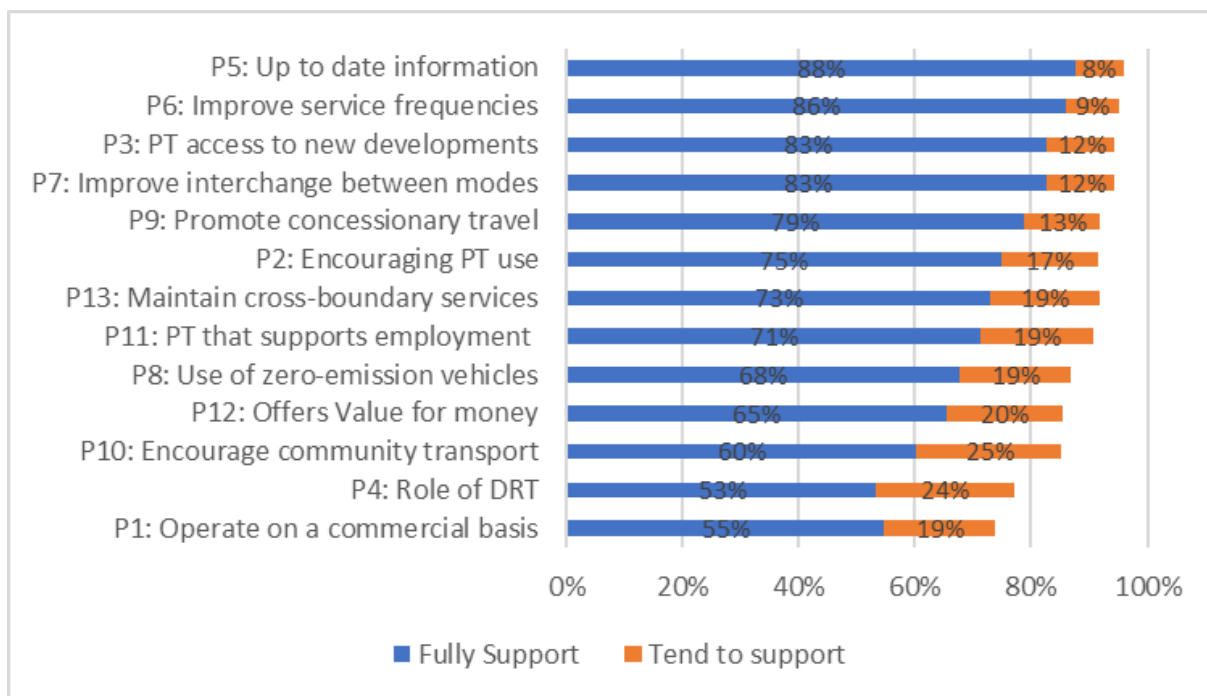
8. Extent of agreement that the Public Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys

8.1   Just over 50% of respondents to Question 8 agreed that the Public Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys, although only 15% strongly agreed (Figure 8-1). A slightly higher proportion of frequent bus users (42%) tended to agree with the statement than infrequent users (33%).

8.2   15% of respondents disagreed that the Policy would provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys, whilst a third of respondents remained neutral.

Figure 8-1: Extent of agreement that the Public Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys
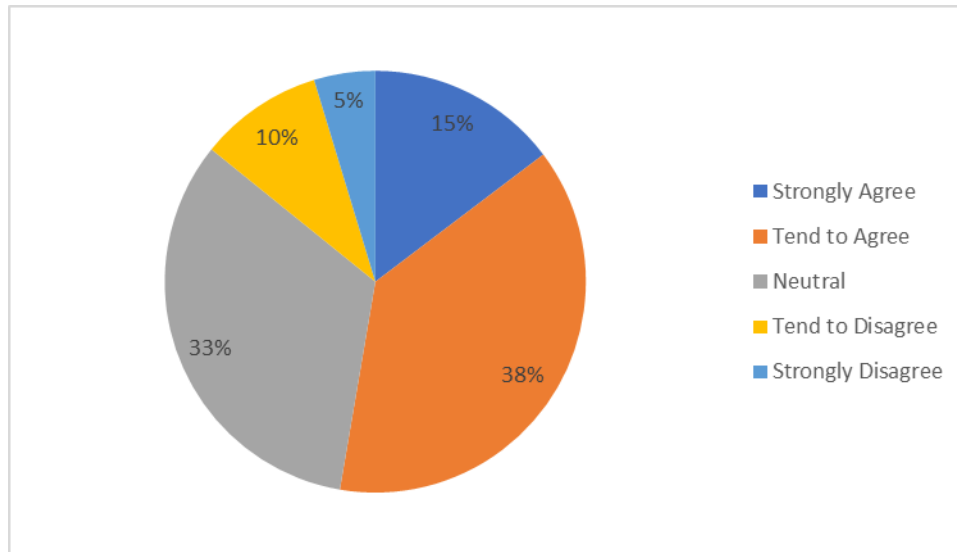
8.3   762 respondents indicated why they responded as they did to Question 8. Appendix 1 summarises the reasoning from those who agreed with the statement, while Appendix 2 summarises the responses from those who disagreed.

8.4   The most popular reasons amongst respondents who agreed were that the changes look positive; the policy will be great if it is actually implemented; public transport is essential to those without alternative means of travel; and that it is important to encourage public transport use as an alternative to car travel.

8.5   Among those who disagreed, the most popular reasons were that they were not convinced the policy would be delivered/successful based on the state of current bus services; they felt there was a need for greater frequency of services, as well as better coverage of the whole county; and they felt services need to stop being terminated.

9. Travel for Young People

9.1   Almost half of respondents (48%) considered that young people should be eligible for cheaper travel up to the age of 18, while 17% of respondents considered travel should be cheaper up to the age of 16 (Figure 9-1). More than 25% of respondents considered that travel should be cheaper for young people up to the age of 25.

Figure 9-1: Age at which young people should be eligible for cheaper travel
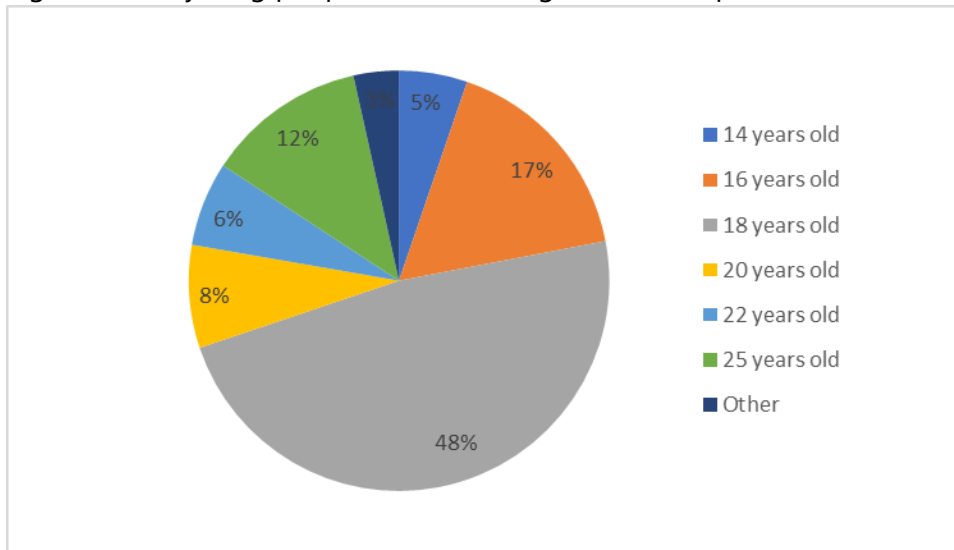
9.2   With regard to the level of discount that should be applied to young people's fares, the majority of respondents (60%) considered it should be half the adult fare, although 19% considered that young people should have free fares (Figure 9-2). Approximately 13% of respondents considered that the discount should be one third of an adult fare, although approximately 8% felt it should be set at two-thirds of an adult fare.

Figure 9-2: Fare levels to apply to young people
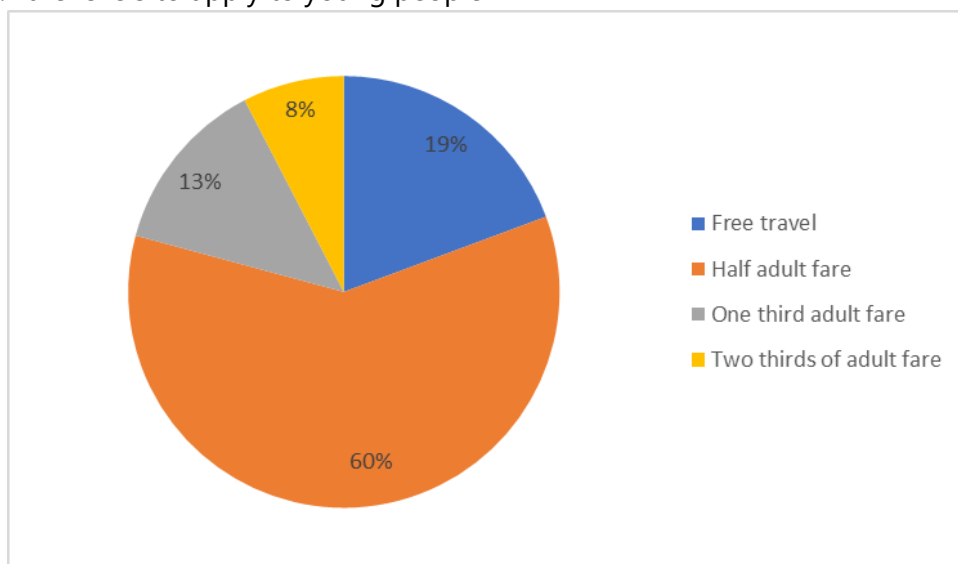
10. Other ways to provide value for money

10.1   Respondents were asked what else the Council could do to provide value for money public transport services (Question 12). 478 respondents answered this question; a summary of the responses is provided in Appendix 3.

10.2   46 ways of providing value for money services were mentioned by multiple respondents. The most popular response, raised by 69 respondents, was to improve service frequencies. There was also widespread support for:

- continuing the current £2 single fare (42 respondents)
- improving service coverage across the county (39 respondents)
- improving service reliability (38 respondents)
- provision of real time information, at bus stops and/or through an app (29 respondents)
- Availability of through tickets for different operators and modes (21 respondents)
- Cheaper fares (20 respondents)
- Improving weekend service frequencies (19 respondents)
- Improving evening / off-peak frequencies (16 respondents)
- smaller vehicles (16 respondents)
- concessionary passes to work before 9:30am (15 respondents)
- student / young person fares discounts (15 respondents)

11. Any other comments

11.1   Respondents were asked if they had any other comments, including on other elements of the Public Transport Policy (Question 13). 382 respondents answered this question; a summary of the responses is provided in Appendix 4. There was some duplication with responses to Question 12, for example, the most common response was to increase bus frequencies, raised by 63 respondents. Other popular responses were:

- Increase rural service frequencies (32 respondents)
- Improve overall service reliability (26 respondents)
- Provide more frequent off-peak services (23 respondents)

Appendices

**Appendix 1: Reasons for agreeing that the Passenger Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys**

Tend to / Strongly Agree Reasoning	No. of Respondents
Changes look positive	51
Policy will be great if actually implemented	49
Public transport essential to those without alternative means of travel	32
Important to encourage public transport as an alternative to cars	32
Need more frequent services	29
Not convinced, based on state of current bus services	27
Wait until it's actually implemented	24
Environmental benefits	23
Elderly / disabled rely on it	22
Need more reliable services	21
Sceptical that there is money to make necessary changes	21
Buses currently meet my needs	17
Need to improve service coverage	15
Policies don't always achieve intended outcomes	15
Could improve connectivity between rural areas and towns / railway stations	11
Commercial factors not overriding community need	10
Could stop service cutbacks	9
Provides benefit to the community	9
Villages / rural areas still isolated	9
Appears council have given careful consideration to the policy	8
Young people rely on it	8
Would better serve my needs	6
Enables public to use transport more often	6
Policies look good and I use the bus frequently	6
More off-peak services needed	5
Should provide good service and public transport improvements	4
Provides benefit to the community	4
Integrated network needed to genuinely change people behavior	4
Any change is better than current services	4
Don't know what the policy/survey actually is	3
Should lead to improved health / mental health	3
Improved air quality	3
Who decides what is priority	3
Improve real time information	3
Must serve new developments	3
Coverage more important than frequency	3
If it leads to greater connectivity with other modes	3
Current cross border services don't meet my needs	3
Must serve the needs of workers	2
Continued investment in public transport required	2
Policy appears vague and unclear	2
If previously discontinued bus services are reinstated	2
Cost of use appears to be missing from the policy	2
Sceptical of DRT	2

Appendix 2: Reasons for disagreeing that the Passenger Transport Policy will provide an efficient bus network that meets user needs for priority journeys

Tend to / Strongly Disagree Reasoning	No. of Respondents
Not convinced policy will be delivered/successful , based on state of current bus services	31
Need more frequent services	21
Greater service coverage needed	18
Need to stop services being discontinued	16
Sceptical policies will actually be delivered / objectives achieved	14
More off-peak services needed	3
Villages / rural areas still isolated	12
Don't believe it will happen	11
Improve current reliability	8
Don't believe rural needs are being considered	7
Lack confidence in Salisbury Reds	6
Who decides what is priority	6
Have seen questionnaires like this before and nothing changes	6
Sceptical that there is money to make necessary changes	5
Past experience	4
Sceptical that there is political will to make necessary changes	4
Commercial factors not overriding community need	4
Not a viable alternative to car travel	3
WCC has other priorities	3
Wait to actually see it in practice	2
Don't know what the policy/survey actually is	2
Cheaper fares needed	2
Policies don't always achieve intended outcomes	2
Policy will be great if actually implemented	2

Appendix 3: Suggestions for other things the Council could do to provide value for money services

Suggested improvement	No. of Respondents
Greater service frequency	69
Continue £2 single fares	42
Greater service coverage	39
Greater service reliability	38
Real time service information	29
Availability of through tickets for different operators and modes	21
Cheaper fares	20
Greater weekend frequency	19
Greater evening/off-peak frequency	16
Smaller vehicles - double deckers often half empty	16
Concessionary travel free before 9:30am	15
Student / young persons fares discounts	15
Improved bus shelters	13
Improved rural travel	12
Clear / updated timetables	10
Better / cleaner buses	10
Lower fares on non-single journeys	10
Concessionary fares for seniors to be cheap but not free to finance improvement	10
Greater connectivity with other modes	10
App	8
Booking service / DRT in rural areas	7
Bus priority measures	7
Smaller buses on country roads	7
Better / more conveniently located bus stops	6
Fare cap	6
Free children's / school fares	6
Season passes	6
Family day tickets	5
Wheelchair / pushchair accessibility	4
Concessionary travel for carers/NHS staff	4
Weekly tickets	4
Nationalise buses	4
Free services	4
Actively discourage car use	4
Increased school transport	3
Electric vehicles	3
Less changing buses/split journeys	2
Lobby Government for greater public support	2
Cheaper than equivalent train tickets	2
More stable free wifi / charging ports	2
Improved image of bus travel	2
Cheaper off-peak travel	2
Franchising	2
Route overhaul	2
Community engagement about quality of service	2
Armed Forces discount	2

Appendix 4: Any other comments

Other comments	No. of respondents
Increase bus frequencies	63
Increased rural frequency	32
Overall more reliable service	26
More frequent off-peak services	23
Improve the frequency of the D1 service	14
Real time information about bus times	14
Greater consideration of the needs of people in rural areas.	13
Pensioners to be able to use concessionary pass before 9:30am	12
Stop reducing service frequencies	9
Prioritising longer journeys to cover more stops	7
Measures to disincentivise driving	6
Faresaver is inadequate	6
Greater connectivity at major transport hubs	6
Easier accessible bus stops	6
Poor quality of the Salisbury Red	5
Improve the quality of the buses	5
£2 single fare should become permanent	5
Financial support to bus companies	4
More frequent R6 service	4
Buses are a necessity to people who rely on them	4
Better public transport to new developments	4
Ensuring buses are clean and pleasant	4
Council take greater control of bus service provision	4
Newer buses in Swindon	4
Quicker bus journeys	4
Scrap DRT - it doesn't work for elderly or disabled, with nowhere to wait	4
Greater cooperation between counties on bus service provision	4
Introduce park and rides separate from standard services	3
Lack of seating and Castle Street bus stop	3
Shuttle bus between Salisbury station and city centre	3
Remove Fisherton street cycle lane	3
Greater evening bus frequencies in and out of Bath	3
Nationalise the service	3
Service from town centre to Stonehenge for tourists	3
Lack of cycle routes in Royal Wootton Basset	2
Add a north-south trainline	2
Keep the number 94 bus	2
Poor quality of R4 and R12 services	2
Increase the frequency of the 44	2

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

6 February 2024

Subject:	**Wiltshire Council's Housing Board Annual Report**

Cabinet Member: Cllr Phil Alford

Key Decision: N

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet regarding the activities of Wiltshire Council's Housing Board (WCHB) between October 2022 and November 2023.

The primary role of the WCHB is to develop and approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan and then to ensure that Plan is being implemented by the HRA Housing Management Service.

Throughout the year the WCHB is regularly updated about the HRA budget position, key performance indicators (KPIs), and other key activities and issues across the service. A key action in late 2023 has been the development of a new Housing Scorecard incorporating the most relevant and valuable KPIs to enhance the monitoring and management of service performance.

This Annual Report was presented to the WCHB at the AGM on 29 November 2023. It will be presented to the Environment Select Committee (ESC) on 11 January 2023.

WCHB is in its third cycle of 4 years, linked to the council's local electoral cycle; this cycle commenced after elections in May 2021 and will run until May 2025.

Proposal(s)

For Cabinet to:

1) Note this Annual Report.

Reason for Proposal(s)

WCHB Terms of Reference require an Annual Report to be presented to WCHB AGM and Cabinet.

Terence Herbert
Chief Executive

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

6 February 2024

Subject:	**Wiltshire Council's Housing Board Annual Report**

Cabinet Member: Cllr Phil Alford

Key Decision: N

Purpose of Report

1. In accordance with the Terms of Reference for the board, to update Cabinet regarding the activities of Wiltshire Council's Housing Board (WCHB) between October 2022 and November 2023 and provide an overview of the activities and performance across the HRA service.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. This report supports the Business Plan 2022 to 2032, in particular our mission to ensure 'The people of Wiltshire are empowered to live full, healthy and enriched lives', 'Our communities continue to be beautiful and exciting places to live', 'Our local economy thrives and is supported by a skilled workforce' and 'We lead the way in how councils and counties mitigate the climate challenges ahead'. Additionally, the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) actions support: 'We have vibrant, well-connected communities', 'We ensure decisions are evidence-based', 'We live well together', 'We have the right housing', 'We take responsibility for the environment' and 'We are on the path to carbon neutral (net zero)', and more around supporting vulnerable customers and supporting the local economy.

Overview and Scrutiny Engagement

3. This report is for noting by Cabinet. It was presented to the WCHB at its meeting held on 29 November 2023 and to the Environment Select Committee (ESC) at its meeting held on 11 January 2024.

Background

4. The current WCHB was appointed between May and July 2021 following a recruitment process and interviews by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Senior Officers.

5. Since 2021 there have been several changes to board membership as a result of tenant members leaving or becoming ineligible following move out of council housing.

6. WCHB meets bi-monthly to consider all matters relating to the delivery of the HRA Business Plan and the activity of the Housing Management Service. The board considers policy, performance, strategy, and high-level operational issues relating to the delivery of that service.

Overview of Key Achievements over the past 12 months

Community Support

7. Continuing Actions
   - Officers continued working remotely with more movement back toward office work including 2 Housing Board meetings now being held in-person each year.
   - Repairs continued with backlogs cleared and new repairs reported during 2022/23 in total were 17,971.
   - Enhanced Tenancy Sustainment support secured over £816,844 in additional income for tenants.

8. Resident Engagement
   - 11 full Estate Inspections with improved outcomes.
   - Scrutiny returned to in-person meetings.
   - Return to in-person engagement as well as continued online sessions.
   - New Resident Engagement Plan 2024-2027 agreed by the Housing Board.
   - 14 Small Improvement Bids delivered.
   - 60 Community Club and Sheltered Scheme meetings held.
   - 3 x live cookery training sessions + an online cookery course delivered.

9. Service Reorganisation
   The Housing Management Service was reorganised with the customer-facing activity delivered on an area basis enhancing tenant/officer relationships, increasing local knowledge and familiarity with issues, and creating a sense of local ownership for staff.

Planned Investment in Homes

10. Planned Maintenance Programmes
    The majority of the planned maintenance works are delivered across a range of works contracts. All of these were re-procured in 2023 with new contracts starting in October. The new number of contracts increased with a previous single contract for fabric works being split into 5 separate lots, encouraging smaller and more specialist providers to bid for the works. These contracts have been mobilised and new work programmes have been agreed.

11. Housing Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEP)
    Progress has continued with the works to improve the energy performance, reduce costs for tenants, and reduce carbon emissions from across all properties in the HRA. Work has focused on those properties with the greatest potential increase in energy efficiency, and our current stock with air source heat pumps installed. Work included retrofit assessments, pre-works Energy Performance Certificates (EPC's), and preparing works programmes for our partnership contractors. The council continues to receive positive feedback from tenants who have benefited from HEEP works.

    The key achievement this period was the completion of two model properties in the same street in Bemerton Heath. Each has been fully refurbished with identical insulation, fixtures and fittings including solar panels and electric vehicle charging

points, but with different heating systems. One house uses an Air Source Heat Pump, the other is heated by infra-red panels. We will be working with the tenants to monitor performance and cost from each system.

12. Council House Build Programme

Profiled programme expenditure:

Phase	HRA Business Plan No. of Units	Current position – December 2023	HRA Business Plan approved figures	Current position – December 2023
2	28	28	£5,773,788	£5,803,102
3.1	91	94	£21,950,972	£24,939,152
3.2	98	98	£20,446,014	£31,016,875
3.3	100	102	£20,000,000	£30,829,676
3.4	100	99	£20,000,000	£39,701,603

The above revised costs are, as a result of:

- Increase in house prices since the birth of the programme some 4 years ago, this has driven up costs of market acquisitions and s106 acquisitions which are purchased at a discounted market led rate. (Peaked at approximately 14%.)
- Increased build cost has been attributed to meeting higher environmental standards and achieving zero carbon on new build homes. i.e., the new standards have seen approximately £14k increase per property for increased specification of fabric/materials and technology. (Peaking at approximately 15%.)
- In addition to the increased standards, the cost of delivering homes using MMC solutions currently comes at a premium.
- Development of New Build Sheltered Schemes is costly, they are often developed over a large footprints with wide corridors and communal space, increasing costs to the project and reducing revenue opportunity. Further additional costs within the Sheltered Projects are decanting/home loss payments and moving costs.
- Inflation still remains high, price increases are likely to occur as business margin price levels to recover losses suffered as a result of the pandemic, and ongoing conflicts. (Peaking at approximately 12%.)
- Even though materials cost increases have stabilised, there is no evidence of costs falling.
- Fluctuating labour costs are increasing/have increased due to the shortage of skilled labour.
- With materials still at historically high levels and labour costs on the increase, we explore the challenges the industry continues to face.

Note: the current position has not been agreed by the Housing Board or by Cabinet, a paper will follow later in the new year proposing agreement and which will set out

the position further. The paper will be developed to make the Cabinet aware of the increased costs, and seek approval to increase the total programme budget in line with the costs. In total, all current projects within the programme, still sit within the agreed £195m parameter.

Breakdown of Programme by delivery type, in phases.

a)   Update on previously approved phases:

Activity	Phase 3.1	Phase 3.2	Phase 3.3	Phase 3.4
Year started	2020	2021	2022	2023
Market Acquisitions	18no	6no	34no**	13no
S106 New Build Acquisitions	24no*	28no	0	0no
Land Led Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) New Build – Zero Carbon in use	52no	18no	45no	26no
New sheltered homes	0	40no	20no (up to)	60no (up to)
Development agreement acquisitions - (additionality)	0	7no	0	0
Phase Total	**94no**	**99no**	**99no**	**99no**
Current Total of Completions and Occupations at time of writing	48no	22no	29no	0no
Average cost per home at time of writing	£265,258	£312,180	£311,410	£401,026
Fully committed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* Phase 3.1 S106 New Build Acquisitions - 6no Zero Carbon in use
** Phase 3.3 Market Acquisitions - 30no x LAHF for Afghan and Ukrainian Refugees

b)   New Build/s106 Acquisition occupied homes within the above phases to date has received an average of 80% satisfaction rate from residents. This is gauged from satisfaction surveys having occupied their home for at least 6 months.

c)   Introduction on new/forthcoming phases:

Activity	Phase 3.5	Phase 3.6	Phase 3.7
Year started	2024	2025	2026
Market Acquisitions	9no	16no	0
S106 New Build Acquisitions	20no	0	0
Land Led Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) New Build – Zero Carbon in use	48no	3no	0
New sheltered homes	26no (up to)	0no	0
Development agreement acquisitions - (additionality)	0	0	0
Phase Total	**103no**	**19no**	**0**

Current Total of Completions and Occupations at time of writing	0	0	0
Average cost per home at time of writing	£331,338	£274,106	0
Fully committed	Yes	No	No

d) With Phases 3.1-3.4 fully committed:

- Phase 3.5 includes homes being purchased for Homes England's SHAP (Single Homeless Accommodation Programme).
- Phase 3.6 includes home being purchased using Homes for Ukraine funding, 13no.

e) Phase 3.6 has scope for additional housing numbers as new opportunities arise and when it reaches 100 homes, phase 3.7 will open.

f) The opportunities currently being explored for Phases 3.6 include s106/development agreement opportunities at Devizes and Chippenham and regular strategic buy back requests, mainly across southern and central Wiltshire. Land Led WC opportunities are engaged with as they are submitted to the Residential Development Team.

The phase has scope for additional housing numbers to be added now to this stage as new opportunities arise, when this stage reaches 100 homes, **phase 3.7** will open.

g) It is possible, both new build and purchasing sites can fall in and out of the programme, or deliver less units as due diligence on each takes place.

h) There are currently 505 homes within the Phase 3 (1000 homes programme). 96 homes have been delivered to date, leaving 409 within the current pipeline. 174 of the 505 homes have been acquired either by means of purchase or s106 acquisition.

i) The original programme intention was to see a 70/30 split in favour of new build.

MMC 3 Year procurement process

a) This year we have entered contract via the Southwest Procurement Alliance Framework for a 3-year MMC partner (Rollalong) to deliver up to 1,000 new homes manufactured for Wiltshire Council and Magna Housing Association.

b) The collaboration with Magna Housing will enable WC to achieve a more competitive manufacturing price than contracting alone.

c) The tender included a fixed price guarantee for any orders placed before the end of March 2023, this was trigged by the ordering of the first 83 WC homes, across 3 sites.

d)   By working together, it is possible to save costs on design and we are sharing good practice and absorbing learning already achieved with neighbouring housing providers.

Programme Progress, headlines

a)   Works have started on site of two of the three MMC Pilot sites at, Corsley and Durrington, Rowde will now follow shortly. Work is now underway for the units to be completed in the factory and the ground works contractor is on site at Durrington and Corsley preparing for the delivery of the homes.

b)   Work continues with the NHS to purchase land from them in Devizes that will see 33 affordable homes delivered, planning permission is soon to be granted following approval of the Outline application which is subject to a s106 agreement.

c)   The Lower Park Farm application in Devizes for 33 units is ready for re-submission on confirmation that the land will be allocated as designated housing land, following the conclusion of the Devizes Neighbourhood Plan consultation.

d)   The Planning Application at Bartlett House in Ludgershall has been submitted for 18 general needs affordable homes, the outcome of the application is awaited, expected early in the new year.

e)   Further Planning Applications are being worked on in the design process at Salisbury, Netheravon (subject to land purchase with the MOD), Trowbridge, Upavon and Rowde.

f)   S106 acquisition sites are entering contract negotiations stage at Trowbridge and Semington which will see the delivery of 20 new zero carbon homes.

g)   Work also continues at two sites in Mere, Corsham, and Melksham to progress new older persons accommodation within these towns.

h)   2 homes have competed with 5 further homes in conveyance for the SHAP programme – Single Homes Accommodation Programme and are expected to be ready for occupation by March 2024. These are part funded by Homes England.

i)   To date in 2023/24, we have seen the completion of 26 homes for the LAHF programme – Local Authority Housing Fund for Ukrainian and Afghan Refugees, also part funded by Homes England and 5 x general needs properties in Salisbury. 5 x further purchases have also completed with a mix of SHAP – Single Homeless Accommodation Programme (2no), 2 x General Needs and 1 x Temporary Accommodation home.

j)   The remainder of the year is to see 41 further homes complete which are a mix of open market purchasing, land led MMC construction, development agreement acquisition and s106 acquisition.

13. Service Performance

a)   The service is replacing its Key Performance Indicator(s) document with a Housing Scorecard which was first presented to the Housing Board in draft in November 2023. The scorecard will continue to be developed with input from the Board.

b)   The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) previously carried out a STAR Survey every 2 years to understand our residents' views about our services. In 2023 the STAR survey was replaced with the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) survey. This approach involves surveying one-half of our tenants each year, with the pattern repeated every 2 years.

A computer-generated random sample of 2,562 households were invited to take part in the survey, which is a half census. All tenants with a valid email address on QL were sent an invitation to complete the survey via online form. After 2 weeks, tenants who had not completed via online form were sent a paper copy by post with a freepost return envelope.

As with the STAR survey, the service takes the results of the TSM and the information it provides about the tenants' views of our service and generates an improvement action plan to address the areas of concern. The service has reviewed the results of the TSM survey and for each measure has produced an action plan. The sector is understood to have seen a 5% downturn across the board. ARP Research's evidence is understood to suggest an 8% decrease across the board.

The survey will be repeated in July 2024 to the remaining households that were not surveyed this time in order to gain a full census survey.

The questions are benchmarked against ARP Research's (research partner) client database of completed TSM compliant surveys. For the overall satisfaction score this includes 14 landlords, amongst which 7 are local authorities and 3 are ALMOs.

The Executive Summary is replicated below (TSM Survey 2023, page 2):

Bench mark	2022 result	Change over time	2023 result	Tenant Satisfaction Measure
72%	77%	⬇	70%	satisfaction overall
72%	80%	⬇	69%	home is safe
67%	N.A.		65%	home is well maintained
58%	N.A.		52%	communal areas clean and maintained
70%	74%	⬇	67%	repairs service in last 12 months
65%	68%	⬇	62%	time taken to complete last repair
57%	58%	⬇	49%	listens to views and acts on them
61%	66%	⬇	61%	being kept informed
72%	77%	⬇	64%	treated fairly and with respect
33%	N.A.		26%	approach to handling complaints
58%	61%	⬇	49%	makes a positive contribution to area
52%	55%	⬇	43%	approach to handling ASB

⬆ statistically significant improvement   ⬆⬇ no statistically significant change   ⬇ statistically significant decline

Report outcomes were presented to the Housing Board. The Housing Board agreed to note the contents of the cover report and the full Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) report that was attached to it. The Housing Board were asked to comment on and have input into the action plans which were appended to the paper presented to the Housing Board.

c)   iHousing portal

i)   More residents are signed up to use our digital option.

Former iHousing	New iHousing		
to November 2020	October 2021	14 November 2022	27 October 2023
900	**1,900**	**2,467**	**2,576**
Approximate registered users which included inactive and never used accounts.	Approximate registered users which is growing daily, especially when we send mass email blasts, we also email new tenants after 1 week, 6 weeks and 4 months, if they have not registered. Please Note: for October 2023, the data is for accounts with a 'Ten[ancy] Status' ('iHousing		

	Registered User' report) marked as 'Current'; it excludes 'Former' (870) and blank / unknown (89).

      ii)   More efficient and positive outcomes for customers.

d)   Resident Engagement Plan

      i)   A new Resident Engagement Plan was due to be introduced for 2024 onwards.

      ii)   Outcomes continued to be delivered, benefitting residents and their families throughout the last year.

      iii)   The Housing Board agreed to introduce a new Resident Engagement Plan at its meeting held on 29 November 2023.

14. Upcoming areas of work

    a)   Upcoming areas of work for the Sub-Committees may include:

      i)   Development and Investment ('Place')
          a.   Housing Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEP)
          b.   Council House Build Programme
          c.   Sheltered Housing Refurbishments
          d.   Sheltered Housing Review

      ii)   Finance and Policy ('Pounds')
          a.   Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan – including budget setting and rent setting

      iii)   Performance and Risk ('People')
          a.   TSM Survey – Action Monitoring
          b.   Regular Risk Update
          c.   Housing Scorecard
          d.   Resident Engagement Plan
          e.   Implementing reforms coming from the Social Housing White Paper

      Please Note: along with the main housing Board, all Sub-Committees would likely be involved with any matters coming from the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman Service.

    b)   Challenge and Change Group

      i)   Moved back to in-person working
      ii)   Key Performance Indicators (suggested by the Chairman of the Housing Board)
      iii)   Property Services Team, Voids and Notices of Promise (suggested by a Head of Service)
      iv)   Grounds Maintenance Team including what tenants want the service to develop into (suggested by a Head of Service)

c) Small Improvement Bid(s)

    i) 4 bids received for 2023/24 in phase 1
    ii) 10 bids received for 2023/24 in phase 2
    iii) Ongoing monies for future years

15. Priorities and Service Objectives

    a) Housing Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEP) – Climate Change
    b) Council Housing Build Programme
    c) Housing Board review and development

16. Membership and Attendance Record (October 2022 – November 2023)

WCHB Member	30/11	25/01	29/03	31/05	26/07	11/10	29/11	Total	2022
Councillor Phil Alford	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7 (100%)	7 (100%)
Rachael Arnott (Tenant Member)	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	5 (71%)	6 (86%)
Jenny Bolwell (Tenant Member)	Not a member	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	4 (67%) Not a member for 1 meeting	Not a member
Councillor Richard Britton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7 (100%)	7 (100%)
Cris David (Tenant Member)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	5 (71%)	6 (86%)
Kevin Ellis-Brush (Independent Member)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	6 (86%)	7 (100%)
Glenn Loftus (Independent Member)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	6 (86%)	6 (86%)
Simon Maggs (Independent Member)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	7 (100%)	7 (100%)
Councillor Ricky Rogers	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	6 (86%)	6 (100%)

									Not a member for 1 meeting

17. Attendance relates to Board meetings only (that is, the figures exclude Away-Days, sub-committees, etcetera).

18. Sub-Committee Membership

19. Whilst all members are able to attend any or all of the sub-committees, membership of the sub-committees is as follows:

Housing Board member	Development and Investment ('Place')	Finance and Policy ('Pounds')	Performance and Risk ('People')
Councillor Phil Alford	✘	✔	✔
Rachael Arnott	✔	✘	✔
Jenny Bolwell	TBC	TBC	TBC
Councillor Richard Britton	✘	✔	✘
Cris David	✔	✔	✔
Kevin Ellis-Brush	✘	✔	✘
Glenn Loftus	✔	✘	✔
Simon Maggs	✔	✘	✘
Councillor Ricky Rogers	TBC	TBC	TBC

Safeguarding Implications

20. There are no significant safeguarding implications associated with this report.

Public Health Implications

21. There are no significant public health implications associated with this report.

Procurement Implications

22. There are no significant corporate procurement implications associated with this report; although should the Board make recommendations regarding procurement of services to be delivered to residents, then this will become a consideration.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

23. All Board members operate in and treat all residents in a fair and balanced manner, maintain their independence and make recommendations to Housing Management. Board members do not represent a particular area; they represent all council residents in the county of Wiltshire and make recommendations in the best interests of all council residents in Wiltshire. The service continually works toward Housing Board membership better reflecting council house residents, in respect of the protected characteristics of the Equalities Act.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

24. There are no significant environmental or climate change implications associated with this report. That is because the report is for noting not making a decision. Members may consider the HEEP programme discussed above and net-zero MMC housing in relation to environmental and climate change considerations.

Workforce Implications

25. There are no significant workforce implications associated with this report.

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

26. Wiltshire Council's Housing Board would fail to meet the requirements of its Terms of Reference, namely to provide an Annual Report to Cabinet.

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

27. Vacancies can occur from time-to-time; there is a risk that there may not be any applicants for vacant posts, however recent experience demonstrates that there was a wealth of applicants for member types (councillor, independent or tenant). We will continue with the same recruitment approach, where necessary.

Financial Implications

28. There are no significant financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

29. There are no significant legal implications associated with this report.

Options Considered

30. A formal report to Cabinet is required. No alternative options were considered.

Conclusions

31. There is increasing evidence that Wiltshire Council's Housing Board is having a positive impact on the quality of service provision to residents and their families, has itself created

an additional opportunity for residents to engage with the service and shaped further engagement opportunities.

Proposal

32. For Cabinet to:

   1) Note this Annual Report.

Reason for Proposal

33. Wiltshire Council's Housing Board's Terms of Reference require an Annual Report to be presented to Cabinet.

James Barrah (Director - Assets)

Report Author: Ian Seeckts, Governance and Scrutiny Officer, ian.seeckts@wiltshire.gov.uk, Tel: 01722 434353

2 January 2024

Appendices

Appendix A – Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders 2022/23.

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: TSM [Tenant Satisfaction Measures] Survey 2023.

Wiltshire Council

Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders 2022/2023

Better Homes Better Neighbourhoods Better Lives

Wiltshire Council

Welcome to this year's Annual Report for Tenants and Leaseholders

Another financial year has come to an end, and I am delighted that we are seeing service improvements across the board that matter to our residents and their families. As Chairman of the Housing Board, I see the Key Performance Indicators on a regular basis. All Board members have been delighted to see new tenants' general satisfaction levels tick up. In the first quarter of 2022/23, we saw this percentage measure in the low eighties, and by the end of the year we've succeeded in pushing it back up into the mid-nineties.

This has been achieved through a combination of residents and officers working together. We call this partnership working and, at the Board level, co-regulation.

On the repairs side, we are continuing to focus our efforts to ensure we drive improvements for you. We have had some difficulties in this area and in some of our planned works. But going forward you should see some great improvements as the challenges we have had around contractor partners is brought under control.

As a supporter of delivering energy efficient properties to our customers, I and the Board are fully behind our Housing Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEP). This project is investing millions of pounds in your homes, over several years. It means that you and your families should benefit from the latest technologies – from better insulation to solar panels, and many other things too.

Better Homes Better Neighbourhoods Better Lives

Wiltshire Council

I am delighted to see the partnership working between residents and their families, and the council, which has benefitted everyone. And I am also pleased to see the volunteers that choose to engage with us and help deliver service improvements for everyone. Please look at the work of your Challenge and Change Group to see what they do for you too. Members are volunteer tenants and leaseholders who look at a narrow part of the service, compare it against what we say we will do, compare it against best practice, and then make recommendations for how we can make things even better.

Even more will be done for our residents and their families in the years ahead as I work closely with residents, the Housing Board, officers and my Portfolio Holder for Housing, Robert Yuill. I want to make sure that issues that are important to residents and their families are dealt with in a fair and balanced way and can be quickly fed back to the Cabinet. This direct line into the Cabinet will continue to make decision making even quicker. If you want to be involved in decision making, then you will be. Your voice is important to me. I want to make sure it is heard. If you want to let me know what is important to you, please feel free to contact me or even come over for a chat if you see me out and about.

I would like to thank all of you again for everything that you have done, as well as the officers. I know that we will all continue to work together as it is that spirit which created a terrific housing department in the first place. If you would like to come along (virtually using Microsoft Teams or we can let you know if we're holding one in-person) to a future Housing Board meeting, you would be very welcome. Your Resident Engagement Team can let you know about future dates for the Board, and they are also on our webpage (wiltshire.gov.uk/housing-resident-involvement).

Wiltshire Council

Phil Alford
Wiltshire Councillor – Melksham Without North and Shurnhold
Cabinet Member for Housing, Strategic Assets and Asset Transfer

Some of our housing stock

Wiltshire Council

What have we achieved this year?

We have helped our tenants secure over **£816,844** in additional income

46% of households are registered to use iHousing

17,971 new repairs reported

99.5% of properties have a valid gas safety certificate

1,633 STAR surveys returned

Wiltshire Council

11 full estate inspections completed

53 right to buy applications received

5,800 of the copies of the annual Housing Matters magazine were sent out

We hold a valid email address for over **75%** of our properties

Continued investment in the Housing Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEP)

Wiltshire Council

Housing in Wiltshire

We currently manage 5,282 dwellings and 1,000 lettable garages in Wiltshire with the main concentration being in the south of the county. These dwellings are made up of various property types, flats, maisonettes, houses, and bungalows.

> **34** properties were sold as part of the government's 'Right to Buy' scheme

How we look after your property

Our housing stock is looked after in patches. We provided services to these patches including planned and cyclical maintenance, responsive repairs, void management, rent collection, rent arrears recovery, tenancy enforcement, anti-social behaviour investigation and resident engagement.

How much we charge

The rent we receive is very important to us, as it pays for all the services we provide and for the upkeep, repair, and maintenance of all our properties, including your home.

We charge rent weekly, our average social weekly rent in 2022/2023 was **£94.06** and our average affordable weekly rent was **£132.46**.

How we spend your rent

What we spent your rent on	
Property repairs and maintenance *Responsive repairs, refurbishment of properties before re-letting and cyclical maintenance.*	**£ 6.7 Million**
Housing management and related costs *Includes officer and administration costs, resident involvement activities, utility bills, legal fees and IT costs.*	**£ 3.7 Million**
Capital contribution *Payments made towards the cost of major works and improvements.*	**£ 0.6 Million** ESTIMATE (budget figures used)
Capital depreciation *An adjustment to account for the annual change in the useful economic life of the housing stock due to factors such as wear and tear.*	**£ 12.0 Million** ESTIMATE (budget figures used)
Interest charged on loans *The council took a loan to buy itself out of the previous subsidy system.*	**£ 3.1 Million**
Provision for bad debts *The amount put aside to cover bad debts owed to the council and unlikely to be repaid.*	**£ 0.3 Million**
Total Expenditure	**£ 26.5 Million**

The slight difference in the totals is due to the rounded of figures.

Income Recovery

We take money owed to us very seriously, as this money is needed to invest in our properties, your homes. The cost of living and energy prices has undoubtedly had an impact on arrears levels and has pushed the end of year performance above the 2.75% target. These increases are being felt across the sector. We are still dealing with the increased arrears caused by the Covid pandemic. High level arrears accrued during this time are slowly reducing but are still affecting the overall target performance, this is expected to reduce over time.

Collection of rent from tenants in receipt of Universal Credit continues to be a challenge, particularly in the 5-week assessment period where tenants effectively have no income.

We have been working hard to implement strategies to deal with the cost of living and energy price increases and continue to support the most vulnerable through our Tenancy Sustainment Team. We have also been working with others housing providers through the Wiltshire Money Forum, looking at ideas and best practices to help support those most vulnerable to fuel poverty.

The former tenant arrears continue to be well managed and has remined below the set target, however, it has slightly increased on last year, this is largely due to some large arrears' accounts moving from current to former tenants. It is difficult to recover debt and we are therefore in the process of implementing the use of debt agencies to further improve our collection rates.

The court system remains challenging with continuing delays affecting our ability to deal with serious non-payers.

We are about to introduce a new arrears management system, which rationalises the way arrears accounts are presented to Income Officers allowing them to focus on accounts which require urgent intervention. The system also provides analytics which will allow us to be more proactive in preventing arrears.

Key Performance Indicators	Achieved	Target	How did we do?
Rent arrears as percentage of rent due (Dwellings)	3.53%	2.75%	🙁
Former tenant arrears as percentage of rent due (Dwellings)	0.85%	1.00%	🙂
Rent arrears as percentage of rent due (Dwellings) - NON-UNIVERSAL CREDIT ONLY	1.66%	1.75%	🙂
Rent arrears as percentage of rent due (dwellings) – UNIVERSAL CREDIT	7.00%	8.00%	🙂

Tenancy Sustainment and Mental Health Support

Our tenancy sustainment service has continued to be a huge success, by providing ongoing support to our tenants experiencing financial difficulties. Engaging with us and using this service has helped tenants increase their income, reduce rent arrears, and overall sustain their tenancies and facilitate their independence. We also offer a mental health support service; we are happy to tailor support to meet the needs of our tenants who do not need a formal diagnosis – we just ask that they are willing to engage and work with us.

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Wiltshire Council

As the demand for these valuable services increases, we have continued to grow the team, we now have a team of 9 consisting of 5 Tenancy Sustainment Officers (TSO), 1 Hoarding Specialist, 2 Mental Health Officers and an Admin Support Officer.

This has allowed us to extend our TSO drop-ins across the County, we now offer drop-in sessions in the following venues: -

- County Hall (Trowbridge)
- The Friary (Salisbury)
- Bemerton Heath (Salisbury)
- Evergreen Court (Amesbury)
- Needham House (Devizes)

These have allowed us to support more tenants more quickly and ensure financial and physical wellbeing which has ultimately improved tenants ability to pay rent and remain in their homes.

We are also working collaboratively with The Food Bank to provide advice and assistance at St Pauls Church in Salisbury.

£816,844 additional income secured for tenants	**409** tenancy sustainment and mental health support cases were completed	**200%** increase in the number of cases completed

Repairs and Improvements

Another very challanging year for our Direct Labour Organisation - DLO team, with recruitment and retention of both our DLO and external contractors remaining a massive challenge and ultimately impacting on the percentage of repairs completed on time, at the end of the year the DLO team remained under resourced with unfilled vacancies, although efforts to recruit continue and are proving more successful, we are hopful that staff levels will increase gradually over the next year. We are continuing to review our framework of contractors and are hoping to have a number of new contacts in place during 2023/2024.

Our DLO 'Right First Time' percentage was **96.7%** which is an improvement on last year and we have exceeded the target set, which is impressive given the challenges that we have continued to face.

17,971 new repairs were raised during the year of which **879** were 'out of hours' repairs. The average cost per repair was **£181.79**. These repairs were completed by both our own DLO and partnering contractors.

Our DLO performance:
6,680 repairs were carried out
The average cost per repair was **£106.10**
87% of repairs were carried out on time by our DLO
96.7% of Tenants satisfied with the repair service provided by our DLO

Wiltshire Council

We have a team of **20** DLO.

Our operatives cover a wide range of trades, which includes plumbing, carpentry, glazing and general maintenance. Specialist trades, including gas and electrical works are completed by our contractors.

Repairs Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators	Achieved	Target	How did we do?
Percentage of **Contractor** routine repairs completed on time	82.11%	92.0%	☹
Percentage of **DLO** routine repairs completed on time	87.54%	92.0%	😐
Percentage of **ALL** repairs completed right first time	95.56%	95.0%	😊

Planned and Cyclical Maintenance

As your landlord, we have a duty to keep your home in good order. This includes carrying out annual gas safety inspections, electrical inspections, and outside decoration.

Wiltshire Council

The Home Energy Efficiency Programme (HEEP) continues to roll out across our housing stock. The HEEP's objective is to get all existing council housing properties up to EPC level B within ten years. We currently have **256** properties at level B or above and a further **1,559** at level C. Over 53% of our properties now have a valid banding.

We also carry out improvements such as new kitchens, bathrooms and windows as part of our planned maintenance programme to make sure that our properties and your homes are of a good standard.

Here is some of what we have done this year:

101 Kitchens replaced	28 Bathrooms replaced	1,143 Electrical tests completed	1,423 Smoke detector tests	4,945 Boiler safety checks completed

Planned and Cyclical Maintenance Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicator	Achieved	Target	How did we do?
Percentage of tenants satisfied with planned maintenance	90.9%	98.00%	☹
Percentage of tenants satisfied with cyclical maintenance	95.1%	95.00%	😊

Our overall satisfaction is based on our tenant experience with us and our Partnership Contractors.

Neighbourhood and Tenancy Management

Our tenancy service team manages estates, sustaining tenancies, organising environmental improvements, signing up new tenancies and tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB). We aim to ensure that where you live is safe, clean and tidy and that issues affecting you and your neighbourhoods are quickly identified and tackled.

117 new tenant settling visits within the first 6 weeks of their tenancy were carried out

171 reports of ASB were investigated

Vacant properties are an important issue to us, as empty properties result in a loss of rental income and mean that families are not being housed. We work hard to ensure properties are refurbished and ready for the next tenant as quickly as possible, however, our ability to do this during this year has been adversely affected by a shortage of staff both in house, our DLO and within our partnering contractors, this has led to delays in turning our properties around.

The average relet time in days hasn't been our sole focus as we have been concentrating on reducing the total number of empty properties rather than working on the oldest first.

Our performance is being closely monitored at every stage and we are working hard to ensure adequate resource is in place to reduce the

number of empty properties and ultimately reduce the amount of time a property is empty.

Tenancy Key Performance Indicators

Key Performance Indicators	Achieved	Target	How did we do?
General Housing: Average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)	86	20	🙁
Sheltered Housing: average re-let time in days (standard re-lets)	64	23	🙁
Percentage satisfaction of new tenants following 6 months in a property	88.59%	95%	🙁

Satisfaction surveys are reviewed and any with negative feedback are followed up to ensure any outstanding issues are resolved and reflected upon to identify areas where our procedures can be improved.

The data indicated that negativity centred around the condition of a property at sign up and consequent repairs - we have reviewed our processes to ensure all works are completed and the tenant is satisfied. Our performance during quarter 4 was within target.

Wiltshire Council

Resident Engagement

We are here to listen to and support our residents enabling them to make the most of their local communities and help with continual improvements to their neighbourhoods. Improvements not only in the services they receive, but in creating new opportunities to benefit all.

The team are delighted to announce our new team member Jasmine. Jasmine is very excited to get to know her communities and encourage customer involvement.

Your Resident Engagement Team, Kate, Jasmine, Caz and Rob

Community Events

Wiltshire Council

Tenants enjoying the cookery courses.

The Resident Engagement (RE) team have been providing cookery courses for tenants as part of our Healthy Living Plan. We have worked alongside the Pantry Partnership, ABC Cook and Phunky Foods to provide courses and workshops across our estates. We are also providing regular on-line cookery sessions for those who are unable to get out and about. Learning how to cook healthy low-cost meals has come at just the right time with the cost-of-living crisis impacting our communities.

A fabulous time was had at our first Phunky Foods cookery course held at the Bemerton Heath Centre. Tenants were able to cook up a storm with cook Jaquie creating a main meal and pudding for themselves just in time for lunch.

This free 6-week course is perfect for all ages and covers healthy eating tips, not to mention a chance to make new friends!

Digital Engagement

With our commitment to get customers connected digitally the team provide iHousing support along with one-to-one sessions to ensure that no one misses out. Hardware can be an issue and we work closely with partners to enable provision at no cost to our customers. Our weekly on-line quiz is a hit and has encouraged those who are isolated to make new connections and even venture out to meet their fellow quizzers in person!

Housing Matters Newsletter and Magazine

Our Monthly Newsletter continues to be popular with up to 200 tenants entering our free monthly food hamper draw in each edition. The Newsletter goes out to 75% of our customers and contains important landlord messages. We provide the opportunity to enter competitions as

a way of encouraging engagement including our up-coming garden competition being judged by the Allotment Society.

The yearly bumper edition of our Housing Matters magazine has hit the doormats of over 5,800 households. We continue to produce this hard copy magazine to ensure that we are reaching all our customers especially those who are not digitally capable.

Some of the lucky winners of our hampers

Estate Inspections

Our monthly estate inspections continue providing an opportunity for residents to join the walk about, helping officers to identify issues and ways to improve their communal areas.

Social Groups

The team continue to support the creation of social groups and associations bringing local communities together to combat isolation. Success stories include men's groups and warm spaces.

Small Improvement Bids (SIB's)

We continue to provide our Small Improvement Bid opportunity supporting our customers to apply for up to £10,000, to make specific

improvements to their local area. Improvements so far include, garden furniture, planters, green houses, pergolas, garden sheds, summer houses and play equipment.

The SIB scheme gives you more control over how money is spent and ensures it goes where you want.

A few of the communal garden improvements completed with funding from SIB's

We are looking forward to working with and meet more of our customers this summer at our event stands across the county. We continue to work with our tenants to encourage them to help us shape and improve our services whilst providing value for money.

If you would like to become involved or find out more about future events, please contact our Resident Engagement Team.

The team contact details are:

Phone: 0300 456 0117 – option 5

Email: Tenantparticipation@wiltshire.gov.uk

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Wiltshire Council

Challenge and Change Group

Volunteer tenants and leaseholders get together regularly to review what Housing Services do and how we do it. This is how the group scrutinises our work, as the Regulatory Standards empower them to, and they report to a sub-committee of the Housing Board or directly to the main Housing Board, whichever is best given the topic they have looked at. We get a great external customer focused view of our work, which helps us make them even better for our residents and their families.

Over the last year, the Group completed taking its Sheltered Housing paper through the Housing Board and looked at Decant and then Anti-Social Behaviour. As this was a quite a difficult topic which required going into a lot of detail, the Group decided to try to focus on less intense projects just in case this was putting other residents off from volunteering.

With a few new members having joined, everyone decided to look at Key Performance Indicators and consider, from a residents' perspective, what was important. A large list of possible measures was passed to the service for consideration and will be discussed with the Housing Board in the future.

Getting back to meeting in-person has helped the Group refocus and add members. Now everyone is looking forward to continuing to challenge the service in a positive way. It can really make a difference to residents and their families. After Key Performance Indicators, the Group intends to look at the Property Services Team, Voids, and Notices of Promise, and then it may look at the Grounds Maintenance Team which should give them a chance to express what residents want the service to develop into.

We are taking a fair and balanced look at these, and it is very interesting. If you would like to get involved, please contact the Resident Engagement Team.

Thank you to a great group of people for volunteering to be part of the group and all residents who help us out by speaking to us, filling out surveys and helping us understand more about how services can be improved.

We would like to thank Housing Services for taking on board so many of our recommendations and implementing them. This is really satisfying to see.

If you'd like to join in as a 'critical friend' of the service by taking an in-depth look at certain parts of the service and then make recommendations about how they could be even better than they already are, please get in touch with the Resident Engagement Team.

The team contact details are:

Phone: 0300 456 0117 – option 5

Email: Tenantparticipation@wiltshire.gov.uk

More information can be found by visiting.

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/housing-hap

Better Homes
Better Neighbourhoods
Better Lives

Better Homes
Better Neighbourhoods
Better Lives

Moving to Digital

In line with Wiltshire Council's drive towards a more Digital environment we are continuing to look for ways to move our interactions with our tenants to a digital platform. This not only saves time and improves the speed at which we can communicate it also saves money, which can be reinvested in your homes.

Again, this year we have continued to promote and encourage the usage of our digital services whether that be the use of our online portal 'iHousing', emailed rent statements or Resident Engagement updates, such as Housing Matters, wherever possible we have 'gone digital!'

We now hold valid email addresses of over **75%** of our properties and will continue to work hard to improve this figure over the coming months and years. We also fully appreciate that not everyone will be able to or want to communicate with us digitally and we are continuing to support those tenants in the ways we always have, ensuring continuity for all our tenants.

iHousing facts and figures

Over **46%** of our properties have registered
1,800 average logins per month
2,096 repairs reported online
920 rent enquiries made
446 client changes made

Our digitisation programme is ongoing, and we are continually working with colleagues to identify, improve and automate as many processes as

we possibly can. Using email and SMS text messaging is continuing to reduce our paper usage and postage costs.

Complaints

We take all complaints raised with us very seriously and our aim is to deal with complaints and respond to the complainant with the outcome of our investigations within 10 working days from the date of the complaint.

66.7% of complaints completed on time (Figures are based on our council complaints policy of responding within 10 working days)
66.6% of complaints dealt with upheld
6 new complaints received
6 complaints dealt with
4 of the complaints dealt with were upheld

STAR Survey

In the summer of 2022, we commissioned our bi-annual STAR survey, the survey was sent out to all households, 1,633 tenants completed and returned the survey, representing a 31% response rate.

The survey consisted of series of questions that were grouped into categories, the results of which were analysed and benchmarked against a group of 13 separate Local Authorities and ALMO's.

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Wiltshire Council

Our results:

Bench mark	2020 result	change over time	2022 result		Question source
78%	81%	↓	77%	satisfaction overall	STAR
23	22	→	18	net promoter score	STAR
75%	77%	↓	75%	quality of home	STAR
81%	83%	↓	80%	safety and security of home	STAR
63%	N.A.	NA	61%	communal areas well maintained and safe	
81%	87%	↓	83%	rent value money	STAR
72%	73%	↓	69%	repairs and maintenance overall	STAR
79%	78%	↓	74%	last completed repair	STAR
79%	80%	↓	77%	easy to deal with	STAR
63%	60%	↓	58%	listens to views and acts on them	STAR
71%	75%	↓	66%	keeps tenants informed	
56%	63%	↓	56%	approach to handling complaints	
82%	84%	↓	83%	neighbourhood as a place to live	STAR
62%	N.A.	NA	61%	makes a positive contribution to area	
55%	56%	↓	55%	dealing with ASB	

↑ statistically significant improvement → no statistically significant change ↓ statistically significant decline

The survey results were slightly down compared to our results in 2020, although disappointing, this was in keeping with the sector and believed to be partly connected to the current economic climate.

We are working on several initiatives which we hope will help to improve our figures in future surveys. From 2023 we will be conducting annual surveys, and these will be sent to 50% of our tenants each year, ensuring that every tenant has a chance to complete a survey bi-annually.

Wiltshire Council

Information about Wiltshire Council services can be made available on request in other languages including BSL and formats such as large print and audio.

Please contact the council by telephone 0300 456 0100, by textphone 01225 712500, or email customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

如果有需要我們可以使用其他形式（例如：大字體版本或者錄音帶）或其他語言版本向您提供有關或爾特郡政務會各項服務的資訊，敬請與政務會聯繫，電話：0300 456 0100。文本電話：(01225) 712500。或者發電子郵件至：customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

Na życzenie udostępniamy informacje na temat usług oferowanych przez władze samorządowe hrabstwa Wiltshire (Wiltshire Council) w innych formatach (takich jak dużym drukiem lub w wersji audio) i w innych językach. Prosimy skontaktować się z władzami samorządowymi pod numerem telefonu 0300 456 0100 lub telefonu tekstowego (01225) 712500 bądź za pośrednictwem poczty elektronicznej na adres: customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

وٹلٹ کڑونسل (Wiltshire Council) کی سروسز کے بارے میں معلومات دوسری طرزوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہیں (جیسے کہ بڑی چھپائی یا آڈیو ہے) اور دوسری زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ براہ کرم کونسل سے 0300 456 0100 پر یا ٹیلی فون ٹیکسٹ پر (01225)712500 پر رابطہ کریں یا customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk پر ای میل بھیجیں۔

يمكن، عند الطلب، الحصول على معلومات حول خدمات مجلس بلدية ويلتشير وذلك بأشكال (معلومات بخط عريض أو سماعية) ولغات مختلفة. الرجاء الاتصال بمجلس البلدية على الرقم 0300456٠١٠٠ أو من خلال الاتصال النصي (تيكت فون) على الرقم ٧١٢٥٠٠ (٠١٢٢٥) أو بالبريد الالكتروني على العنوان التالي: customerservices@wiltshire.gov.uk

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Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee

11 January 2024

Climate Emergency Task Group

Background

1. The Climate Emergency Task Group (CETG) is a standing task group reporting to the Environment Select Committee. The task group's initial terms of reference were endorsed by the Select Committee on 3 September 2019 and were revised on 9 November 2021.

2. The task group has produced two reports with recommendations:
   - Energy and Transport & Air quality (29 September 2020)
   - Planning (13 January 2021)

3. At its meeting on 6 June 2023 the Select Committee approved the continuation of the task group 2023/24.

4. The task group's last update to the Select Committee was on 11 November 2023.

Membership

5. The membership of the task group is as follows:

Cllr Clare Cape
Cllr Sarah Gibson
Cllr Tony Jackson
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Brian Mathew
Cllr Nick Murry
Cllr David Vigar
Cllr Ian Wallis
Cllr Graham Wright (Chairman)

Terms of Reference:

6. The task group's revised terms of reference were endorsed by the Environment Select Committee on the 9 November 2021. These are:

a) To help shape and influence the development of Wiltshire Council's programme (in all relevant areas) for meeting its objective of making Wiltshire Council carbon neutral and seeking to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030 (excluding the geographical area administered by Swindon Borough Council).

b) To scrutinise the delivery of this objective through the Climate Strategy (2022-2027) and its delivery plans, as well as key plans, policies, and programmes, such as the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan and Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. Including the way in which the Council is measuring progress and how it is performing and reporting against baselines.

c) To provide recommendations on other aspects of decarbonising the county including partnership working and community-led approaches as well as acting as a national role model.

Recent Activity

10. The task group met on the 28 November 2023 to consider its forward work plan for the coming months.

11. The task group considered the following:
   - Air quality, monitoring, and action planning.
   - The Local Transport Plan with a particular focus upon bus travel and the use of alternative fuels in public transport.
   - Carbon audits, their wider application particularly within small businesses
   - Engagement with the wider community.

12. The outcome of that discussion can be seen in the task group forward work plan in Appendix 1.

Forward work plan

1. The Climate Emergency Task Group forward plan is attached at Appendix 1.

Proposals

That the select committee:

1. **Notes the update on the Task Group activity provided above.**

2. **Notes the Climate Emergency Task Group's forward work plan in Appendix 1**

Cllr Graham Wright, Chairman Climate Emergency Task Group

Report author: Simon Bennet, Senior Scrutiny Officer, Tel: 01225 718709, email: simon.bennett@wiltshire.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Climate Emergency Task Group – Forward Work Plan

16 January 2024	**See Through Carbon** Carbon audits and working with SMEs.
Late 2023 / Early 2024	**Air Quality Action Plan** Outcome of the consultation process.
Early 2024(tbc)	**Local Transport Plan** To understand the future strategy in particular active travel, electric vehicles charging.
Early 2024	**Local Nature Recovery Strategy** Each statutorily required local nature recovery strategy is specific and tailored to its area.
Early 2024	**Climate Change Adaptation Plan** To review the council's draft plan.
Spring 2024	**Tree & Woodland Programme** Programme begins autumn 2023, with update on progress available spring 2024.
Summer 2024	**Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUGS2)** Update on the government funded programme for retrofitting.
Summer 2024	**Bio-diversity Net Gain** Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a new planning policy with the potential to change the face of nature recovery in England.
October 2024	**Annual update on the Council's response to the Climate Emergency**
2025	**Carbon Offsetting Strategy** Update on the development of the strategy.
tbc	**Soft Plastic Recycling**
tbc	**Alternative fuels**
tbc	**Natural England Funded Pilot**

	Meeting to consider the pilot projects looking at rolling out local nature recovery planning, bio-diversity net gain and the environmental toolkit.
tbc	**Biogas** To explore the potential for biogas as a replacement for natural gas and use in vehicles.

Wiltshire Council

Environment Select Committee
Forward Work Programme

Last updated 15 December 2023

Environment Select Committee – Current / Active Task Groups		
Task Group	**Start date**	**Final report expected**
Climate Emergency Task Group	September 2019	Standing

Agenda Item 11

Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
6 March 2023 (tbc)	Update on Broadband Provision in Wiltshire	As resolved at the ESC meeting on 4 January 2023, the select committee will receive an update report.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Ashley O'Neill	Victoria Moloney (Head of Economy & Regeneration)
6 March 2024	Highways Annual Review of Service 2022	As resolved at ESC 12 January 2022, to receive a further annual report in 2023.	Samantha Howell (Director of Highways and Transport)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	Dave Thomas (Head of Highways Assets & Commissioning)
6 March 2024 (tbc)	MyWilts app potholes reporting functionality	As resolved at the ESC-meeting on 19 September 2023 the committee will receive an update on the development of the MyWilts potholes reporting functionality.	Mark Tucker (Director ICT)	Cllr Ashley O'Neill	
6 March 2024 (tbc)	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	As discussed at meeting with the Cabinet Member (20 Oct 2023) the select committee to receive a report on the Plan.	Sarah Valdus (Director – Environment)	Cllr Nick Holder	Lynn Trigwell (Head of Natural & Historic Environment)
6 March 2024	Libraries Development	As resolved at the ESC-meeting on 14 March 2023 on the leisure and libraries portfolio to provide an update including the results of the peer challenge and development of the Library Strategy.	David Redfern (Director Leisure Culture and Communities)	Cllr Ian Blair Pilling	

Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
6 March 2024	Leisure Services	As resolved at the ESC-meeting on 14 March 2023 the committee will receive a further update that includes trend data, the outcome of the public holiday pilot (incl. the terms of reference for the pilot) and further information on the transformation review.	David Redfern (Director Leisure Culture and Communities)	Cllr Ian Blair Pilling	
6 March 2024	Gypsy & Traveller Plan	As discussed at meeting with the Cabinet Member (18 Oct 2023) the select committee to receive a report on the Plan.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Nick Botterill	Nic Thomas (Director of Planning)
6 March 2024	Task group update	To receive update from task groups regarding activity and its forward work plan			Cllr Graham Wright Simon Bennett (Senior Scrutiny Officer)
4 June 2024 (tbc)	Community Infrastructure Levy (CiL)	As discussed at meeting with the Cabinet Member (18 Oct 2023) the select committee to receive a report on the Levy funding.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Nick Botterill	Nic Thomas (Director of Planning)

Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
4 June 2024 (tbc)	Update on the Towns Programme App Development	As resolved at the ESC meeting on 4 January 2023, the select committee will receive an update report.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Richard Clewer	Victoria Moloney (Head of Economy & Regeneration)
4 June 2024	Speed Limit Assessments	As discussed at the meeting with the Cabinet member 24 Nov 2023 the select committee will receive a report on speed limit assessments.	Samantha Howell (Director of Highways and Transport)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	
4 June 2024	Homeless Strategy 2019-2024	As resolved at the ESC meeting on 8 November 2022, the select committee will receive an update report in 12 months' time.	Emma Legg (Director – Adult Social Care)	Cllr Phil Alford	Nicole Smith (Head of Housing)
4 June 2024	Milestone contract	As resolved at the ESC meeting on 19 September 2023 the committee to receive an update on the first year of the Milestone contract to include key performance indicators including carbon reduction, savings, and outcomes targets. Will include updates on gully clearing and potholes.	Samantha Howell (Director of Highways and Transport)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	Dave Thomas (Head of Highways Assets & Commissioning)

Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
4 June 2024	Local Plan	As discussed at meeting with the Cabinet Member (18 Oct 2023) the select committee to receive a report on the plan after the consultation processing.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Nick Botterill	Nic Thomas (Director of Planning)
4 June 2024	Task group update	To receive update from task groups regarding activity and its forward work plan			Cllr Graham Wright Simon Bennett (Senior Scrutiny Officer)
18 July 2024 (tbc)	LHFIG Review	To receive an update report on the implementation of the Local Highway & Footway Improvement Groups (LHFIG)	Samantha Howell (Director of Highways and Transport)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	Dave Thomas (Head of Highways Asset Management & Commissioning)
18 July 2024 (tbc)	Waste Management Strategy: Annual Review	As resolved at ESC 25 July 2023 to receive a further annual review in 2024.	Sarah Valdus (Director – Environment)	Cllr Nick Holder	Martin Litherland (Head of Service Waste Management)
18 July 2024	Task group update	To receive update from task groups regarding activity and its forward work plan			Cllr Graham Wright Simon Bennett (Senior Scrutiny Officer)

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Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
3 September 2024	Rights of Way	To receive a report, as requested by ESC 25 July 2023, regarding rights of way. To include issues of maintenance and access, updates to the definitive maps and engagement with volunteer groups.	Samantha Howell (Director of Highways and Transport)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	Chris Clark (Head of Local Highways)
3 September 2024	Streetscene contract	As resolved at the ESC-meeting on 19 September 2023 the committee will receive an update on the Sctreetscene contract.	Samantha Howell (Director of Highways and Transport)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	Adrian Hampton (Head of Highway Operations)
3 September 2024	Passenger Transport Service Update	As resolved at the ESC-meeting on 19 September 2023 the committee will receive an update on the Passenger Transport Service.	Samantha Howell (Director of Highways and Transport)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	Jason Salter (Head of Service Passenger Transport)
3 September 2024 (tbc)	Tree & Woodland Planting Strategy	As discussed at meeting with the Cabinet Member (20 Oct 2023) the select committee to receive a report on the Plan.	Sarah Valdus (Director – Environment)	Cllr Nick Holder	Lynn Trigwell (Head of Natural & Historic Environment)

Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
3 September 2024	Task group update	To receive update from task groups regarding activity and its forward work plan			Cllr Graham Wright Simon Bennett (Senior Scrutiny Officer)
19 November 2024	Wiltshire Housing Development Partnership	As resolved at the ESC-meeting on 7 November 2023 the committee will receive an update.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Phil Alford	Richard Walters (Head of Service – Major Projects) Claire Moore (Housing Enabling Lead)
19 November 2024 (tbc)	UK Shared Prosperity Fund	As discussed at the ESC-Executive meeting on 23 November 2022 on the economic development portfolio.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Richard Clewer	Victoria Moloney (Head of Economy & Regeneration)
19 November 2024	Task group update	To receive update from task groups regarding activity and its forward work plan			Cllr Graham Wright Simon Bennett (Senior Scrutiny Officer)

Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
21 January 2025	Task group update	To receive update from task groups regarding activity and its forward work plan			Cllr Graham Wright Simon Bennett (Senior Scrutiny Officer)
4 March 2025	Task group update	To receive update from task groups regarding activity and its forward work plan			Cllr Graham Wright Simon Bennett (Senior Scrutiny Officer)
tbc	Economic Strategy	As discussed at the ESC-Executive meeting on 23 November 2022 on the economic development portfolio.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Richard Clewer	Victoria Moloney (Head of Economy & Regeneration)
tbc	Planning transformation programme	As resolved at the ESC-meeting on 19 September 2023 the committee will receive updates on the planning transformation programme.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Nick Botterill	Nic Thomas (Director of Planning)
tbc	Private sector renewal strategy	As resolved at the ESC meeting on 8 November 2022, the select committee will receive an update report when appropriate.	Emma Legg (Director – Adult Social Care)	Cllr Phil Alford	Nicole Smith (Head of Housing)

Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
tbc	Minerals & Waste Plan	As discussed at meeting with the Cabinet Member (18 Oct 2023) the select committee to receive a report on the plan.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Nick Botterill	Nic Thomas (Director of Planning)
tbc	Parking Strategy	As discussed at the ESC-Executive meeting on 6 December 2022 on the highways and transport portfolio.	Parvis Khansari (Corporate Director Place)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	
tbc	Active Travel	As resolved at the select committee meeting on 14 June 2022, the committee will receive a further update. (Deferred from July 2023)	Samantha Howell (Director of Highways and Transport)	Cllr Caroline Thomas	Spencer Drinkwater (Principal Transport & Development Manager)
tbc	Leisure Strategy	As discussed at the ESC-Executive meeting on 12 October 2023 on the leisure and libraries portfolio.	David Redfern (Director Leisure Culture and Communities)	Cllr Ian Blair Pilling	
tbc	Review of the Waste Delivery Plan	As discussed at the ESC-Executive meeting on 20 October 2023 on the leisure and libraries portfolio.	Sarah Valdus (Director – Environment)	Cllr Nick Holder	Martin Litherland (Head of Service Waste Management)

Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
tbc	Housing Development Strategy	As discussed at the ESC-Executive meeting on 21 November on housing, development management and assets.	James Barrah (Director Assets)	Cllr Phil Alford	

Information briefing				
Meeting Date	**Item**	**Details / purpose**	**Associate Director**	**Responsible Cabinet Member**
tbc	Environment Act 2021	To receive a (series of) briefing regarding the implications of the Environment Act.		
tbc	LEP transition	To receive a briefing on the implications of the council taking on some of the responsibilities of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	Victoria Moloney (Head of Economy & Regeneration)	Cllr Richard Clewer