Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

AGENDA

Meeting:	Cabinet
Place:	County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge
Date:	Tuesday 20 April 2010
Time:	10.30 am

Membership:

Cllr John Brady	Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Housing
Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Keith Humphries	Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing
Cllr John Noeken	Cabinet Member for Resources
Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philipe	Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Risk
Cllr Jane Scott OBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Waste, Property and Environment
Cllr John Thomson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Services
Cllr Dick Tonge	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Cllr Stuart Wheeler	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic and Members' Services, County Hall, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718024 or email yaminarhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk

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

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

Part I

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

<u>Key Decisions</u>   Matters defined as 'Key' Decisions and included in the Council's Forward Work Plan are shown as ⚷

1   Apologies

2   Minutes of the previous meeting *(Pages 1 - 22)*

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 23 March 2010 copy attached.

3   Chairman's announcements

4   Declarations of Interest

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

5   Public participation

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public. This meeting is open to the public, who may ask a question or make a statement. Written notice of questions or statements should be given to Yamina Rhouati of Democratic Services by 12.00 noon on Friday 16 April 2010. Anyone wishing to ask a question or make a statement should contact the officer named above.

'Work together to support Wiltshire's Communities*'

6   Care Quality Commission Inspection of Adult Social Care *(Pages 23 - 72)*

Report of the Corporate Director, Community Services is circulated

Silu Pascoe, the Lead Inspector, will present the report.

'Deliver high quality, low cost, customer focused services*'

7   ⚷Report on the Corporate Plan 2010-14 *(Pages 73 - 114)*

Report of the Director Policy, Research and Communications is circulated

8   Housing PFI Scheme - Appropriation of Land For Planning Purposes *(Pages 115 - 124)*

Report of the Service Director, Housing is circulated

9   **Next Steps in Developing the Wiltshire Core Strategy** *(Pages 125 - 132)*

Report of the Service Director, Economy and Enterprise is circulated

10   **Office Decant Proposals for the Workplace Transformation Programme** *(Pages 133 - 146)*

Report of the Corporate Director, Resources is circulated

11   **Homes 4 Wiltshire Service Review** *(Pages 147 - 214)*

Report of the Service Director, Housing is circulated

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'Ensure local, open, honest decision making*'

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12   **Budget Monitoring**

Reports of the Chief Finance Officer are circulated for the period April 2009 to February 2010

     a   **Revenue Budget** *(Pages 215 - 224)*

     b   **Capital Budget** *(Pages 225 - 232)*

13   **Urgent Items**

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

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Part II

<u>Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed</u>

None

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* these headings reflect the key goals of Wiltshire Council to achieve its vision to 'Create stronger and more resilient communities'

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Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

CABINET

MINUTES of a MEETING held at COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE on Tuesday, 23 March 2010.

Cllr John Brady	Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Housing
Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr John Noeken	Cabinet Member for Resources
Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philipe	Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Risk
Cllr Jane Scott OBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Waste, Property and Environment
Cllr John Thomson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Services
Cllr Dick Tonge	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Cllr Stuart Wheeler	Cabinet Member for Leisure, Sport and Culture

Also in Attendance:

Cllr Allison Bucknell	Portfolio Holder for Customer Services
Cllr Laura Mayes	Portfolio Holder for Oganisational Culture
Cllr Alan Macrae	Portfolio Holder for Schools
Cllr Howard Greenman	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Cllr Jerry Kunkler	Portfolio Holder for Leisure
Cllr Jeff Osborn	Chairman – Overview and Scrutiny Resources Select Committee
Cllr Desna Allen	Chairman – Local Service Review Scrutiny Task Group (Area Board Review)
Cllr Bill Moss	
Cllr Peter Doyle	
Cllr Julian Johnson	

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

42. **Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Keith Humphries, Cabinet member for Health and Wellbeing.

43. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 23 February 2010 were presented.

Resolved:

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2010 subject to the following amendment:

Minute no. 36 – Wiltshire Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) at resolution (c) – reference to Cllr John Brady be amended to read Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet member for Waste, Property and Environment.

44. **Chairman's announcements**

(a)   Blue Badges

The Leader referred to Cabinet's agreement at its meeting on 11 February 2010 to make representations to the Government on the restrictions placed on local authorities in the way they issued Blue Badges. At that meeting, Cllr Thomson in updating Cabinet on the recently held Dementia Conference, highlighted the need to lobby the Government on this issue. Changes to the law were sought to ensure that sufferers of mental illnesses and those they relied on for transport, carers of children with disabilities and those with severe autism and Link drivers should be given the same consideration as those with physical illnesses.

The Leader explained that Cllr Thomson had sent a letter to this effect to the Minister for Transport copied to the local MP's and that Councillors would be kept informed of developments.

(b)   Graham Hogg – Service Director, Housing

The Leader advised that Graham Hogg had been involved in an accident resulting in him coming off his motorbike. Although serious, his condition was not considered critical and he was currently receiving treatment at the Royal United Hospital, Bath. The Leader would on Cabinet's behalf be writing to Graham to wish him a speedy recovery.

(c)   George Batten, Director

This being the last meeting of Cabinet attended by George Batten, the Leader thanked him for his services to the authority and to the people of Wiltshire and added that he would be greatly missed.

45. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Allison Bucknell, Portfolio Holder for Customer Care declared a personal interest in the item Commissioning of Sure Start Children's Centres by virtue of her being chairman of the North Wilts and Devizes Portage Service (minute no. 54 refers).

46. **Public participation**

The Leader explained that as usual, she would be happy to allow the public to speak at the start of each item if they wished to do so.

There was no public participation.

47. **Budget Monitoring**

(a) **Revenue Budget Monitoring April 2009 - January 2010**

Cllr de Rhe-Philipe presented a report on the latest position on the revenue budget for the period April 2009 to January 2010. She explained that overall the Council was forecast to outturn within budget and that budget action plans had been implemented by all departments to ensure their year end position would be on budget. She congratulated officers on the progress they had made so far.

There were still pressures on the budgets for the departments of Community Services and Children and Education which would continue to be monitored. If necessary, underspends elsewhere in the revenue budget would be used to ensure an overall balanced budget.

Resolved:

That the report be noted

Reason for Decision

To inform members of the Cabinet of the Council's budgetary pressures.

(b) **Capital Budget Monitoring April 2009 - January 2010**

Cllr de Rhe-Philipe presented a report which updated Cabinet on the latest position on the Capital Programme for the period April 2009 to January 2010. It was noted that there was a projected variation of £5.246m against the full year budget for 2009/10.

The report drew Cabinet's attention to changes in the capital programme and sought approval for a redirection of funds identified as not spent in the Major Highways Improvement budget to be used to purchase 4 highway vehicles.

Resolved:

That the Cabinet:

(i) **note the current financial position of the 2009/10 capital budget;**

(ii) **note the budget changes in section 1 of Appendix B of the report presented and**

(iii) **approve the underspend identified in the Major Highways Improvement budget be used for a different purpose and fund the purchase of 4 highway vehicles.**

Reason for Decision

To inform Cabinet of the current financial position of the 2009/10 capital budget and to identify schemes within the programme where expenditure is not progressing as anticipated.

48. **Corporate Plan**

The Leader presented the Council's draft Corporate Plan for Cabinet's consideration with a view to approving the Plan for onward recommendation for its adoption by Annual Council in May 2010. The Plan covered the period 2010-2014 although it was noted that it would be reviewed and refreshed annually . The Plan incorporated comments and feedback received on the first draft following initial consideration by Cabinet in October 2009.

The Plan included the nine priorities previously agreed by Cabinet namely:

- Work in partnership to support vulnerable individuals and families
- Increase opportunities to help young people achieve their potential
- Local, open, honest decision-making
- Improve our roads and road safety
- Support the local economy
- Meet housing needs
- Reduce our environmental impact
- Achieve savings, be more efficient and ensure we deliver value for money
- Focus on our customers and improve access to our services

Under each priority, a small number of key outcomes had been identified to be achieved over the next four years. The Leader requested that the order of priorities be reviewed to ensure that services to people was given the highest priority.

The overarching vision 'create stronger and more resilient communities' and the following three key three goals would remain the same:

- o *High quality, low cost, customer focused services*
- o *Local, open, honest decision making and,*

o *Work together to support Wiltshire's communities*

The covering report of the Service Director, Policy, Research and Communications explained that the Council was changing and developing rapidly and faced many varied challenges ahead. The core business of the council and the relationship it has with the community would change radically over the next few years. It was therefore vital that the Council planned how it would manage these challenges and communicates its vision, goals and priorities.

The Plan would be closely linked to other documents and processes most notably, a new Business Plan for the Council, the Medium Term Financial Plan, the Local Area Agreement and Local Agreement for Wiltshire, the Comprehensive Area Assessment and would influence the Cabinet's forward work plan.

Cllr Jeff Osborn, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Resources Select Committee reported that his Committee would be considering the Corporate Plan at its meeting on 25 March 2010. It was agreed that the outcome of Scrutiny's consideration be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 20 April with the final draft of the Plan to enable Cabinet to consider any recommendations arising out Scrutiny's consideration prior to submitting the Plan to Council for adoption.

Resolved:

(a) **That the order of priorities be reviewed giving services to people the highest priority and that Cabinet consider the Corporate Plan as amended at its meeting on 20 April 2010 to include the outcome of consideration of the Plan by the Overview and Scrutiny Resources Select Committee prior to the Plan being submitted to Council on 18 May 2010 for adoption.**

(b) **That Cabinet notes the next steps necessary to disseminate the Corporate plan internally and externally and to develop departmental delivery plans.**

Reasons for Decision

All high performing organisations have a Corporate plan or equivalent to direct and focus their work. An ambitious and effective Corporate plan will focus and galvanise the organisation's resources to deliver its strategic priorities over the forthcoming four years. The new Corporate plan is now ready for approval by Cabinet and Council following consultation and engagement both internally and externally subject to receiving the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Resources Select Committee.

49. **Medium Term Financial Plan**

Cllr de Rhe Philipe presented a report which updated Cabinet on the progress towards developing the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the five year period up until the financial year 2014-15.

Having set the budget for 2010-11, the Council was now preparing it's MTFP which would enable strategic planning on how to manage its future resources. It was noted that following the forthcoming general election, irrespective of the result, it was widely forecast that local government would face a challenging environment of spending pressures, increased demand and restrained finance settlements.

The assumptions of the financial model were outlined – notably the Council's commitment to minimise Council tax increases and that correspondingly from 20011-12 onwards the MTFP model assumed there would be zero Council tax increases. In terms of the General grant it was assumed that this would decrease at a level between 10% and 20% over the 4 year period. Pay and Inflation was modelled assuming an ongoing annual pay award of 0.5% and inflation of 2.5% per annum.

A number of spending pressures were identified within the report in three main areas – Statutory and Legislative changes, Demographics and Delivery of the objectives of the Corporate Plan. Furthermore existing and possible future efficiencies were outlined.

The Chief Executive explained the intention to produce a new Business Plan for the Council which would sit alongside the MTFP. This would show how the Council would deliver the business in the MTFP which would in turn deliver the Corporate Plan. Whilst the Corporate Plan would identify the Council's priorities, individual service plans would provide further details on departmental activities.

Resolved:

That the report be noted

Reason for Decision

That members are aware of the scale of the challenge facing the council and the plan being developed to address this challenge.

50. **Approved Provider Accreditation Scheme - Residential Services for People with Disabilities**

Cllr John Thomson presented a report which sought Cabinet approval to develop, undertake and implement an Accredited Provider Scheme with providers of residential care for implementation in April 2011. The scheme would replace the existing 'Residential Framework' agreements.

To facilitate this, Cabinet approval was sought to extend by way of exemption, all existing Residential Framework agreements with Wiltshire providers until 31 March 2011. Approval was also sought to continue to use the South West Fair Pricing Tool as a method for ensuring appropriate individual placement costs and value for money and would assist in tailoring more accurately the care package according to need.

Cllr Thomson explained that the proposal would increase the number of suppliers accredited to provide the quality of care required by the Council. It would also help enhance arrangements for supported living as opposed to reliance on providing residential care.

Resolved:

(a)   That Cabinet establish a Residential Care 'Accredited Provider scheme' to which existing Wiltshire-based 'residential care' providers would be encouraged to apply. This scheme to replace the existing 'Residential Framework'.

(b)   That in order to allow for the required timeframe to undertake and establish the Accreditation Scheme, an Exemption be granted with regard to the existing Residential Framework Agreements. This exemption is to allow the extension of current agreements until 31 March 2011.

(c)   That delegated authority be given to the Head of Commissioning (Learning disabilities) in ensuring the delivery of this proposal

Reasons for Decision

Although the Council's focus is on developing the 'supported living' model of service provision, it is necessary to ensure that a range of high quality, good value residential care provision is available for those people who need that level of care. Through the Accredited Provider Scheme the Council will look stabilise the local market and to draw into the county some specialist providers that we currently lack. For example for people with autism and complex needs, many of whom currently are placed in out of county placements.

The 'Accreditation Scheme' will help to maintain a diverse range of residential care Providers who offer sustainable, responsive, quality services for the identified 'core' group of individuals identified above. The Scheme will, therefore, ensure the current and future availability of residential care services in an unstable and reducing market.

The Scheme will allow the Council to manage more effectively the fluctuations within the residential care market.

51. **Area Boards in Wiltshire - Leaders' Review**

Cllr Thomson presented a report on the outcome of the Leader's Review on the operation of Area Boards in Wiltshire. He explained that in the eight months since Area Boards were launched in June 2009, 86 Area Board meetings had been held across Wiltshire, directly involving 5,547 citizens in local democracy, whilst a further 10,000 residents had signed up to be kept informed and involved.

As part of the introduction of Area Boards, the Leader of the Council gave a commitment to undertake a review of the initiative after 6 months. The outcomes described and proposals put forward in the report were the result of consultation with councillors, parish councillors, officers, partners and the general public. Over 1,200 responses were received in response to a survey conducted between January and March 2010 (over 500 of whom had attended Area Boards). Additionally over 120 delegates attended a workshop at the Corn Exchange in Devizes on 8 March to consider how the Area Boards may be further improved.

Details of the survey findings were presented from which it was noted that overall the findings were positive. Of the 23 areas examined by the recent survey, 17 received an overall positive endorsement from respondents.

Cllr Thomson guided Cabinet through the proposals contained within the report. An outcome of the review would be to ensure that the Council targeted support appropriately, would further embed the Area Board system throughout the organisation and give Area Boards more responsibility.

In the discussion which ensued, it was pointed out that at the outset, it had been accepted that Area Boards being a new initiative would require an ongoing process of refinement, building on experience gained and responding to community needs and aspirations. With one exception, a number of Councillors spoke very positively about Area Boards.

Cllr Thomson paid tribute to the tremendous work and effort put in by officers and Councillors to make the Area Board system work and this had provided a very good foundation on which to build on.

Cllr Thomson emphasised that Area Boards had provided a much needed forum where real issues affecting people and their local communities could be raised. They also provided the public with the opportunity to raise such issues with senior members and officers present and to hold them to account.

A Local Service Review Scrutiny Task Group had considered the report on the Leader's Review and a report summarising the views expressed by the Task Group was presented. Cllr Desna Allen, Chairman of the Task Group attended Cabinet to answer questions on the Task Group's report and Cllr Thomson responded to the points made by the Task Group.

The Leader reaffirmed her commitment to the Area Board system and referred to the additional investment in them by way of additional funding. Officers were requested to ensure that issues raised through the Area Board system were dealt with more appropriately which in some cases would be to refer them to the relevant Divisional Councillor as constituency issues. She also agreed that work be undertaken to capture the outcomes of Area Boards as a way of measuring their effectiveness.

Resolved:

People

1) **That Area Boards and Community Area Managers be encouraged to work with Council services, parish councils and partners such as health services, housing associations, schools, voluntary sector organisations and neighbourhood groups to engage with and document the needs, aspirations and stories of people from different walks of life and backgrounds in the area.**

2) **To challenge each Area Board, in order to facilitate the above, to experiment with new ways of broadening public participation during 2010/2011, and prepare a bid for LPSA funding to achieve this.**

3) **That the new Community Area Networks should be used for regular consultation to help inform agenda preparation and to gain feedback on the local Forward Plan.**

4) **Parish council forums and alliances should be encouraged in each area to discuss and agree items for consideration by the Area Boards.**

5) **Area Boards are encouraged to hold informal or consultative meetings around subjects or themes of particular local concern and to facilitate this new approach the number of informal meetings permitted per Area Board be increased to 4 in any year.**

Powers

6) **That the Area Boards are the main mechanism for consulting communities at local level and to facilitate this, services are requested to provide good notice of consultations in order to give Area Boards adequate time to programme and deliver consultation activity in the locality.**

7) **That the scheme of delegation to officers be amended to require the use of the decision checklist attached as Appendix 3**

8) **That Cabinet members be requested to encourage officers to refer matters of only local impact to the Area Boards and town and parish**

councils so that they can be more fully involved in the decision making process.

9) **That the Community Issue System be reviewed with a view to achieving better response times and greater clarity regarding outcomes delivered**

Partnership

10) **That the revised community area partnership agreement and funding arrangements (Appendix 4) be adopted for 2010/11.**

11). **That the Council recognises that partnership arrangements and community planning should best suit local circumstances and that work should continue with WFCAP to negotiate the best solution for that Community Area.**

12) **That the Council agrees to negotiate a new three year service level agreement with WfCAP to secure its funding and develop and strengthen the support it provides to partnerships in Wiltshire.**

13) **That the Resilient Communities Partnership be invited to develop ways of supporting and strengthening community planning in Wiltshire including commissioning further improvements to the community area profiles.**

Publicity

14) **That Area Boards be encouraged to develop closer relationships with the local newspapers by providing copy and news stories in order to raise awareness and encourage participation.**

15) **That Area Boards be encouraged to provide copy for local parish magazines and other community newsletters**

16) **That an Annual Report be produced each year detailing the successes of the Boards involving people who have benefited from the outcomes**

17) **That all Area Boards communications be written in plain language avoiding jargon and acronyms.**

Parishes

18) **That parishes be encouraged to form clusters, forums and alliances within (and across) community areas to share knowledge, experience and concerns and to put forward items for consideration by the Area Boards.**

19) **That Area Boards communications be sent by email to all parish councillors through the community area network.**

20) **That examples of successful collaborations between parish councils and area boards be promoted to demonstrate the successful outcomes that the new arrangements are delivering**

21) **That Area Boards are expected to meet at a range of urban and rural venues**

22) **That the Area Boards Handbook is revised to set out more clearly the role, rights and responsibilities of parish representatives upon the Area Boards and that this is circulated as a separate information sheet for parish and town councillors.**

23) **That Community Area Managers will offer to give presentations and host discussions about the local Area Boards for parish and town councils in the area.**

Implementation of recommendations
24) **That the Director Community, Libraries, Heritage & Arts in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Communities, be authorised to:**

(a) **revise the Area Boards Handbook to accommodate the outcome of the Leaders' review and the decisions here adopted;**

(b) **ensure that all necessary arrangements are made to implement these recommendations;**

(c) **undertake a further review in 12 months to assess how far these recommendations have addressed the concerns raised during the review; and**

(d) **produce an annual report setting out the achievements of the Area Boards during 2009/10.**

Reason for Decisions

To address the Leader's desire to further strengthen Wiltshire's Community Area Governance arrangements.

52. **Admissions Arrangements**

Cllr Grundy presented the report of the Director for Children and Education which had been produced as part of the statutory process for the determination of admission arrangements to maintained schools. As the Council was the statutory admission authority for Voluntary Controlled and Community Schools

in its area, the report also detailed the admission arrangements for those schools.

Details of the schemes proposed were presented. Cllr Alan McRae, Portfolio Holder for Schools explained that these arrangements had been considered and approved by the Schools Admissions Forum, following consultation with the schools. He also thanked Bryan Cash, Education Officer (Admissions) for his work on meeting the legislative requirements and simplifying the process. Cabinet was required to approve these documents in order for them to become the admission policy for Wiltshire for 2011/12.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves and determines:

(a)   The proposed scheme for the co-ordination of admission to secondary schools for 2011/12;

(b)   The proposed scheme for the co-ordination of admissions to primary schools for 2011/12;

(c)   The proposed admission arrangements for Voluntary Controlled & Community secondary schools for 2011/12 and

(d)   The proposed admission arrangements for Voluntary Controlled & Community schools for 2011/12.

Reason for Decision

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to have a determined admission policy for 2011/12 in place on or before15 April 2010.

53.   **Corporate Procurement Strategy 2010-2013**

Cllr Noeken presented a report by the Corporate Director of Resources which sought adoption of a new Corporate Procurement Strategy for 2010-2013.

The Strategy incorporated the requirements of the National Procurement Strategy and adoption by Cabinet would ensure that the document and associated action plan were recognised and supported at an executive level. It would also demonstrate the Council's ambition to achieve procurement and commissioning excellence by managing it strategically and ensuring that procurement was clearly aligned with corporate objectives.

Resolved

That Cabinet:

(i)   note the report;

(ii)   approve the adopt of the Procurement Strategy for 2010-2013 and

(iii)   request an Annual Report to review progress in meeting the Action Plan attached to the new strategy.

<u>Reason for Decision</u>

High level executive approval of the Procurement Strategy for 2010-2013 is required to support the Corporate adoption of the Action Plan and to ensure that it links with the Corporate Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy.

54.   **Commissioning of Sure Start Children's Centres**

Declaration of Interest

Cllr Allison Bucknell declared a personal interest in this item by virtue of being Chairman of the North Wilts and Devizes Portage Service

Cllr Grundy presented a report by the Director for Children and Education, which sought approval to cluster the management of Sure Start Children's Centres in Wiltshire from April 2011. The report also sought approval to extend the availability of specialist provision for children under five with difficulties and disabilities in each hub of the County to provide wider choice for parents between 9am and 3pm all year round.

Wiltshire had 30 Sure Start Children's centres, developed between 2006 and 2010, managed by a range of providers. The majority were managed by voluntary sector organisations (20), whilst school governing bodies (7) and Wiltshire Council (3) accounted for the remainder.

The end of current contracts on 31 March 2011 offered an opportunity to rationalise the management of children's centres. The proposal would also seek to address the existing situation whereby the provision for children under five with difficulties or disabilities was not consistent or equitable throughout the County.

<u>Resolved:</u>

That through the commissioning process, contracts for Sure Start Children's Centres in Wiltshire from April 2011 be offered on the following cluster basis through the tendering process, to provide best value within the available Sure Start Grant and a more cohesive service within the hub structure of the County:

- **Cluster the three children's centres in Trowbridge under one contract**
- **Cluster the three children's centres in Salisbury under one contract**

- **Cluster the three children's centres in Chippenham under one contract**
- **Cluster the two children's centres in Melksham under one contract**
- **Cluster the two children's centres in Devizes under one contract**
- **Cluster Marlborough with Pewsey under one contract**
- **Cluster Mere, Tisbury and Wilton under one contract**
- **Cluster Wootton Bassett with Cricklade under one contract**
- **Cluster Amesbury with Bulford under one contract**
- **Offer Tidworth, Corsham, Malmesbury, Westbury, Warminster, Downton, Bradford-on-Avon and Calne as single sites, but through the selection process, commissioners will look positively on proposals to combine individual sites and the named clusters together within a hub area of the County; Chippenham hub, Devizes hub, Salisbury hub and Trowbridge hub, in order to align services and**

- **to provide a co-ordinated specialist service for children under five with difficulties and disabilities based in the four Council hub areas of the County with outreach services delivered across the hub area, providing a range of support between 9am and 3 pm, Monday to Friday all year round.**

- **That where possible, for the purpose of stability, experienced staff be retained in the interests of the children and their families.**

Reason for Decision:

The present management of the children's centres by a range of different providers within a geographical area is not delivering best value for money, and causing delivery partner organisations to work with a large number of different managers within an area. Clustering children's centres together will provide economy of scale and greater cohesion with partner agencies that work on a hub or County-wide basis.

55. ⚷ **Homelessness Strategy**

Cllr Brady presented the first Wiltshire Council Homelessness Strategy for the period 2010-2015 with a view to Cabinet approving the Strategy for onward recommendation for its adoption by Council. The Strategy set out the Council's plans for the prevention of homelessness and for securing that sufficient accommodation and support would be available for people who become homeless or who were at risk of becoming so.

All local authorities had a duty to produce a homelessness strategy and the Strategy proposed built on the achievements of the former Wiltshire district council strategies and set a framework for the continued improvement of

homelessness services. The Strategy would be revised on an annual basis with an annual update to Cabinet.

Cllr Brady congratulated Angie Rawlins, Head of Housing Options and her team on producing the Strategy and for securing the Council being ranked in the top quartile of Councils for actions taken to prevent households from becoming homeless.

A discussion ensued on the extremely low figure quoted in the Strategy on the rough sleeper counts noting that the figures were more than likely not representative of the true figure. It was noted that the figures were taken from a survey conducted in accordance with Government guidelines. Cllr Brady added that the Council was not complacent and was doing all it could in conjunction with partners to identify and assist those considered vulnerable. The Strategy would be updated to include the latest information as at the time of presentation to Council.

Resolved:

That Cabinet recommends that full council approve the updated homelessness strategy 2010/15 and agrees the implementation of the homelessness strategy action plan.

Reason for Decision

The legal requirement imposed upon all local authorities by the Homelessness Act 2002. It also encourages the continued partnership working with other statutory bodies and voluntary sectors whose work helps prevent homelessness or meet the needs of people who have experienced homelessness.

56. **Housing PFI**

(c) **Housing PFI - Update**

Councillor Brady presented the report of the Service Director, Housing which updated Cabinet on the Housing PFI scheme.

It was noted that the project had been further delayed, due to land issues and ongoing commercial negotiations with Silbury Housing Limited (SHL) such that it would no longer be possible to sign the contract in March. The revised date would be dependent on how quickly the land issues could be resolved and commercial agreements reached with SHL which potentially, could take until the summer.

The report provided the latest position on the land issues, the project agreement, the financial business case, value for money aspects, Persimmon land, affordability and phase 2 of the scheme.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

(d) **Appropriation of Rights - Broad Street, Trowbridge & Paxcroft Mead Hilperton (report to follow)**

Consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting on 20 April 2010.

57. **Planning Enforcement Strategy**

Cllr Brady presented a report which sought approval of a Planning Enforcement Strategy, details of which were presented. The Strategy would replace those of the former Wiltshire district Councils and set out service standards and priorities. It also explained the purpose of planning enforcement and would ensure that resources were used efficiently and effectively to deal with what were regarded as the most serious breaches of planning control in a robust and proportionate manner.

Adoption of the Strategy was previously deferred by Cabinet at its meeting on 22 September 2009 in order to allow for consultation with members of this Council and town and parish councils. Accordingly, a consultation exercise took place with Councillors, town and parish councillors and a random sample of users of the enforcement service and took the form of extremely well attended seminars, questionnaires and e-consultation.

The results of the consultation exercise had been analysed and where appropriate, incorporated into the Strategy.

A comment was made that a change in Government following the General Election might have implications on the Strategy and it was considered prudent to bear this in mind in the context of circulating the leaflet proposed to explain and promote the Strategy.

Resolved:

That Cabinet adopt the Planning Enforcement Strategy as presented.

Reason for Decision

To ensure a high quality, cost effective planning enforcement function with consistent, measurable performance, is delivered across the authority.

58. **Anti-Money Laundering Policy**

Cllr de Rhe Philipe presented a report which sought approval of a new Anti-Money Laundering Policy, details of which were presented. The Policy was designed to ensure the Council had an appropriate and proportionate set of measures to comply with legislation and regulation in this field and would protect its staff and members.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves the Anti-Money Laundering Policy supplied at Appendix 1 of the report presented and its communication to all Council staff and members.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Council complies with its legal obligations and regulatory responsibilities in respect of money laundering.

59. **Places of Change Funding for Redevelopment - Damascus House and Emmaus House Hostel, Salisbury**

Cllr Brady presented a report of the Service Director, Housing regarding the redevelopment of the above mentioned premises and sought approval for the signing of an agreement between Wiltshire Council and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

The Council had been successful in securing funding of £1.2million from the Places of Change programme of the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA), to assist with funding the redevelopment of a direct access hostel and care facility in Salisbury. Cllr Brady amended the recommendation to reflect that the contract sum had increased.

The redevelopment would be managed by one of the Council's partner Registered Social Landlords GreenSquare. The proposal would involve the Council signing a funding agreement with HCA, and to pass on the funding of from Places of Change to GreenSquare to enable the draw down of funds by 31 March 2010.

Resolved:

That Cabinet approves the signing of the agreement between Wiltshire Council and Homes and Communities Agency. That Cabinet approves the transfer of the Places of Change funding of £1.5m and any further sums allocated by Places of Change to the Council for the Damascus House/Emmaus House project to GreenSquare to enable funds to be drawn down, and contracts exchanged by 31/3/10.

Reason for Decision

The first tranche of the Places of Change funding must be drawn down by Wiltshire Council by 31/3/10. Failure to do so will result in funding being withdrawn and the redevelopment project will no longer be financially viable. GreenSquare cannot enter into any contracts on the build programme until they have the grant funding secured.

60. **South West UK Brussels Office - TUPE Transfer of Staff to Wiltshire Council**

The Council has been a member of the South West UK Brussels Office (SWUKBO) Partnership since its inception in 2001. As a trusted and steadfast member of that Partnership, partners had requested that this Council takes on the Secretariat responsibilities of the Partnership involving the TUPE transfer of staff from Somerset County Council.

Cllr John Brady presented a report by the Director of Economy & Enterprise which explained how this could be achieved and sought approval of the TUPE transfer of SWUKBO staff from Somerset County Council to Wiltshire Council.

Resolved:

(a) **That Cabinet agrees to support the TUPE transfer of South West UK Brussels Office staff from Somerset County Council to Wiltshire Council for a period of three years starting 1 April 2010 subject to confirmation that a sufficient number of signatories to the Supplemental Agreement relating to the SWUKBO developed by Wiltshire Council have been secured.**

(b) **In the event that a sufficient number of partner signatories to the Supplemental Agreement have not been secured by the date of the Cabinet meeting, Cabinet authorises the Chief Executive in consultation with the Director of Economy & Enterprise to complete the process of TUPE transfer of SWUKBO staff subject to the required level of sign up by partners being achieved.**

Reason for Decision

The Partnership Agreement for the South West specifies that the SWUKBO Secretariat responsibilities should rotate around the South West partners and as a trusted and steadfast member of the SWUKBO Partnership with the appropriate level of management capacity, Wiltshire Council has been invited to take on those responsibilities.

A management fee would be payable to Wiltshire Council to take on this role. The new arrangement would also enable Wiltshire Council to develop a closer working relationship with SWUKBO and develop stronger relationships with the

European institutions and networks including the European Parliament, Commission and Committee of the Regions with the benefit of early information regarding the availability of European funding opportunities to support the delivery of the strategic objectives of the Council and its partners. In the last three years, over £10 million of European funding has been secured for projects in Wiltshire; Wiltshire Council's membership of the SWUKBO Partnership has been a contributory factor to this success

61. **Municipal Waste Disposal (Landfill Diversion Contract) - PART I**

Cllr Sturgis presented the report of the Corporate Director, Economic Development, Planning and Housing on municipal waste disposal addressing the Landfill Diversion Contract.

The purpose of this report was to update Cabinet on the progress with negotiations with the preferred tenderer, recommend the awarding of a contract to the preferred tenderer subject to the completion of outstanding details to the Council's satisfaction, and to recommend authorisation of the Chief Executive to complete the certification requirements of the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 in respect of the contract.

Further details including information classified as exempt were received and considered in Part II of the meeting, minute no. 64 refers.

62. **Urgent Items**

There was no urgent business.

63. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

Resolved:

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the public from the meeting for the following item of business because it was likely that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 and paragraphs 3 & 5 respectively of Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

64. **Municipal Waste Management (Landfill Diversion Contract) - Part II**

Cllr Sturgis presented a confidential report of the Corporate Director, Economic Development, Planning and Housing on municipal waste disposal addressing the Landfill Diversion Contract.

Resolved

That the Cabinet:

(a)   **authorises the Service Director Waste Management to conclude negotiation of the proposed contract with Hills Waste Solutions Limited on terms to be approved by the Leader of the Cabinet in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Waste, Property and Environment and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance and Risk after receiving advice from the Solicitor to the Council, the Chief Finance Officer and the Director of Neighbourhood and Planning; and**

(b)   **authorises the Chief Executive to complete the certification requirements of the Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 in respect of the proposed contract (including the direct agreement with the funders) subject to its award in accordance with its proposal set out in paragraph (a) above.**

Reason for Proposal

The Council could incur substantial additional costs if the targets for diversion of waste from landfill are not achieved. Proposing the signing of the contract with Hills for the delivery of 60,000 tonnes each year of MSW to the proposed MBT plant at Westbury and the subsequent delivery of at least 20,000 tonnes each year of SRF to an energy recovery plant reduces this risk.

65.   **Development of the ICT Transformation Programme**

Cllr Noeken presented the confidential report of the Corporate Director, Resources regarding the development of the ICT Transformation Programme.

Resolved

That Cabinet:

(a)   **note that the Legal advice received indicated that a variation to the existing Steria contract is not possible and therefore the current contract and that notice of termination has been given to take take effect from 13 January 2011;**

(b)   **agree that transformation of ICT services is required in order to deliver the Workplace Transformation Programme and improve ICT support provided to the wider organisation, partners, members and customers;**

(c)   agree that in order to deliver b) above within the timeframe set by a) Option 3 In-house provision of services is taken forward within the current approved ICT budget for 2010/11 of £20.4M and

(d)   agree that appropriate project governance is formed, including the Cabinet member for Resources to monitor and direct progress of the project and report at least quarterly to Cabinet with additional briefings if required, to Cabinet Liaison.

Reason for Decisions

To advise Cabinet of the advice received, options considered and costs involved with this project. Full reason as detailed in the confidential report presented.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30am – 1.30pm)

These decisions were published on the 29 March 2010 and will come into force on 8 April 2010.

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic & Members' Services, direct line 01225 718024 or e-mail yaminarhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk
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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **Care Quality Commission – Inspection of Adult Social Care 2009 – Report and Improvement Plan**

Cabinet member: **John Thomson, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Services**

Key Decision: **No**

Executive Summary

This report presents the report of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection of Adult Social Care and the Council's improvement plan, developed in response to recommendations within the Inspection report.

Proposal

That Cabinet receive the report from the Lead Inspector and to note the improvement plan, which is currently being implemented.

Reason for Proposal

The Council welcomes the inspection as an independent evaluation of performance of two areas of adult social care services.

The council is required to present the findings of the Inspection of Adult Social Care and its improvement plan at a public meeting.

Sue Redmond
Corporate Director of Community Services

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **Care Quality Commission – Inspection of Adult Social Care 2009 – Report and Improvement Plan**

Cabinet member: **John Thomson, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Services**

Key Decision: **No**

Purpose of Report

1.   The purpose of this report is to inform Councillors of the results of the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection of Adult Social Care in 2009 and to present the Council's improvement plan in response to the inspection. A presentation on the inspection is being provided by the Lead Inspector, Silu Pascoe.

Background

2.   CQC undertakes a programme of inspections of adult social care across England. The role of inspections is to provide an independent evaluation of a Council's performance in delivering social care outcomes to its communities and its capacity to improve that delivery in the future.

3.   The focus of the inspection in Wiltshire was on two areas: *safeguarding* across all adult services *and increased choice and control* in respect of services and outcomes for older people with mental health needs. Wiltshire's is the first inspection nationally to consider specifically services for older people with mental health needs. For each of these two themes, CQC considered how well the council delivers outcomes for people. They provide a separate judgement of 'capacity to improve' based upon an assessment of leadership, commissioning and use of resources.

4.   The inspection process is detailed and relates to national standards which the CQC have developed. Standards are evidenced by information provided by the Council, and, predominantly by service user and carer views, gathered during the inspection process by postal questionnaire, meetings with service user and carer groups.   During the inspection fieldwork, which took place over two weeks in November-December 2009, two inspectors, accompanied by an expert

by experience, followed up on specific case work (an examination of 16 sample case files, which resulted in 6 visits to service users) and met with councillors, managers, front-line staff, service providers and partners. Fieldwork also included a public open forum and a 'mystery shopper' test of availability of information about services.

5.   The Inspection Report was published by CQC on 17 March 2010. A copy of the Inspection Report is attached as Appendix A. The report is also available on the Council and CQC websites and copies have been provided to many individuals and organisations involved in the inspection.

Main Considerations for the Council

6.   The inspection report covers three areas. The first is safeguarding, which has been judged as *adequate*. Inspectors commended the Council for its commitment to strengthening adult safeguarding arrangements, and investment of additional resources. They recommended further work to ensure that people know how to raise concerns and that staff in all relevant organisations know how to recognise and manage safeguarding concerns appropriately. Inspectors also recommended improving outcomes though quality assurance. Prior to the inspection, these issues had been acknowledged by the Local Safeguarding Adults Board, and action was taken to audit the quality and consistency of practice and recording across adult care and mental health teams, and an action plan developed. Ongoing quality assurance work will continue to be a priority for the Local Safeguarding Adults Board, and will be driven forward by a new Independent Chair for the Board.

7.   The second area relates to choice and control for older people with mental health needs. The Council was judged to be *adequate*. Inspectors commended the Council for treating people with dignity and respect and giving them a say in how they want their needs to be met, and suggested that more could be done to improve information about support options, to ensure that assessment and support plans focus on outcomes and to increase numbers of people receiving direct payments and other forms of self-directed support. Work is well underway to implement these recommendations.

8.   The third area relates to capacity for improvement, and covers leadership, commissioning and use of resources. Inspectors were pleased to see that the Council has a clear vision for adult social care, and listens to and learns from the views of people who use services. They commended the Council for showing creative ways of developing new services, with a focus on securing value for money. The report concludes that capacity to improve in Wiltshire is *promising.*

9.   The inspection report contains 17 recommendations, all of which have been accepted. An improvement plan has been drawn up to ensure

recommendations are implemented and this will be monitored by the Service management team, as well as by the Local Safeguarding Adults Board.   A copy of the Improvement Plan is attached as Appendix B.

10.   The Improvement Plan will also be monitored at regular meetings with the CQC Area Manager. The CQC Area Manager and CQC Lead Inspector will also meet with the Council six months after publication of the report to assess progress made.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

11.   The inspection report does not raise any specific environmental issues.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

12.   The inspection report does not raise any specific equalities issues, although all of the actions within the improvement plan are focussed on improving outcomes for vulnerable people in Wiltshire.

Risk Assessment

13.   There are no specific risks associated with the recommendations or the proposed improvements.   Failure to adopt the recommendations within the report would hamper the Council's ability to improve outcomes, and may affect the Council's Annual Performance Rating for Adult Social Care.

Financial Implications

14.   Good performance does not always have financial implications, but improving performance in some areas does have an impact on budgets. The department's management team have redirected resources to increase capacity as necessary.

Legal Implications

15.   None.

Options Considered

16.   No other options were considered. The Council accepts and is required to implement these recommendations in order to improve outcomes and to achieve improvements.

Conclusions

17.   The Inspection of Adult Social Care has been an in-depth and useful exercise in focussing attention on two key areas of service: safeguarding adults and choice and control for older people with mental health needs. The Council's improvement plan addresses the recommendations made by inspectors and implementation is being seen as a priority.

Sue Redmond
Director, Department of Community Services

Report Author:
Sue Geary
Head of Social Care Policy

Appendices

Appendix A – Care Quality Commission Inspection Report, Service Inspection of Adult Social Care: Wiltshire

Appendix B – Wiltshire Council Inspection of Adult Social Care Improvement Plan

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Inspection report

Service inspection of adult social care:
Wiltshire Council

Focus of inspection:

Safeguarding adults
Increased choice and control for older people with
mental health needs

Date of inspection: November/December 2009

Date of publication: 17 March 2010

About the Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission is the independent regulator of health and adult social care services in England. We also protect the interests of people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

Whether services are provided by the NHS, local authorities, private companies or voluntary organisations, we make sure that people get better care. We do this by:

- Driving improvement across health and adult social care.
- Putting people first and championing their rights.
- Acting swiftly to remedy bad practice.
- Gathering and using knowledge and expertise, and working with others.

Inspection of adult social care

Wiltshire Council

November/December 2009

This report is available to download from our website on www.cqc.org.uk

Please contact us if you would like a summary of this report in other formats or languages. Phone our helpline on 03000 616161 or Email: enquiries@cqc.org.uk

Contents

Introduction

An inspection team from the Care Quality Commission visited Wiltshire in November/December 2009 to find out how well the council was delivering social care.

To do this, the inspection team looked at how well Wiltshire was:

- Safeguarding adults whose circumstances made them vulnerable.

- Increasing choice and control for older people with mental health needs.

Before visiting Wiltshire, the inspection team reviewed a range of key documents supplied by the council and assessed other information about how the council was delivering and managing outcomes for people. This included, crucially, the council's own assessment of their overall performance. The team then refined the focus of the inspection to cover those areas where further evidence was required to ensure that there was a clear and accurate picture of how the council was performing. During their visit, the team met with people who used services and their carers, staff and managers from the council and representatives of other organisations.

This report is intended to be of interest to the general public, and in particular for people who use services in Wiltshire. It will support the council and partner organisations in Wiltshire in working together to improve people's lives and meet their needs.

Summary of how well Wiltshire was performing

Supporting outcomes

The Care Quality Commission judges the performance of councils using the following four grades: 'performing poorly', 'performing adequately', 'performing well' and 'performing excellently'.

Safeguarding adults:

We concluded that Wiltshire was performing adequately in safeguarding adults.

Increased choice and control for older people with mental health needs:

We concluded that Wiltshire was performing adequately in supporting older people with mental health needs to have increased choice and control.

Capacity to improve

The Care Quality Commission rates a council's capacity to improve its performance using the following four grades: 'poor', 'uncertain', 'promising' and 'excellent'.

We concluded that the capacity to improve in Wiltshire was promising.

4

What Wiltshire was doing well to support outcomes

Safeguarding adults

The council:

- Was strongly committed to promoting community cohesion and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Contributed to community safety services which supported people to keep safe in their own homes and in their local communities.
- Was committed to strengthening adult safeguarding arrangements and had invested additional resources to achieve this.
- Provided a range of safeguarding training so that both council and partner agency staff had good awareness of adult safeguarding.

Increased choice and control for older people with mental health needs

The council:

- Ensured most people were treated with dignity and respect and were given a say in how they wanted their needs met.
- With its partners, had developed some new services for people with dementia which enabled them to maintain their independence.
- Supported voluntary and community organisations to provide services that gave people choices and promoted their independence.
- Ensured people had access to independent advocacy support.

Recommendations for improving outcomes in Wiltshire

Safeguarding adults

The council and partners should ensure that:

- People know how to raise concerns if they are at risk of or are being harmed or abused.
- Staff and managers in all relevant organisations know how to recognise and manage safeguarding concerns appropriately.
- Outcomes for people are improved through effective quality assurance and performance management of safeguarding practice and recording.
- All staff receive the appropriate training and are competent to undertake safeguarding work.
- People whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from independent advocacy support.

Increased choice and control for older people with mental health needs

The council should:

- Improve the quality, availability and accessibility of information so that people are well informed about support options.
- Ensure that assessment and support plans focus on outcomes.
- Increase the number of people using Direct Payments and other forms of self-directed support.
- Address gaps in service availability and flexibility.
- Give people more choice and control in short break services and support.
- Support family carers both in and beyond their caring role.

What Wiltshire was doing well to ensure their capacity to improve

Providing leadership

The council:

- Had a clear vision for adult social care.

- Listened to and learnt from the views and experiences of people who used services to deliver better outcomes for local people.

- Had a range of forums and mechanisms in place to ensure that citizens and staff were engaged in strategic planning and development.

- Had good working relationships with its Primary Care Trust partner to deliver improvements for older people with mental health needs.

- Had developed positive partner relationships with voluntary and independent sector organisations.

Commissioning and use of resources

The council:

- Had improved commissioning and contracting arrangements with voluntary and community organisations.

- Showed creative ways of developing new services, with a focus on securing value for money.

- Worked effectively with provider organisations to improve the quality of care homes and domiciliary care services.

- Had strengthened contract specifications to ensure the commissioning of safe services.

Recommendations for improving capacity in Wiltshire

Providing leadership

The council should:

- Ensure that older people with mental health needs are more involved in strategic planning, development and evaluation.

- Ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to support older people with mental health needs.

- Ensure people who use services and carers are engaged in shaping adult safeguarding policy, procedures and practice.

- With partners, develop a quality assurance and performance management framework for all safeguarding activity to ensure improved outcomes for people.

Commissioning and use of resources

The council should:

- Update the joint mental health commissioning plan and ensure that its implementation delivers improved outcomes for older people with mental health needs.

- Ensure that independent and voluntary sector provider organisations are involved in shaping the market for self-directed support.

Context

Wiltshire is a unitary council located in the southwest of England. It is a predominantly rural county and is not dominated by any single town or city but instead consists of 20 local communities built principally around smaller market towns and larger villages. There are populations in excess of 10,000 in Wootton Bassett, Chippenham, Calne, Devizes, Melksham, Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster and Salisbury.

Of the 149 county and unitary authorities in England, Wiltshire was ranked as the 140th least deprived in the 2007 Indices of Multiple Deprivation. However, the county has pockets of deprivation including three local areas that were amongst the 20 per cent most deprived in England.

The council estimates that the total population of Wiltshire is 456,000. The county has 80,400 people aged 65 years and over, representing 16.1 per cent of the total population. The older population is predicted to increase to 120,900 by 2025.

The council used data from national research to estimate how many older people within Wiltshire might have a mental health problem. Estimates in 2006 were:

- 98 people aged 65 years and over per 1,000 will experience a neurosis such as depression, anxiety and phobias.
- 3 people aged 65 years and over per 1,000 will experience a psychosis such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.
- 50 people aged 65 years and over per 1,000 will live with dementia.

In 2006, it was estimated that there were 12,000 older people with mental health needs in Wiltshire. By 2011, it is predicted that there will be an 11 per cent increase with 1,314 more older people with mental health needs. In 2008, the council estimated that there were 6,157 older people with dementia. The proportion of people with dementia with a diagnosis registered with GPs is around 30 per cent, which is below the national average.

Wiltshire has a relatively small proportion of people from black and minority ethnic communities (4.3 per cent of the population) compared to 11.3 per cent for the rest of England. Older people from black and minority ethnic communities are over-represented in Wiltshire mental health services.

The council has a leader and cabinet and an overview and scrutiny model of governance. The Conservative group controls the council.

Wiltshire Council became a new council in April 2009. In December 2009, the Audit Commission did not score its overall assessment of the council. The Audit Commission rated the council as performing adequately in its use of resources. This rating was based on the last financial year of the former county council which controlled most of the council spending for the area. In December 2009, adult social care services were judged to be performing well by the Care Quality Commission.

Key findings

Safeguarding

People who use services and their carers are free from discrimination or harassment in their living environments and neighbourhoods. People who use services and their carers are safeguarded from all forms of abuse. Personal care maintains their human rights, preserving dignity and respect, helps them to be comfortable in their environment, and supports family and social life.

People who use services and their carers are free from discrimination or harassment when they use services. Social care contributes to the improvement of community safety.

The council was strongly committed to promoting community cohesion and reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. The Place Survey, a national survey in 2009 of what the public think of where they live and of their local council found that Wiltshire was the second safest county with the second lowest number of recorded crimes in the country.

A good range of community safety services and initiatives supported people to keep safe in their homes and in their local communities. The council and partner organisations worked to minimise the risk to people of being a victim of distraction burglary, doorstep crime and rogue trading. Work was in progress to strengthen links between adult social care and the wider community safety partnership.

Wiltshire and Swindon User Network, a user-led organisation, worked with the council's passenger transport unit to promote safe travel for people whose circumstances made them vulnerable. The council had funded Victim Support to run a specific project for people with learning disabilities in North Wiltshire. The project aimed to raise awareness of and reduce the fear of hate crime. The council's Court of Protection team provided a valued service. The team gave advice and support where concerns were raised about people at risk of or victims of financial abuse.

There was a strong corporate focus on completing equality impact assessments (EIAs) for new policies or changes to existing policies. However, the EIAs that we saw were in need of further development to ensure that people were free from discrimination or harassment when they used services.

Work to review the joint Swindon and Wiltshire adult safeguarding policy and procedures had just started, having been postponed to take account of the national review of Department of Health 'No Secrets' guidance. It would be important for the Wiltshire Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) to complete its own EIA to take account of both local and national evidence in relation to safeguarding. This would ensure there would be no adverse impact on particular groups as a result of policy and procedural implementation. The council needed to address areas of under-reporting of safeguarding alerts, such as for people with mental health needs, people who misused alcohol and drugs and people with sensory disabilities.

People are safeguarded from abuse, neglect and self-harm.

Some people were effectively safeguarded against abuse, neglect and poor treatment. The SAB had commissioned an independent review of safeguarding arrangements in Spring 2009 and had developed a substantial improvement plan. Adult social care staff had just started to implement some of the actions required, however, so it was too early to assess the impact of the changes on people whose circumstances made them vulnerable.

The council had demonstrated its strong commitment to securing people's safety by increasing resources given to adult safeguarding. A new safeguarding team had been established in September 2009 and a new business manager post created to support the SAB. These were important steps in promoting the sustainability of future adult safeguarding arrangements.

Public awareness of adult safeguarding and how to report concerns required further development. The council had worked with two user-led organisations to produce an accessible booklet about keeping safe. This was a good initiative. The booklet had been recently updated and was available on both the council's website and in hard copy. The targeting and dissemination of safeguarding information required strengthening as it was not well profiled in public information points. Most people that we met had limited awareness of how to keep themselves safe and how to report concerns if either they or someone they knew was at risk of being harmed or abused.

People who used services and carers would benefit from the production of an accessible explanatory guide which informed them of what to expect when involved in safeguarding processes.

There was scope to improve the safeguarding partnership's shared understanding of what constituted a safeguarding referral. Cases indicated confusion about when to use care management processes and when to use safeguarding processes. The interface between health processes for dealing with serious untoward incidents and safeguarding arrangements needed further development. The integration of safeguarding processes with local arrangements for the Care Programme Approach for people with mental health needs also needed strengthening.

Adult social care staff had good partnership working relationships with the police at both strategic and operational levels. Work was in progress to strengthen joint working with the local children's safeguarding board to manage the interface between safeguarding arrangements of both boards more effectively and efficiently. There was work to do to establish closer links between the SAB and the service user Partnership Boards. This would ensure more joint consideration of the evidence and recommendations of national investigations and inquiries and the implications for local services in Wiltshire.

A range of safeguarding training was available and take up was good by both council and partner agencies staff. Staff reported that the training was of good quality and helpful in the roles they performed within safeguarding procedures.

Effective quality assurance and performance management systems for adult safeguarding practice and recording were not yet in place across the partnership. Recording of safeguarding practice was of variable quality. Key actions to safeguard people were not always easily identified and recording of final outcomes of safeguarding work was not consistently clear. This meant that there was still uncertainty about some people's circumstances. We found some examples of positive practice that included effective involvement of the person at risk of abuse. Some cases we saw, however, showed inadequate risk assessment and protection planning.

Where safeguarding strategy meetings had taken place we found variable performance with regard to compliance with required procedural timescales in holding the meeting, attendance at the meeting, and recording and distribution of strategy meeting minutes. Some partners reported that they did not always receive copies of the minutes of strategy meetings or case conference meetings and were not informed of the final outcome of safeguarding investigations. This resulted in some lack of clarity about decisions made and actions taken. Action had been taken to improve administrative support to investigating managers.

Managers identified a number of practice, procedural and training issues arising from the cases we read. This reinforced the need to strengthen management oversight and supervision of both safeguarding practice and recording. The council had recognised the need to address some of these issues and had recently introduced new case file recording standards alongside action plans for all teams to improve recording practice.

Monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding alerts and outcomes of safeguarding activity were limited. This needed to improve to help the SAB understand the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements and inform service developments.

The council operated safe recruitment and selection processes and practices for its workforce. The council took action, including disciplinary action, to address staff practice where there were adult safeguarding concerns. Users of Direct Payments received council funding to obtain Criminal Records Bureau checks when they employed personal assistants. The council commissioned Compass, a Direct Payments Support service, to raise awareness about safeguarding for people using Direct Payments. Work was in progress to address the specific issues relating to safeguarding and self-directed support. There was scope for council staff to do more to support people who had Direct Payments or Individual Budgets to identify and address their safeguarding needs.

People who use services and carers find that personal care respects their dignity, privacy and personal preferences.

The council had some initiatives in place to improve dignity in care for people who used regulated services such as care homes and domiciliary care services. The My Home Life project was specifically designed to improve the quality of life for people living in care homes. Mental health liaison nurses in acute hospitals provided

specialist advice and support to hospital staff to improve dignity in care of older people with mental health needs. Alzheimers Support was working with health services to improve dementia awareness among hospital staff.

The SAB had yet to consider the findings of the Ombudsman report 'Six Lives'[1] in relation to Wiltshire with regard to respecting the dignity, privacy and personal preferences of people with learning disabilities whilst in hospital. The SAB also needed to address the findings of the Michael Inquiry[2] to ensure that people with learning disabilities receive personalised and safe general healthcare and treatment.

The multi-agency safeguarding adults policy and procedures contained clear guidance for staff about managing and sharing confidential information across partner agencies. Work was in progress to improve information sharing between adult social care and the NHS Mental Health Trust in respect of safeguarding.

Independent advocacy support for people within safeguarding processes was under-developed. Limited use had been made of the Independent Mental Capacity Advocate (IMCA) service to both empower and support people through safeguarding procedures. We found some cases where advocacy services had not been considered or proactively offered to people who could have benefited from this support.

All relevant staff had been trained in the requirements of the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) and MCA champions had been identified in adult social care teams. There were plans to roll out MCA training to a wider staff group. Independent Mental Capacity Advocates (IMCAs) had been used to support people who lacked capacity to make their own decisions. A Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards training programme was being implemented with priority given to independent care home providers.

People who use services and their carers are respected by social workers in their individual preferences in maintaining their own living space to acceptable standards.

The council had a good understanding of the quality of services that it commissioned from regulated care providers. It used information from contract monitoring and Care Quality Commission regulatory information and inspection reports to ensure that people who used services had choice in terms of the quality of residential and domiciliary care services.

A new Care Quality Team had started to support care home and domiciliary care providers to improve their services. The council had a policy of commissioning only single rooms in care homes, except where couples specifically chose to share a room. A new risk policy provided guidance to staff who supported people whose physical condition or living space had become a risk to their health and well-being.

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[1] Ombudsman Report. Six Lives: the provision of public services to people with learning disabilities. 2009.
[2] Healthcare for all: Report of the independent inquiry into access to healthcare for people with learning disabilities. 2008.

Increased choice and control

People who use services and their carers are supported in exercising control of personal support. People can choose from a wide range of local support.

All local people who need services and carers are helped to take control of their support. Advice and information helps them think through support options, risks, costs and funding.

The council had produced a broad range of public information about adult social care services which was of relevance to older people with mental health needs. The information was available in both printed copy and on its website. A small amount of information had been produced on DVD. We found the accessibility and dissemination of information was variable, with only a limited range in some public information settings.

There was work to do to ensure that older people with mental health needs had information which helped them to consider support options. The council had produced little information tailored for older people with mental health needs and its website did not signpost people to information of specific relevance to them. Older people with mental health needs were not systematically involved in designing, monitoring or evaluating the provision of information produced by the council.

Many people we met and who responded to our survey said they found it difficult to know where to go to get information. Some people who paid for their own care felt they had received insufficient help from the council when they had sought information and advice about support options. They felt that they were too readily left to fend for themselves. One person said:

"*I was told to 'search the book'. I got no expert advice about care options.*"

There were a large number of self-funders in Wiltshire therefore it was important that the council more closely monitored the outcomes of providing information, advice and support to them.

The council was working with its partners to enhance the range of information, advice and support to older people with dementia and their family carers. Alzheimer's Society and Alzheimers Support were funded to provide information, advice and support. Since July 2009, Memory Cafes had been established across the county and these were also a source of information, advice and support. An informative DVD entitled 'Worried About Memory' had recently been produced and was displayed in most GP surgeries. There were plans to make it available through the mobile library service.

A small work group led by voluntary and community organisations and including carers had just developed a draft information pack for carers of people with dementia. The group had also recommended that information about dementia should be put on the council's website and this was under development.

The council intended to recruit a dementia advisor as part of the plans to pilot a new primary care-based memory service in South Wiltshire. The dementia advisor would provide information and advice at the earliest stage of diagnosis and ongoing support to people with dementia and their family carers.

The council's website provided information for carers. The council also funded carer support organisations to provide information, advice and support to carers.

The council had introduced a new FOCUS programme designed to make it easier for people to access information, advice and support regardless of their financial situation. FOCUS stood for Focus On Customers Underpins Success and new roles had been created to make sure that people could contact the right person with the right skills when they needed support. Since summer 2009, four new FOCUS 'hubs' had been established across the county so the teams were still in the early stages of development.

People who use services and their carers are helped to assess their needs and plan personalised support.

Most people we met told us that they were treated with dignity and respect and had been given a say in how their needs were met. We found some examples where people experienced positive outcomes from the complex packages of support put in place by their care manager or care co-ordinator. One person said:

"Everybody who had been to help us has been so nice."

Older people with mental health needs received an assessment and care management service from staff in adult care teams and community mental health teams for older people. The council and NHS Wiltshire commissioned Avon and Wiltshire (AWP) Partnership Trust, an NHS Mental Health Trust, to provide community mental health teams for older people and social care staff were seconded by the council into the teams.

Case files we read showed that assessments and support planning were not yet sufficiently person-centred and outcomes-focused. The views of older people with mental health needs and carers were not well recorded in people's assessments and care plans. People had not been routinely supported to complete contingency plans. There was no single assessment process in place which meant that some people had to repeat their stories to both social care and health practitioners. Work was in progress to review the care planning process undertaken within the AWP Partnership Trust to ensure closer interface between health and social care support planning processes.

The adult social care workforce had undergone major change as result of the introduction of the FOCUS programme. The AWP community mental health teams were also being re-configured. These changes had led to some older people with mental health needs and carers waiting some time for assessments to be completed.

More work was needed to support family carers both in and beyond their caring role. Most carers we met had a relatively low awareness of their entitlement to a carer's assessment. Carers needed more support to access and complete assessments of their own needs. Carers' support agencies supported some carers to complete assessments when approached to do so but felt they were not sufficiently resourced to provide this service on any great scale.

Waiting lists had grown for carer assessments to be completed by community mental health team staff. Health and social care commissioners had very recently met with the AWP Partnership Trust to agree an action plan to improve performance on completing carer assessments. Carers were particularly concerned at the lack of contingency planning for if they were ill or could not continue in their caring role. Arrangements for contingency planning and emergency support for carers needed to have greater priority in support planning.

Progress was limited in supporting older people with mental health needs to access and take-up Direct Payments. Nineteen people were in receipt of Direct Payments. Some Direct Payment users were experiencing difficulties in finding services to meet their needs. We found limited awareness of self-directed support in general, and Direct Payments in particular, amongst people who used services. There was no self-assessment process in place to enable older people with mental health needs to identify their own needs and suggest how those needs should be met. The council had started to pilot individual budgets to enable people to have more choice and flexibility in their personal support arrangements. This development had not yet extended to older people with mental health needs.

The number of carers in receipt of Direct Payments had increased. Most carers used Direct Payments to buy a sitting service. One carer told us:

"*I use Direct Payments to pay for a sitting service. It's great because I can get out to see family and friends. It's made a big difference to me*."

The council funded South Wiltshire Advocacy Network (SWAN) to provide an independent advocacy service, including an IMCA Service. Growing use was made of the IMCA service for those who lacked capacity to make their own decisions. A number of Third Sector organisations were also funded to provide advocacy support as well as an information and advice service. People we met valued independent advocacy services to empower them to speak up about issues which concerned them. SWAN staff had identified the need to recruit and train more advocates who could support older people with mental health needs. Self-advocacy and peer advocacy were less well developed which limited people's options to exercise choice and control in decisions affecting their lives.

People who use services and their carers benefit from a broad range of support services. These are able to meet most people's needs for independent living. Support services meet the needs of people from diverse communities and backgrounds.

The council was developing a range of services with its partners. Third Sector organisations delivered community-based services which helped people to have choices and maintain their independence. Age Concern provided Active Ageing activities, support to community day services and luncheon clubs, and support to people in their own homes. The council funded Alzheimer's Society and Alzheimers Support to provide a range of services to older people with dementia. Services included day opportunities, sitting services, support to people in their homes and a limited befriending and buddying service. These organisations also provided support to family carers.

Memory cafes and Singing for the Brain groups provided social opportunities for people with dementia and their carers and opportunities for them to develop their own support networks. A good example of a peer support group was the Memory Support Group in the south of the county. A group of older people with dementia, supported by skilled facilitators, met together in a domestic setting. Group members were given good information about dementia as well as facilitated to give and receive support from each other. Members of the group told us what a difference the group had made in their lives. One person said:

"*We come for the camaraderie and unity. We have lots of laughs.*"

Carers who wished to do so also met in another room to support each other. They valued the group as it provided one of the few opportunities to meet with other carers at the same time as their family member met with other people in a separate group.

The council, with its partners, had developed some new services for people with dementia which enabled them to continue living in their own homes. New service developments included a specialist flexible day care service combined with a residential respite bed and a short-term residential service for five people with behaviour which challenged services. Two places in a local nursing home had been established to support people with dementia to regain their independence skills to return home after a stay in hospital.

Older people with mental health needs had access to rehabilitation services, including intermediate care services, to assist them in regaining independence skills. However, some staff felt that people's potential to benefit from re-enablement services, either to prevent hospital admission or after hospital discharge, was not always recognised. This meant that access was limited. The council's re-ablement service was being re-configured to provide a service to a wider range of people with complex needs. Consideration should be given to developing models of rehabilitation services that will meet the needs of older people with mental health needs.

Assistive technology was beginning to be provided to support the safety and independence of people who used services. Two telecare projects had started in different parts of the county. The South Wiltshire generic telecare project included a

GP and care staff with dementia skills available via Wiltshire Medical Services call centre 24 hours a day. The West Wiltshire telecare pilot project specifically focused on people with dementia.

Some people we met told us they had difficulties in accessing domiciliary care services which provided consistency of care and continuity of staff. They felt that some domiciliary care staff lacked knowledge, experience and skills in meeting the needs of older people with dementia. The council was aware of some of these issues and planned to pilot a new specialist service for older people with dementia at the end of 2009. The quality, flexibility and availability of some domiciliary care services still needed to be addressed in order to maintain people's independence in their own homes.

Older people with mental health needs and their family carers experienced limited choice and availability of short breaks and respite services. People wanted to exercise more choice and control over where and when they took short breaks away from their own homes. Carers reported particular difficulties in finding respite nursing care places and specialist respite care provision which could be accessed quickly. Some older people with dementia said they wanted a greater range of services to support them in their own homes where they felt safe.

Day services were valued by people using them. However, there was an overall shortage of day services and growing waiting lists for some existing provision. A particular gap in support was for people whose needs could not be met in community day centres and luncheon clubs but who did not need specialist provision for people with very complex needs.

Housing with support options needed expanding to provide people with more choice in where and how they lived their lives. It was pleasing to see that older people with mental health needs had been included in the council's older people accommodation strategy. The council was working in partnership with housing and care providers to develop a range of supported living arrangements, including extra-care housing.

End of life care support options for older people with dementia was identified by the council and NHS Wiltshire as an area for development.

The council had strengthened its support to family carers by funding carer support agencies and Third Sector organisations to provide carer services. Some carers we either met or heard from, however, did not feel sufficiently supported. Carers were seeking better provision of support services to enable them to continue in their caring role. They also wanted to pursue opportunities beyond their caring role such as leisure and employment opportunities.

There was some inequity of service provision across the county. For instance, there were no day services for older people with dementia in the north of the county. This inequity had been recognised and was being addressed. Wiltshire's three Alzheimer's organisations in partnership with the council had looked at rebalancing their resources to achieve more equitable service delivery. An action plan was in place and due to start implementation in April 2010.

The council had identified some areas for improvement in providing support services to people with diverse needs. The joint mental health commissioning plan identified that people with mental health needs who had additional learning, physical or sensory disabilities did not necessarily receive the same quality of services to meet all their needs. These issues had not yet been fully addressed. The council had started work with the PCT to ensure that older people with depression and those who misused alcohol received the right quality of service.

People who use services and their carers can contact service providers when they need to. Complaints are well-managed.

Contact details of service providers were not included on care plans but most people said they knew who to contact during office hours. Some people who used services and carers were less clear about contact arrangements during out of office hours. There was scope to profile the emergency duty service (EDS) better in public information points and in care and support plans.

Staff in the EDS could contact the AWP Partnership Trust's Crisis Service for information in relation to older people with functional mental health problems. AWP Partnership Trust staff were also Approved Mental Health Practitioners and provided Mental Health Act assessments out of hours. There was a limited range of services available to support people during out of office hours. Emergency duty service workers used domiciliary care services and residential care services to meet urgent needs. There was no specialist crisis service to specifically support older people with mental health needs and family carers in their own homes. An Emergency Carers Card scheme had been launched and enabled carers to register some basic details with a call line service.

Individual reviews were not always held at timely intervals. This meant that managers could not be sure whether care plans had been fully implemented and were meeting people's needs or if service user needs had changed. Some carers said that their assessments had not been reviewed so their changing needs had not been responded to. The quality and outcomes from people's reviews needed closer monitoring as reviews were not consistently holistic and outcome-focused.

The council had just revised its complaints service leaflet in line with new national guidance on complaints. Work was in progress to produce an easy read version of the new complaints leaflet. Some people who used services said that they did not have information about the complaints service and did not know how to make a complaint. Independent advocacy support was provided to help people through the complaints process but usage was low.

The number of complaints received on behalf of older people had reduced to 26 in 2008-09 from 44 in 2007-08. There was no breakdown of data to identify how many complaints had been received on behalf of older people with mental health needs. Most complaints were addressed in a timely manner. There were links between the complaints service and safeguarding procedures. Managers were actively involved in monitoring both complaints and compliments to identify learning points.

Capacity to improve

Leadership

People from all communities are engaged in planning with councillors and senior managers. Councillors and senior managers have a clear vision for social care. They lead people in transforming services to achieve better outcomes for people. They agree priorities with their partners, secure resources, and develop the capabilities of people in the workforce.

People from all communities engage with councillors and senior managers. Councillors and senior managers show that they have a clear vision for social care services.

Councillors and senior managers had a clear vision for adult social care which was integrally linked to the vision for the whole council. A key council ambition was to develop and support resilient communities whereby citizens determined priorities and developed options and solutions to local issues. The council was also strongly committed to ensuring equitable access to support and services across the county.

Councillors and senior managers listened to and learnt from the views and experiences of people who used services. There was a range of forums and structures in place to ensure that citizens were engaged in informing strategic planning and development. The new Community Area Boards enabled people to raise issues directly with councillors, council managers and other partner organisations such as the police, fire and rescue service and PCT.

The community services directorate had strengthened its senior management capacity to support the delivery of its vision for adult social care. Over the past year, the directorate had concentrated a great deal of its transformation activity on developing and implementing the FOCUS programme. The programme was designed to establish an organisational structure that put people first.

The Transformation Steering Group had sound governance arrangements in place to deliver on the council's plans for transforming adult social care. Staff were directly involved in workgroups established to deliver the personalisation agenda.

Councillors had become increasingly aware of and engaged with the adult safeguarding agenda. The cabinet had designated a member to be a safeguarding champion. New councillors had been briefed on safeguarding, equality and diversity issues as part of their induction.

There was no councillor designated as an Older People's Champion but two councillors with lead responsibilities for adult social care had become Dignity Champions. The Dignity Champions were raising the profile of dignity in care.

People who use services and their carers are a part of the development of strategic planning through feedback about the services they use. Social care develops strategic planning with partners, focuses on priorities and is informed by analysis of population needs. Resource use is also planned strategically and delivers priorities over time.

The council had a range of mechanisms in place that enabled people who used services and carers to contribute to the development of strategic planning. However, there was more work to do to involve older people with mental health needs in strategic planning, development and evaluation.

The Mental Health Partnership Board was the main route for people to contribute their views and influence decision-making at a strategic level. The Board had been recently re-named and re-launched as the Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership. The Partnership was responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the mental health strategy for older people and adults of working age with mental health needs. Its membership included elected service user and carer representatives from existing user and carer groups.

Older people with mental health needs were not yet represented on the Partnership but did contribute their views to strategic planning through 'Our Time to Talk' user group. The Partnership acknowledged that inequitable attention had been given to older adults with regard to the mental health strategic plan. To ensure age equality in strategic decision-making, older people with mental health needs needed to be more directly involved in the Partnership.

The council had established a framework within which to involve carers in strategic planning, development and evaluation. Carers' focus groups enabled carers to become engaged with service development. Carers were represented on the Carers Strategy group which had been established to identify and address strategic issues for carers. Work was in progress to produce a revised carers' strategy which reflected the main issues for carers and was in line with the national carers' strategy.

Carers of older people with dementia were increasingly involved in strategic planning. The Older People's Mental Health Steering Group was responsible for the development and implementation of the new dementia strategy. Carers were involved in some of the dementia strategy work-groups. The Steering Group also planned to establish an expert reference group which would include carers.

The council had developed positive relationships with both Third Sector and independent sector organisations and were involving them in strategic planning. The council had good strategic working relationships with its health partners, especially the Primary Care Trust. There was a well established formal partnership agreement in place between the council and PCT for mental health services and the partnership agreement had recently been extended to incorporate services for all adult user groups.

Relationships between the council and Wiltshire local involvement network (LINk) were positive but at an early stage of development.

The Safeguarding Adults Board had secured senior commitment from most key agencies and was adopting a more strategic approach to its work. The Board had yet to develop an overarching strategy. It had recently prioritised the implementation of its improvement plan which had superceded its work plan for 2009-10.

There was a need to ensure people who used services and carers were involved in shaping adult safeguarding policy, procedures and practice. The views and experiences of service users and carers were insufficiently reflected in the SAB and its sub-groups.

The social care workforce has capacity, skills and commitment to deliver improved outcomes, and works successfully with key partners.

Council staff had access to a range of learning and development opportunities. Independent and Third Sector organisations could also access training courses provided by the council.

There was more work to do to develop learning and development opportunities for the social care workforce who supported older people with mental health needs. Some staff felt they needed to increase their knowledge, experience and skills in order to improve outcomes for older people with mental health needs. Some people who used services had been inappropriately passed to specialist services when their needs could have been met by adult care staff. The reconfiguring of adult social care into locality FOCUS 'hubs' and the PCT plans to develop mental health services with a more primary mental health focus had implications for both health and social care workforces.

Work was already in progress to develop a joint workforce plan which would include workforce development for staff working with people with dementia. However, attention was also needed to develop a skilled and effective workforce who could support older people who had a range of mental health needs.

The council was working with its partners to develop a workforce strategy that addressed key workforce priorities to deliver the personalisation agenda. The council had recognised there was a need to change the culture amongst staff in the way they supported people who used services. As part of transforming adult social care, a programme of staff training had started in person-centred planning and outcome-based support planning.

Staff reported that they received regular supervision and managers were accessible for informal support.

Workload capacity during the implementation of the FOCUS programme had been adversely affected by a number of factors, including staff sickness and inability to recruit to some posts. The council had taken action to address these issues and staff deployment and capacity in the FOCUS hubs was kept under regular review.

Safeguarding training needs had not been systematically scoped across the partnership and there was no multi-agency training strategy. A competency-based framework for staff and managers had yet to be developed for safeguarding work and training. This meant that the council and its partners could not be assured that staff and managers were competent to undertake safeguarding work. The SAB had established a new learning and development sub-group but it was in the early stage of development.

The increased number of safeguarding referrals had resulted in some teams finding it difficult to balance safeguarding work with other operational duties and responsibilities. There was particular pressure on team managers who were investigating managers. The council had recognised the pressure and had recently identified some experienced social workers to become investigating managers.

The new safeguarding team was in the early stages of its development and some administrative posts were yet to be filled. We were concerned whether the team would be able to deliver the range of roles and responsibilities placed on it. Senior managers were aware of the need to keep both the capacity and capability of the team under review.

Performance management sets clear targets for delivering priorities. Progress is monitored systematically and accurately. Innovation and initiative are encouraged and risks are managed.

The council had greatly improved its performance management systems and reporting arrangements within the past year. Performance improvements had been achieved in relation to national performance indicators. A set of local indicators of performance had also been established. There was evidence of a more outcome-based approach to performance reporting which was a positive development. A culture of performance management was becoming embedded at every level of the directorate.

Better collection and monitoring of data was needed to ensure that older people with mental health needs were being treated fairly in access to and use of support services. The council had recognised that management and performance information with regard to older people with mental health needs needed strengthening.

Systematic quality assurance and performance management arrangements for all safeguarding activity were underdeveloped across the safeguarding partnership. This meant that the SAB could not be assured that staff practice was effective at keeping people safe. We were pleased to hear that some new monitoring measures had been put in place and work was in progress to embed them. A new quality assurance sub-group of the SAB had been established but was in the very early stages of its development.

The SAB's governance and reporting arrangements had been strengthened. The council's overview and scrutiny committee had taken a robust approach to scrutinising the SAB Annual Report 2008-09.

Commissioning and use of resources

People who use services and their carers are able to commission the support they need. Commissioners engage with people who use services, carers, partners and service providers, and shape the market to improve outcomes and good value.

The views of people who use services, carers, local people, partners and service providers are listened to by commissioners. These views influence commissioning for better outcomes for people.

The council had developed a joint commissioning framework with NHS Wiltshire for adult health and social care. A new Joint Commissioning Board had recently formed with responsibility for overseeing and monitoring the development and implementation of commissioning strategies and work plans. This development was positive as it provided greater opportunity to make the best use of resources across health and social care.

There was a commissioning advisory group comprising people who used services who influenced the Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership. Older people with mental health needs were under–represented in this group.

Recent focus had been on involving older people with dementia, carers and partner organisations in the development of the draft joint commissioning strategy for people living with dementia and their families. Partner agencies reported that they had felt listened to by commissioners.

The council had developed both positive and productive relationships with partner organisations with regard to strategic commissioning. Provider forums were influencing council commissioning practice.

Commissioners understand local needs for social care. They lead change, investing resources fairly to achieve local priorities and working with partners to shape the local economy. Services achieve good value.

A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment had been produced with a comprehensive information base that was used to inform commissioning strategies. Each community area had a profile of data that informed local people about the needs of their local area. Grant funding was made available through the Community Area Boards for local people to develop services in line with their locally defined priorities.

There was a joint mental health commissioning plan but it needed refreshing and updating to take account of developments such as the draft joint commissioning dementia strategy, draft older people's strategy and plans for self-directed support. Work was in progress to update and resource the action plan associated with the draft joint commissioning dementia strategy.

The council and PCT jointly commissioned a range of services as part of the partnership agreement that it had for mental health services.

The council had improved its commissioning and contracting arrangements with Third Sector organisations. It had moved to more strategic partnership working and had established more longer-term contracts with these provider organisations. This move was appreciated by partners as it enabled them to plan their services more effectively.

The council had worked closely with its partners to commission a range of interesting pilot projects around the county to reflect local priorities. The pilot projects were testing out different ways of providing support to older people with dementia. Money had been ring-fenced to roll out the projects to other parts of the county to ensure equitable access to new service developments.

The council worked in a number of different ways with independent and voluntary sector providers to improve the quality of care homes and domiciliary care services. Regular contract monitoring was in place and placements had been suspended when the required standards were not met. Contract specifications had been strengthened with regard to adult safeguarding requirements to ensure that the council commissioned safe services.

Continuing work was needed to involve providers in shaping the market for support and services required in relation to the personalisation agenda. Some providers had concerns about the council's commissioning and contracting intentions, especially as to how the intentions might be applied to services for older people with mental health needs.

Council financial planning, management and control were sound. There was a strong focus on securing value for money when commissioning services from independent and Third Sector organisations. The council was jointly commissioning some new service developments with neighbouring councils to maximise value for money opportunities. The medium term financial strategy reflected the shift towards developing community-based services and reducing residential care placements. The council was working closely with the PCT and police to identify where efficiencies could be shared.

Appendix A: summary of recommendations

Recommendations for improving performance in Wiltshire

Safeguarding adults

The council and partners should ensure that:

1. People know how to raise concerns if they are at risk of or are being harmed or abused. (page 11)

2. Staff and managers in all relevant organisations know how to recognise and manage safeguarding concerns appropriately. (page 11)

3. Outcomes for people are improved through effective quality assurance and performance management of safeguarding practice and recording. (page 12)

4. All staff receive the appropriate training and are competent to undertake safeguarding work. (pages 12 and 23)

5. People whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from independent advocacy support. (page 13)

Increased choice and control for older people with mental health needs

The council should:

6. Improve the quality, availability and accessibility of information so that people are well informed about support options. (page 14)

7. Ensure that assessment and support plans focus on outcomes. (page 15)

8. Increase the number of people using Direct Payments and other forms of self-directed support. (page 16)

9. Address gaps in service availability and flexibility. (page 18)

10. Give people more choice and control in short break services and support. (page 18)

11. Support family carers both in and beyond their caring role. (pages 16 and 18)

Providing leadership

The council should:

12. Ensure that older people with mental health needs are more involved in strategic planning, development and evaluation. (page 21)

13. Ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to support older people with mental health needs. (page 22)

14. Ensure people who used services and carers are engaged in shaping adult safeguarding policy, procedures and practice. (page 22)

15. With partners, develop a quality assurance and performance management framework for all safeguarding activity to ensure improved outcomes for people. (page 23)

Commissioning and use of resources

The council should:

16. Update the joint mental health commissioning plan and ensure that its implementation delivers improved outcomes for older people with mental health needs. (page 24)

17. Ensure that independent and voluntary sector provider organisations are involved in shaping the market for self-directed support. (page 25)

Appendix B: Methodology

This inspection was one of a number service inspections carried out by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in 2009.

The assessment framework for the inspection was the commission's outcomes framework for adult social care which is set out in full on our website. The specific areas of the framework used in this inspection are set out in the Key Findings section of this report.

The inspection had an emphasis on improving outcomes for people. The views and experiences of adults who needed social care services and their carers were at the core of this inspection.

The inspection team consisted of two inspectors and an 'expert by experience'. The expert by experience is a member of the public who has had experience of using adult social care services.

We asked the council to provide an assessment of its performance on the areas we intended to inspect before the start of fieldwork. They also provided us with evidence not already sent to us as part of their annual performance assessment.

We reviewed this evidence with evidence from partner agencies, our postal survey of people who used services and elsewhere. We then drew provisional conclusions from this early evidence and fed these back to the council.

We advertised the inspection and asked the local LINks (Local Involvement Network) to help publicise the inspection among people who used services.

We spent six days in Wiltshire when we met with seven people whose case records we had read and inspected a further nine case records. We also met with approximately 60 people who used services and carers in groups and in an open public forum we held. We sent questionnaires to 80 people who used services and 18 were returned.

> We also met with
> - Social care fieldworkers
> - Senior managers in the council, other statutory agencies and the third sector
> - Independent advocacy agencies and providers of social care services
> - Organisations which represent people who use services and/or carers
> - Councillors.

This report has been published after the council had the opportunity to correct any matters of factual accuracy and to comment on the rated inspection judgements.

Wiltshire will now plan to improve services based on this report and its recommendations.

If you would like any further information about our methodology then please visit the general service inspection page on our website.

If you would like to see how we have inspected other councils then please visit the service inspection reports section of our website.

WILTSHIRE 2009 - AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT: ACTION PLAN

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
		Safeguarding	
The council and partners should ensure that people know how to raise concerns if they are at risk of, or are being, harmed or abused		**The Council will continue its commitment to raising awareness of safeguarding issues. We will continue to provide all relevant organisations in Wiltshire with information, including copies of 'No Secrets' leaflets and 'Keeping People Safe in Wiltshire' booklets. Developments include:**	
	✓	By December 2009 – We have undertaken a Carers Voice survey of Safeguarding awareness and are using results to inform the plans of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board.	Safeguarding Adults Board
	✓	March 2010 – We held an awareness raising event for professionals across all relevant organisations – Whose risk is it anyway?	Safeguarding Adults Board
	✓	By June 2010 – We will have produced an additional explanatory guide for the public in accessible format, to complement our existing leaflets – on the subject of "what to expect when you are involved in safeguarding"	Safeguarding Adults Board
	✓	By June 2010 – We will continue to undertake targeted awareness raising work, and will have provided specific advice sessions for the direct payments support service, carers support agencies, Alzheimer's support. We expect this work to support people feeling safe, and may result in an increase in alerts raised by members of the public, carers and third sector organisations.	Policy Team
	✓	By September 2010, we will undertake a 'mystery shopper' audit of availability of No Secrets across all relevant agencies. We expect this work to increase take-up of the "No Secrets" leaflet.	SAB Quality Assurance Sub Group
	✓	By December 2010, we will have informed every Community Area Board in Wiltshire about the safeguarding adults agenda, and given them information about how to raise concerns. We expect this work to support people feeling safe, and may result in an increase in alerts raised by members of the public.	Policy Team

Key: ✓ = **Completed**
✓ = **On track**

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
The council and partners should ensure that staff and managers in all relevant organisations know how to recognise and manage safeguarding concerns appropriately	✓	**The Safeguarding Adults Board is committed to consistent management and practice of safeguarding and will be monitoring this through its quality assurance role. Developments include:** By May 2010 – To take account of national policy changes, we will work with Swindon BC to complete a policy review of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults in Swindon & Wiltshire Policy and Procedures. This policy will clarify and remind each organisation of their responsibilities and the interfaces with other organisational processes (care management, Care Programme Approach, Clinical Incidents). Evidence will be through quality assurance/file audit, described below.	SAB Policy and Procedures Sub Group
	✓	By May 2010 – We will have a multi-agency learning and development plan for safeguarding, to support the revised procedures.	SAB Learning and Development Sub Group
	✓	Throughout 2010 – We will continue to raise awareness and reinforce consistent management of safeguarding through multi-agency training, investigating manager and investigating officer workshops, management meetings, supervision and contract monitoring arrangements. Evidence will be through quality assurance/file audit, described below.	Safeguarding adults Board
The council and partners should ensure that outcomes for people are improved through effective quality assurance and performance management of safeguarding practice and recording		**The Safeguarding Adults Board is committed to developing quality assurance and performance management arrangements, and last year established a Quality Assurance Sub Group to develop these arrangements. The SAB will continue to review practice through learning events, reviews and case studies. The council will continue to monitor all safeguarding alerts, checking that timescales are being met, and chasing up any gaps in recording.**	
	✓	December 2009 – the council provided staff with additional training courses to improve CareFirst recording for safeguarding work.	CareFirst Team
		From January 2010 – Adult care teams have implemented regular case file audit as	Operational Heads of

Page 60

Progress: ✓ **= Completed**
✓ **= On track**

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
	✓	part of the supervision process. From June 2010, all managers throughout the department up to and, including the Director of Adult Social Services, will undertake checks of case files (chosen at random and using agreed case audit guidelines). This will be evidenced through case audit in supervision paper and operational monitoring reports.	Service to Service Director
	✓	March 2010 – The council has agreed a minimum data set for safeguarding recording in Adult Care. This will improve the consistency of recording, and will ensure that management information is of a consistent quality.	Performance Team
	✓	From April 2010 – The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team will commence a regular quality audit programme of undertaking spot /sample audits of records, to ensure compliance with record keeping guidance and will feed back to Heads of Service to address any training or performance issues.	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team
	✓	From June 2010 – We will implement regular electronic reporting of safeguarding activity for managers to access on CareFirst.	Performance Team
The council and partners should ensure that all staff receive the appropriate training and are competent to undertake safeguarding work		**The Safeguarding Adults Board is committed to ensuring all staff are trained to an appropriate level, and has established a Learning and Development Sub Group to ensure this work is coordinated. The council will continue to raise awareness for all staff, supported by the corporate learning and development plan. Developments include:**	
	✓	In February 2010 – We have provided 2 training courses for Safeguarding investigating managers attended by 36 managers from Adult Care and Mental Health. A further course has been organised for March 2010.	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team
	✓	March 2010 – We have established 2 regular workshops (1 in North and 1 in South of county) for Safeguarding investigating officers (to complement the existing investigating managers workshops). These will promote sharing of good practice and professional development.	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team
	✓	By April 2010 – We will have reviewed our training needs analysis of all safeguarding	SAB Learning &

Page 65

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
	✓	investigating officers, and will offer refresher training where needed. By end April 2010 – We will have in place an agreed Learning & Development Strategy for all organisations involved in safeguarding in Wiltshire, which identifies a) all safeguarding learning & development available and b) competencies for each role against which organisations will ensure compliance.	Development Sub Group SAB Learning & Development Sub Group
	✓	By June 2010 – Have in place agreed competencies for members of the Safeguarding Adults Board and a plan to address any gaps.	SAB Learning & Development Sub Group
The council and partners should ensure that people whose circumstances make them vulnerable benefit from independent advocacy support	✓	**The council is committed to providing a range of advocacy services to support people who access social care and will ensure that advocacy is promoted for people who are safeguarded.** April 2010 – We will arrange an advocacy presentation at Investigating Managers Workshops to promote use of advocacy and Independent Mental Capacity Act advocates in safeguarding. This will remind managers of their responsibilities in promoting advocacy.	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team
	✓	May 2010 – Regular monitoring of advocacy use will be built into minimum data set for recording, to allow regular reporting and analysis during supervision and case file audit.	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team
	✓	June 2010 – We will complete an assessment of hours of advocacy used in safeguarding to inform commissioning of advocacy services.	Programme Lead - Mental Capacity Act

Page 62

Progress: ✓ = **Completed**
✓ = **On track**

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
Choice and Control			
The council should improve the quality, availability and accessibility of information so that people are well informed about support options		**The council is committed to ensuring that everyone has access to appropriate information. We monitor how well our locality teams meet the information needs of customers, including those who fund their own support. We will continue to improve information on support options in the following ways:**	
	✓	By June 2010 – We will produce an information pack for carers of older people with mental health needs	MH Commissioning Board
	✓	By June 2010 – We will produce web pages on dementia on the council website to provide an additional route for people to be informed.	MH Commissioning Board
	✓	By June 2010 - We will distribute 500 copies of carer information packs and 500 copies of a DVD	Dementia Strategy Information sub group.
	✓	By September 2010 – We will work with our Council Customer Access Team to ensure that there are relevant information leaflets in all council offices.	Policy Team
	✓	By September 2010 – We will work with Council Communications Team to establish a 'Reader Panel' which will provide service users and carers with an opportunity to be involved in the development of written and web-based information. This will include older people with mental health needs.	Transformation Team
	✓	Timescale to be agreed with NHS Wiltshire – We will appoint a dementia advisor and audit the effectiveness of this role in providing information and advice.	Dementia Strategy Information sub group
The council should ensure that assessment and support plans focus on outcomes		**The council will continue its commitment to improving outcomes for people who need support. We have local performance indicators 'We listened and understood your needs', 'We offered you choices' and 'Control over daily life'. We will develop outcome focussed working further in the following ways:**	

Page 63

Progress: ✓ = Completed
✓ = On track

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
	✓	By March 2010 – We have completed the roll-out of person-centred planning training to 700 staff across adult care.	Transformation Steering Group
	✓	By March 2010 - Each operational team has identified a 'Person centred planning' champion and developed action plans for the implementation of person-centred approaches.	Operational Team Managers
	✓	By March 2010 – We will work with Councils in the south west to introduce 17 standards that support the Transforming Adult Social Care agenda into the contract with Avon & Wiltshire Partnership NHS Trust, and will monitor the achievement of these through performance monitoring.	S75 Contract Monitoring meetings and 6 Local Authority meetings
	✓	By May 2010 – We will improve our electronic recording systems so that we can record how we work with people in a more person-centred way.	CareFirst Team
	✓	By December 2010 – We will run a series of workshops with Avon & Wiltshire Partnership Trust staff to ensure that the Care Programme Approach process identifies outcome measures in line with the recovery model.	S75 Contract Monitoring Meetings and 6 Local Authority meetings
The council should increase the number of people using direct payments and other forms of self-directed support		**The council is committed to increasing the number of people who receive a direct payment or other form of personal budget, and ensuring that people feel that they have choice and control over the services they receive. We evidence this through our local performance indicators ('We offered you choices' and 'Control over daily life'). Improvement work includes:**	
	✓	By May 2010 – We will have completed a review of the direct payments process, to make it more streamlined and efficient to administer for adult care and AWP teams.	Transformation Steering Group
	✓	By June 2010 – We will use our performance management systems – case file audit and supervision – to ensure that direct payments are offered as default, and that reasons for not offering a direct payment or other form of self-directed support are followed up.	Operational Heads of Service

Page 64

Progress: ✓ **= Completed**
✓ **= On track**

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
	✓	By October 2010 – We will pilot and implement a resource allocation system (RAS) and have a process in place to inform all service users of an indicative sum for their care package, which can be delivered as a direct payment, or other form of self-directed support, or as a commissioned service.	Transformation Steering Group
	✓	By December 2010 - For carers of older people with mental health needs, we will extend the range of options available from the 'credit card' system for flexible day and respite services.	Mental Health Commissioning Board
The council should address gaps in service availability and flexibility and The council should give people more choice and control in short break services and support		**Through our adult care commissioning, and joint commissioning with the NHS, we are committed to ensuring a range of appropriate services across the county. We will build on existing pilot projects and develop new services. This will include:**	
	✓	By March 2010 – Department of Health approval for Private Finance Initiative (PFI) bid - Joint plan to provide a range of accommodation for people with dementia, including: 2 specialist dementia care homes; an 80-bed nursing home; 2 community resource centres; 3 mobile services across Wiltshire.	Mental Health Commissioning Board
	✓	By April 2010 – The Wiltshire reablement service will have the necessary capability to work with older people with mental health needs.	Transformation Steering Group
	✓	By June 2010 – The Council will act as guarantors to increase the availability of respite beds. We will provide 2 new dedicated beds by June 2010, and evaluate demand/satisfaction before extending the service.	Mental Health Commissioning Board
	✓	By July 2010 – We will deliver an additional 2 new memory support groups to provide support to older people with mental health needs	MH Commissioning Board
	✓	By December 2010 – We will increase the number of memory cafes across Wiltshire from 4 to 5 to provide additional information and support for older people with mental health needs and their carers.	MH Commissioning Board
	✓	By December 2010 – We will establish a 'buddying' system to support older people	MH Commissioning

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
		with mental health needs.	Board Transformation Steering Group
	✓	By February 2011 – Through 'outcomes-based' contracts with providers, we will ensure there is access to a wider range of services to help people remain independent in their own homes.	
	✓	By April 2011 – We will evaluate the pilot for specialist domiciliary care and, if effective, extend across the county.	MH Commissioning Team
	✓	By April 2011 – Extend results of telecare pilots across Wiltshire, to improve access to telecare services.	Transformation Steering Group
	✓	By December 2011 – We will develop skills in the independent sector by providing a range of training. This will widen the availability of generic services available to older people with mental health needs.	Helped to Live at Home Project
The council should support family carers both in and beyond their caring role		**The council will continue to work with carers support agencies to improve support and services for carers, to raise awareness of carers' issues, to signpost carers to appropriate services, to provide training to support carers to re-enter employment and support carers currently in employment. We will continue to promote direct payments for carers in employment, or who wish to return to employment. We will continue to fund opportunities such as 'Time Out' (which this year has provided over 400 carers breaks without the need for an assessment), support the Alzheimer's organisations to provide a sitting service (which has provided over 3,000 hours of support this year) and fund carers support agencies to offer a range of support groups, including a group for carers of people with short-term memory loss and a group for mental health support. Developments include:**	
	✓	From December 2009 - We have provided support for carers through the Libraries Service, including: extended loans service; home library service; wellbeing days; 200+ new books focusing on health and carers.	Carers Strategy Group
	✓	By February 2010 – We have advertised the West Wilts Working Carers Group to all Wiltshire Council staff to ensure that employees who are also carers are aware of	Transformation Team

Page 66

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
Page 67	✓	support available to them. By April 2010 – We will continue to provide an additional sum of £20,000 per year to the carer support agencies in Wiltshire to provide training to carers, and additional help is provided with replacement care and transport. Since April 2009, this training has included: manual handling, computer skills, stress management and first aid.	Carers Strategy Group
	✓	From April 2010 – We will monitor carers' assessment numbers by AWP, through the updated contract monitoring arrangements we have with them. We will continue to monitor carers' assessments undertaken by Adult Care Teams through the case file auditing process and as part of regular performance monitoring.	Mental Health Commissioning Team & Adult Care Heads of Service
	✓	By May 2010 – We will have analysed Wiltshire results of the national survey of carers and identified how we will address issues for carers of older people with mental health needs.	Performance Team
	✓	By June 2010 – We will have worked with the 4 carers support agencies to sign up to the terms and conditions of a single partnership agreement, which will ensure equity and stability of provision of support services over the next five years.	Carers Strategy Group
	✓	By July 2010 – We will deliver 16 carer awareness training sessions to health staff including neighbourhood teams and GP surgery staff. Evidence – attendance & evaluation.	Carers Strategy Group
	✓	By June 2010 – JobCentre Plus will be a signatory organisation to the Wiltshire Carers Strategy 2009-2012.	Transformation Team
	✓	By July 2010 – We will produce an information leaflet for carers about the support available to them to re-enter or maintain employment.	Transformation Team
	✓	By April 2011 – We will ensure that carers across the county have improved and more consistent information by commissioning a Carers Break Information and Support Service.	Carers Strategy Group

Progress: ✓ = **Completed**
✓ = **On track**

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
	✓	At a date to be determined with NHS Wiltshire, We will develop the Dementia Advisor's role to support carers at the point of diagnosis (linked to NHS Wiltshire implementation of the new memory service)	Dementia Strategy Steering Group

Page 68

Progress: ✓ = **Completed**
✓ = **On track**

WILTSHIRE 2009 - AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
Leadership			
The council should ensure that older people with mental health needs are more involved in strategic planning, development and evaluation	✓	**The council remains committed to involving service users and carers in all areas of activity.**	Mental Health Partnership Board
		In June 2010 – we will re-confirm the structure, membership and delivery of the user involvement groups for the Mental Health Partnership and the Delivery Steering Group for the Dementia Strategy to ensure a range of representation.	
	✓	We will continue to involve older people with mental health needs in the implementation of the Accommodation Strategy for Older People and other projects, including the Care Pathways work.	Transformation Steering Group
The council should ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to support older people with mental health needs		**The council will continue to develop knowledge and skills to support older people with mental health needs through its workforce strategy and through the FOCUS Next Steps project.**	
	✓	By April 2010 – Our review of the reablement service will have improved its capability to work with older people with mental health needs.	Transformation Steering Group
	✓	By end April 2010 – We will continue a focus on dementia awareness and training and agree a multi-agency Dementia Strategy workforce protocol to set out the actions each agency will take.	OPMH Strategy Workforce Development Group
	✓	By September 2010 – We will agree competencies for Adult Care staff and will have ensured that people have the skills and confidence to provide assessment and services to older people with mental health needs.	Transformation Steering Group
The council should ensure that people who used services and carers are engaged in shaping adult safeguarding policy, procedures and practice		**The Safeguarding Adults Board is continuing to strengthen user and carer involvement in its work and has user representation at Board and Sub Group meetings. In March 2010, the Board is appointing an Independent Chair.**	
	✓	In March 2010 – We held an awareness raising event for professionals across all relevant organisations and this included user-led and carer organisations.	Safeguarding Adults Board

Progress: ✓ = **Completed**
           ✓ = **On track**

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
	✓	By June 2010 – We will involve service users and carers in the production of an explanatory guide for the public in accessible format ("What to expect when you are involved in safeguarding").	Policy Team
	✓	By June 2010 – We will develop feedback processes to enable customers and carers involved in safeguarding alerts to share their experience. Analysis will inform both policy and practice.	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Team
	✓	By June 2010 – We will appoint a carer representative to the SAB.	Safeguarding Adults Board

Page 70

Progress: ✓ **= Completed**
　　　　　　 ✓ **= On track**

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
Commissioning and Use of Resources			
The council should with partners, develop a quality assurance and performance management framework for all safeguarding activity to ensure improved outcomes for people	✓ (yellow) ✓ (yellow)	**The Safeguarding Adults Board is committed to developing quality assurance and performance management arrangements, and last year established a Quality Assurance Sub Group to develop these arrangements. We will continue to publish a monthly management information report to inform the work of the SAB. The SAB will continue to review practice through learning events, reviews and case studies.** June 2010 – The SAB will agree a multi-agency work plan for the Quality Assurance Sub Group, which will focus the work of the sub group. This will span the range of safeguarding adults work undertaken in Wiltshire and involve regular analysis of available management information, checks that every agency has its own auditing, and quality assurance systems in place and the development of feedback systems from service users and carers. By June 2010, we will improve the format of Management Information Reports, based on feedback from managers, to aid decision-making for operational and strategic managers across the safeguarding partnership. Evidence – Monthly Reports,	Safeguarding Adults Board Policy Team
The council should update the joint mental health commissioning plan and ensure that its implementation delivers improved outcomes for older people with mental health needs	✓ (green)	**The council has well-established joint commissioning arrangements and a programme for updating its commissioning documents.** March 2010 – We have completed a refresh of the Adult Care elements of the commissioning plan. Evidence – updated document.	MH Commissioning Team
The council should ensure that independent and voluntary sector provider organisations are involved in shaping the market for self-directed support		**The council is committed to working with service providers and will continue to use regular provider forums to share information about self-directed support and the transformation of adult social care. We will continue to user contract monitoring meetings and service specification discussions to include information about personalisation and self-directed support. Additional developments include:**	

Progress: ✓ **= Completed**
      ✓ **= On track**

Page 71

Area	Progress	Commentary, Actions and Progress	Governance
	✓	We will continue to involve service provider representatives (along with customers and carers) in development projects such as the Care Pathways Project (developing preventative services) and the Helped to Live at Home project (developing outcomes-led commissioning).	Transformation Steering Group
	✓	In January 2010 – we established and support a Workforce Strategy provider sub group, chaired by a service provider, to consider new models of working to meet the needs of personalisation.	Workforce Strategy Steering Group

Progress: ✓ **= Completed**
  ✓ **= On track**

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **Report on the Corporate Plan - 2010-2014**

Cabinet member: **Councillor Jane Scott - Leader of the Council**

Key Decision: **Yes**

Executive summary

This report presents the revised Corporate Plan taking account of changes requested at the last Cabinet meeting on 23 March 2010. It also includes the comments made from the Overview and Scrutiny Management and Resources Select Committee meeting on the 25 March 2010 for Cabinet consideration.

Proposal

That Cabinet:

Reviews the Corporate Plan, consider the points made by the Overview and Scrutiny Management and Resources Select Committee, and make any final amendments prior to the Plan being presented to Council on 18 May 2010 with a recommendation that the Plan be adopted.

Reason for proposal

1. All high performing organisations have a Corporate Plan or equivalent to direct and focus their work.
2. An ambitious and effective Corporate Plan will focus and galvanise the organisation's resources to deliver its strategic priorities during the next four years.
3. The new Corporate Plan is ready for approval by Cabinet and Full Council following further minor changes.

Laurie Bell
Service Director, Policy, Research and Communications

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: Report on the Corporate Plan - 2010-2014

Cabinet member: Councillor Jane Scott - Leader of the Council

Key Decision: Yes

Purpose of report

1. This report presents the council's Corporate Plan covering the period 2010-14. It has been updated to take account of comments made at the last Cabinet meeting on 23 March 2010. The plan has also been reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Organisation and Resources Select Committee at its meeting on 25 March and a number of points for Cabinet consideration have been made.

Background

2. Cabinet has considered the Corporate Plan at two previous meetings in October 2009 and March 2010. At the last meeting Cabinet requested that the order of the priorities be changed so that those focusing on people are put first. The revised plan is attached at Appendix 1.

3. The nine re-ordered priorities are:

   o   Focus on our customers and improve access to our services

   o   Work in partnership to support vulnerable individuals and families

   o   Local, open, honest decision-making

   o   Increase opportunities to help young people achieve their potential

   o   Support the local economy

   o   Meet housing needs

   o   Improve our roads and road safety

   o   Reduce our environmental impact

   o   Achieve savings, be more efficient and ensure we deliver value for money

4. The Budget and Performance Task Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Organisation and Resources Select Committee considered the Corporate Plan at their meetings in October 2009 and March 2010 respectively. At the meeting in March the Select Committee asked a number of questions and these together with responding comments are detailed in Appendix 2. These questions were asked either in the meeting itself or were raised in pre-meeting discussions. One specific request was to cross-reference the Corporate Plan with the LAW, LAA targets and CAA comments. This has already been done and the latest updated version is attached at Appendix 3 for information.

Cabinet is requested to review the question and points made in Appendix 2 and decide if any further changes are required to the Corporate Plan.

Overall, the Select Committee welcomed the Corporate Plan as the core document to take the council forward over the next four years. It appreciated how the plan had been developed over a period of time and the source documents used to inform it. However from a scrutiny perspective it was recognised that further detail would emerge from the departmental delivery plans and a new business plan for the council. Each of the four select committees will scrutinise the relevant extracts from these when available alongside the priorities from the Corporate Plan. Future scrutiny work programmes will be aligned to the priorities but with some flexibility to recognise that the plan and source documents will be subject to regular review.

5. The Corporate Plan is linked to the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The MTFP was considered alongside the Corporate Plan at the last Cabinet meeting in March. Since then it has not been significantly changed and is therefore not included on the agenda for this Cabinet meeting.

Impact of Corporate Plan

6. The Corporate Plan will have wide ranging implications for the council. It will affect all services and will require a 'can do' culture, inter-departmental working, and more effective partnership working if it is to be delivered successfully. Its impact against the standard report headings include:

   o Environmental impact: The importance of the protecting and enhancing the local environment is fully recognised in the plan, with one of the priorities focusing on reducing our environmental impact.

   o Equalities impact: The national equalities scheme for local government has been taken into account in the plan.

   o Risk assessment: An ineffective Corporate Plan has a number of risks which have been outlined previously. Managing risks will be an integral part of departmental delivery plans.

   o Financial implications: The corporate plan will have financial implications and strong links have been made to the MTFP to ensure the Plan is realistic and affordable. Funding is being identified in the MTFP specifically to finance the delivery of councillor priorities.

     o   Legal implications: There is no statutory requirement to produce a corporate plan. However, the Comprehensive Area Assessment and other inspections often use a corporate plan as a key piece of evidence to identify and understand the priorities set by the council.

Next steps

7. Following Cabinet, any final changes will be made if required. It will then be submitted to Full Council on 18 May 2010 for final approval. The plan will then be reviewed and refreshed each year to assess overall progress against the priorities and to ensure its continued relevance.

Laurie Bell
Service Director Policy, Research and Communications

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Report authors:

Paul Mountford, Matti Raudsepp, Nick Darbyshire and Laurie Bell

26 March 2010

Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1   Corporate Plan
Appendix 2   Comments from Overview and Scrutiny Organisation and Resources
                Select Committee meeting 25 March 2010
Appendix 3   Corporate Plan links to the LAW, LAA, and CAA

Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

Corporate Plan 2010-2014

Welcome to the 2010-2014 Corporate Plan for the new Wiltshire Council

Aiming to be the best

Creating the new Wiltshire Council has been a huge success and I am delighted that in our first year we have achieved so much. We have delivered over £20 million of efficiency savings which has been reinvested into our key front line services including highways, vulnerable children and adults. We introduced one contact number **0300 456 0100** to help our customers to access us and have their queries dealt with at the first point of contact and we launched a new website which more than one million people have visited to use our on line services.

A big success has been the introduction of eighteen area boards, which have been attended by over 5,000 local residents. So far we have allocated £750,000 to support more than 250 community projects including art clubs, allotments, saving village shops, delivering a dental practice and community speed watch schemes. By 2012 we will have allocated over £5 million to support our local communities. Local people are helping to influence decisions affecting their communities and we need to review and rethink our service delivery to meet local needs.

We can no longer accept that an average performance is good enough. Many of our services can be better, especially given our favourable position in Wiltshire compared to many other parts of the country. And, we can no longer accept that people are resigned to not being heard or not being in control of their lives. The era of providing services 'to' the public and creating dependency is over. We must actively involve people in decision making and service design and support them to live more independent lives. This is a big agenda but I know councillors, staff, partner agencies, and the community can work together on this and make Wiltshire the best county to live in, work in and visit.

Our Corporate Plan sets out where we will prioritise our resources – money and people – in the next four years to deliver improvements in these areas. Given the current economic climate and the impact that this is having on our communities, and will have on public sector funding in future years, this is a key priority for us and we must continue to adopt a proactive and positive *can do* approach in everything we do and look at how together we can make Wiltshire even better.

Jane Scott, Leader Wiltshire Council

The journey ahead – working together

The council is the lead public agency in Wiltshire, but despite its size it cannot work alone in addressing the complex, challenging and changing needs and aspirations of all our communities. The challenge we face is to move from being a unitary council to what a 'unitary plus' council.

Unitary plus is an opportunity to work closely with our partners and make partnership working a way of life. Together we can address rising customer expectations and the pressures forecast for public sector funding. It challenges us to be different and to build on what has been achieved so far, transforming our services and building better relationships with local people. It is a future where public agencies share resources and focus on people's lives and not their individual services. This will push us to the boundaries of what is possible. If we're successful, the benefits will be huge in terms of improved service performance and in developing a meaningful relationship with citizens.

We know we need to make radical changes within our organisation in the way we work and relate to other agencies, citizens and the wider community. Our focus will be on making a positive difference to the people living in Wiltshire, helping them to live fulfilling and independent lives with a minimum dependency on public services.

We will need to transform our services improving performance and reducing costs; change the way decisions are made with an emphasis on fostering localism and trust; and fully engage with our partners to pool resources, share intelligence, and deliver seamless services.

We need to raise our ambitions and aim to achieve performance that exceeds expectations.

We will make Wiltshire Council the best local authority in the UK, aiming to do more with less, and focusing its energies and resources on the things that matter most to its communities.

Andrew Kerr, Chief Executive

Our vision and goals

Our role and purpose

Our activities influence lives either directly or indirectly. The council is the main body influencing the quality of life in Wiltshire and we take that responsibility very seriously.

The role of the council is wide ranging and changes to reflect the pressures and opportunities that emerge for local people and their communities. Many services that we provide are required by law, but we have flexibility to adjust our focus based on the needs of people and communities.

The current economic situation and the pressure on public finances make this a challenging time for Wiltshire and the council. Business as usual is not an option for us. We know that we cannot continue as we are and we have to reduce the cost of our activities. We will have to work differently to avoid impacting on our front line services.

Our vision is to create stronger and more resilient communities

A strong sense of community spirit lies at the heart of our vision. We want to encourage and support local communities to get involved and work with us to strengthen their ability to deal with local challenges. We will work closely with town and parish councils, voluntary groups, local people and other public sector organisations to establish community needs and to help meet those needs in the most effective way.

We want to be more than just a unitary council; we want to be *Unitary Plus,* recognising that our real strength will be in working with others to achieve more.

Our communities give us a sense of well-being and belonging. Strong communities can cope with changing and challenging circumstances and they will often find their own solutions to many of the problems they face. These communities require less intervention from public services which is good for people and it reduces the pressure on increasingly scarce public resources.

Our vision is underpinned by 3 key goals:

Deliver high quality, low cost, customer focused services

We must provide the services Wiltshire actually needs, of the quality our residents actually want, and do this in a cost effective way which represents value for money. We must make our residents and visitors, our customers, the starting point when designing and delivering services. Our focus, for everything we do, must be on the customer to ensure that people are satisfied with what we do.

Ensure local, open, honest decision making

To feel a sense of ownership and belonging, people must be able to contribute directly to the decisions that affect their local area. An open and honest approach is essential if we are to build trust in our communities.

Work together to support Wiltshire's communities

The new council must work with its communities, focussing on their needs and helping them to help themselves. We will work closely with voluntary organisations, business and other public bodies. Working together to support communities and citizens, we can achieve so much more.

What will stronger and more resilient communities look like?

Strong and resilient communities will improve the quality of life for us all and, at the same time, lead to a reduced reliance upon public services.

There are many factors which will contribute to our success. Our vision is of communities:

- o that are places where people choose to live and work
- o where people take pride in their town or village
- o where people from all backgrounds, ages and beliefs feel valued, included, and are treated with respect
- o where people volunteer and get together to tackle local concerns
- o with many 'social networks' allowing people to be active and involved
- o which possess the skills and businesses to generate jobs to meet local employment needs
- o which are informed about environmental issues and actively create local solutions
- o where children and young people enjoy life and achieve their potential in and out of school
- o where people get involved in democratic processes and have a voice in shaping the present and the future of their area
- o where people have healthy lifestyles

Our priorities and outcomes for the next four years

Our chosen priorities address the most pressing challenges facing Wiltshire. They respond to our customers and what they have said are important and need more attention.

The financial reality that we face means that we have to work differently. We must look at what we do, ensure we are doing the right things in the right way, avoid duplication, meet people's needs and work in a more business like way to reduce costs.

We have identified the following priorities, as it is acknowledged that resources will not be sufficient to do everything we might want to do in the future.

- o **Focus on our customers and improve access to our services**

- o **Work in partnership to support vulnerable individuals and families**

- o **Local, open, honest decision-making**

- **Increase opportunities to help young people achieve their potential**

- **Support the local economy**

- **Meet housing needs**

- **Improve our roads and road safety**

- **Reduce our environmental impact**

- **Achieve savings, be more efficient and ensure we deliver value for money**

We will review and design our services to reflect these priorities.

Life in Wiltshire today

There are many things that determine what life is like in an area including the economy, the number of houses and their affordability, whether the villages, towns and the countryside are pleasant places to live and visit. National and local surveys tell us what people consider life is like in Wiltshire and how happy they are living here.

The most recent Place Survey (2008) demonstrated that 86.4% of residents are consistently satisfied with Wiltshire as a place to live, comparing favourably with the national figure of 79.7%. Given the challenges we face, we cannot be complacent and must work hard to ensure this remains the case.

In Wiltshire, compared to the national average:

- People are healthier and live longer
- People from different backgrounds get on well together
- More elderly people live here
- Deprivation is generally low
- Crime rates are amongst the very lowest making it one of the safest places to live
- Unemployment rates are consistently low
- The level of qualifications in the working population is relatively high
- The overall effectiveness of secondary schools and sixth forms is good

However, there are challenges:

- Pockets of deprivation exist in some of our market towns and rural areas
- Earnings of people that live and work in Wiltshire are lower than similar areas
- The level of qualifications in the working population varies widely between areas and there are still too many people who lack basic qualifications
- Employment growth in added value employment sectors has been lower than other competitor areas, with a particular loss of manufacturing and public administration jobs
- Many primary schools are only satisfactory and a small number are inadequate
- Primary school exam results for level 4+ at key stage 2 in English and maths is below that for England
- The gap in achievement between the majority of children and those from disadvantaged backgrounds is closing in some areas, but progress is patchy and inconsistent for different groups
- Wiltshire is an expensive place to live, with relatively high house prices
- The quality of private sector housing needs to improve, particularly in bringing empty homes back into use, improving houses in multiple-occupation, and raising the energy efficiency levels of homes

What's Wiltshire like?

Health
Residents in Wiltshire are generally healthier than similar areas elsewhere. For example, over the last decade the number of people dying from heart disease, stroke and cancer have fallen and remain below average. Also, in recent surveys over three quarters of people indicated that their health was generally good or very good. However, health inequalities do exist between areas and different groups. The life expectancy of people living in the most affluent areas of Wiltshire is five years more than the least well off areas. Groups where ill health can be a particular problem include older people, families of military personnel, gypsies and travellers, migrant workers, and families with young children on low incomes.

Most children and young people are healthy but more young children suffer from tooth decay than elsewhere and work is ongoing to address this particular issue. Further joint work is also occurring to tackle issues ranging from child obesity encouraging healthy eating and physical exercise to reducing teenage pregnancy rates.

The growing health needs of older people are recognised with many initiatives being progressed to meet these demands. They include help to prevent falls amongst the elderly and the provision of support to sufferers of dementia and their carers.

Economy
Wiltshire has a strong local economy. However, like most areas the recent economic recession has had an impact on the county and its residents. The downturn has led to people being made redundant, getting into debt and losing their homes, and businesses struggling to obtain credit to invest and remain competitive. The council has been active in helping to address these problems by working with partner organisations through the 'Action for Wiltshire' programme. This provided short term help to reduce the adverse effects of the recession including help and advice lines for small businesses in crisis and residents needing advice on benefits, debt and redundancy; a benefits take-up campaign; and securing £3m from the government's future jobs fund to create 450 additional or temporary jobs for 18-24 year olds.

Whilst this programme continues, the council working with partner organisations is looking at how it can further strengthen the economy in the longer term. The focus will be on supporting existing businesses and enabling sustainable growth in business start-ups and securing new businesses. This will help to address some underlying issues that affect Wiltshire including levels of out-commuting, an over dependence on public sector jobs, and the relatively low income levels of people who live and work here.

A range of other initiatives will also be progressed including the regeneration of Trowbridge, Chippenham, and Salisbury town centres; maximising the benefits from the military presence in Wiltshire; improving broadband connectivity across the county; and addressing skills gaps in the workforce.

Housing
Wiltshire is a popular place to live and there are 198,700 homes in the county. This is set to increase by about 44,000 homes by 2026 under the government's future planning requirements for Wiltshire. House prices are higher than average and this coupled with below average earnings for people who live and work in the county, places considerable pressure on people wishing to live in their local town or village. The provision of new affordable housing is an important issue and like many areas in the south west, the number of new affordable homes being built in Wiltshire has not kept pace with demand. The recent recession has not helped this situation. The council is committed to providing greater numbers of affordable housing and plans to build more affordable

homes are underway. The council has also recently been given government funding to build additional 'council' houses.

The older population in Wiltshire is set to increase by 43% over the next 16 years. This means the future housing requirements of older people need to be carefully considered and a range of alternatives provided. We must reduce our reliance on residential care homes and increase the opportunities and choices available for people to continue to live independently within their communities.

The council directly manages around 5,400 council homes. Most of these homes are in good condition with only a small number failing to meet the National Decent Homes Standard.

Other issues are also being tackled by the council working with its partner agencies. They include preventing homelessness, improving the energy efficiency of homes, meeting the housing needs of military personnel, providing sites for gypsies and travellers, and bringing back empty homes into use.

Environment
The natural environment in Wiltshire makes a very important contribution to our quality of life. However, globally and locally, our demands and our lifestyles are threatening that environment we value so highly and it is clear that we need to drastically reduce the impact that our lives have on the planet.

Climate change is a major challenge for the world and for Wiltshire and the council must demonstrate its commitment to making an immediate and sustained effort in many areas, particularly in reducing harmful greenhouse gas emissions. All large energy-using companies and organisations will be required to participate in carbon trading from 2010 onwards. The council will be assigned a quota of carbon we are allowed to emit and work within that quota or risk having to purchase additional 'credits'. To help us succeed, we have signed up to the 10:10 campaign to cut carbon emissions during 2010/11 and have set ourselves a challenging target of halving our carbon footprint by 2020. We are also responsible for working with other public sector organisations, businesses and communities to reduce CO_2 emissions across the county as a whole. As signatories of the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change we have demonstrated our commitment to tackling climate change - addressing both its causes and its impacts.

One way in which the council and all residents can work together to reduce the threat of climate change is by improving waste services. Household waste sent to landfill produces significant amounts of methane, which has a powerful global warming effect, and valuable recyclable resources are lost in the ground. Our strategy is to greatly reduce the amount of waste we bury in these sites. One way in which we can do this is by recycling more. The council has also embarked on ambitious plans to reduce landfill by sending non-recycled waste for energy production. By 2015, landfill could be reduced to about 25% of waste collected in Wiltshire, making us one of the lowest landfill authorities in the country.

Along with our focus on reducing Wiltshire's emissions and reducing waste, we also have to manage the effects of increasing temperatures and changing weather conditions. These are the unavoidable consequences of climate change. Recent flooding in Cockermouth showed how extreme weather can damage our lives, livelihoods and the infrastructure of an area. We must be prepared and will develop a plan to minimise the effects of such events and manage the aftermath.

As the countryside of Wiltshire changes through the growth and development of our economy and our communities, and the effects of climate change become more influential, looking after our natural wildlife habitats and the biodiversity they support becomes more difficult. It is vital that we work with landowners, farmers, communities and individuals to protect, monitor and restore

habitats to ensure they will be available for future generations to enjoy nature's contribution to the quality of their lives.

Roads
In large rural areas like Wiltshire, with widely dispersed towns and villages, a safe and effective road network is essential. Our county is joined together by a network of over 2,700 miles of public roads which are used by almost all our residents and feature highly in people's thinking. The most important feature of a road network is, of course, safety and this has always been our primary focus. Although the numbers of accidents resulting in fatalities or serious injuries has been falling consistently over the last decade, we will keep working closely with the Police and Highways Agency to ensure that trend continues.

The maintenance of our roads is something which our residents regularly consider needs improving. The overall trend for the roads in Wiltshire in recent years has been one of improvement, and our carriageway conditions compare favourably with many other counties (especially our B class roads and minor roads which are in better overall condition than other shire counties in the South West). We have recently reviewed our system for repairing dangerous potholes and improved the speed of our response. This has been a real challenge considering the additional damage to our carriageways sustained during the freezing conditions during the winters of 2009 and 2010.

We recognise the need to keep improving the standards of maintenance and cleanliness of the roads, and the need to go as far as we can in meeting the expectations of our residents. We also need to ensure that our communities have a say and can influence aspects of our road maintenance programmes so that people in Wiltshire are helping us identify the priorities on the road network.

Along with the safety and physical condition, the cleanliness of our road network is something we must continue to improve and maintain. The general impression residents and visitors have of the local area can be influenced greatly by seemingly simple things such as how clean and tidy a place looks. Relative to other parts of the country, Wiltshire is largely free of litter, however, we recognise that we must aspire to be one of the cleanest places in the country.

Communities
There are many things that influence people's quality of life and it has become clear in recent years that one of the most important is a sense of belonging, being part of a 'community'. People living in places which have a strong sense of community, a healthy community spirit, tend to enjoy a better quality of life and general well-being.

It is also clear that strong social networks with a range of voluntary groups and clubs taking an active role reduces the reliance upon public services. Communities are better placed to look after themselves without needing expensive intervention from public service organisations.

The strong military presence in Wiltshire is a major influence on life in the county and on the council and its partners. There are approximately 15,000 military personnel based in Wiltshire with a further 16,000 dependants. Overall, this amounts to over 6% of the population and has a direct impact on our local communities and on the infrastructure, services and economic activity in the county. We want that impact to continue to be valuable and positive.

There are changes to the existing personnel numbers and locations in Wiltshire including the development of the Super Garrison on Salisbury Plain and the closures of the UK Land Forces HQ in Wilton and RAF Lyneham. We will continue to work jointly with the military community through the Military Civilian Integration (MCI) Programme and other partners to ensure that such initiatives are managed successfully and result in positive outcomes for the county as a whole.

Communities having their say

Recognising that people have become disengaged from their communities and local democracy, in Wiltshire we have encouraged local residents to get involved with community issues through Area Partnerships and Area Boards. This has resulted in real benefits including an increase in the number of residents becoming engaged in voluntary activity and the provision of funding for local community projects. Wiltshire can be proud of the fact that 30% of its residents are regular volunteers against a national average of 23%.

Without doubt, this good work means that there are high levels of satisfaction with Wiltshire as a place to live. However, 70% of residents feel that they are unable to influence local decisions and there remains a general lack of trust and confidence in national and local government. We must rebuild people's confidence in public services by encouraging them to have a greater involvement in the decisions that affect them, influencing services in their local area. By being open and honest we can start to rebuild trust in democracy.

Ensuring that people have a voice in the decisions which affect their lives was at the heart of our move to a unitary council. The cornerstone has been the creation of 18 Community Area Boards across the county, which focus on issues affecting their respective local areas. Collectively, the council will have provided nearly £5.5m by 2012 for Area Boards to invest in projects and activities which improve life in the county. This work has been recognised nationally by the Audit Commission which awarded a 'green flag' to the council and its partners, for the innovative work in involving people in decisions that affect their local communities.

People and families

Wiltshire's population is set to increase by over 40,000 people by 2026. The total population increase of 9.2% will be almost entirely accounted for by our retired population.

As the proportion of older people in the community increases, so does the number of people requiring help and support, either at home or through residential care. In response to this challenge, the council is reviewing and transforming its adult social care services to promote independent living, well-being and choice. This will help people to stay independent in their communities and continue to use mainstream services and give them choice and control over any additional support services they may need. Implicit within this approach is support for those who act as carers for friends or family members, which whilst being valuable to those who benefit from it, also lessens the pressure on public services.

Other groups also benefit from an emphasis on independent living. For example, many adults with learning disabilities require residential care which takes them away from their families and communities. Where possible, we need to support people in these difficult circumstances whose preference may be to live at home.

Independent living can be achieved successfully if all public service providers work closely together. The council therefore needs to maximise its opportunities to work with its key partners such as the NHS, the Voluntary and Community sectors, and the business community, so that support is coordinated, streamlined and focused on meeting the needs of individuals.

Young people

Educational attainment amongst children and young people shows a mixed picture in Wiltshire. In 2009, overall secondary school GCSE results were good and above the England average, with a positive and improving trend over the last five years. However, performance for primary schools in combined English and Maths Level 4+, Key Stage 2 was below the England average with little change evident over the last five years.

Particular groups of children and young people find it more challenging to get the best out of life and achieve the same educational results as others. Children in care, with special educational

needs, in receipt of free school meals, with a disability often need more support to do well. "Narrowing the gap" between the outcomes for these children and other children is a key need.

In the community, the provision of activities for young people is seen as important an area in need of improvement.

The council – fit for the future

The unitary council must be fit for purpose and able to meet the challenges that face our communities.

The recent global financial crisis and high levels of national debt will result in pressures on public service budgets for the foreseeable future. Our grant from central government is one of the lowest in the country and as a result of the recession, our income from fees and charges has also dropped. We intend to keep council tax as low as possible and so we will need to use our resources as efficiently as possible if we are to deliver our priorities and continue to improve quality of life in Wiltshire.

Managing our resources
The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) anticipates resource requirements over the next four years. It forecasts changes and variation in the council's income and expenditure and helps us to plan for the future. It will be updated to take account of changing assumptions, risks and other uncertainties. These can range from new central government policies imposing additional responsibilities on the council to a prolonged recession leading to reduced income and added pressures on services. It is closely linked to the Corporate Plan and reflects how we will resource our priorities over the next four years.

The move to one council has already delivered £8.5m of efficiency savings in its first year and a further £5.8m is anticipated in 2010-11. Having become a single organisation, harmonising and transforming our services and the way we do things is our next challenge. We will produce a business plan that will set out the business the council is in and how it will operate in a more business like way. The plan will align to the MTFP and the Corporate Plan. It will be a visionary strategic plan for all our services that will drive our ambition to be the best local authority in the country. It will focus on further efficiencies, more effective ways of working in partnership, systems improvements and service performance improvements as well as our influence and standing within Wiltshire, the south west region and nationally.

We will measure our success based on our efficiency, performance, how we work with others and our customer and stakeholder satisfaction. The level of local people influencing the direction of our services and spend will also be a clear measure that we changed the way we do things.

We anticipate that we will deliver savings greater than originally estimated in our move to one council. The MTFP indicates that we will deliver savings and efficiencies of £50m by 2014 which will be reinvested to support our priorities.

We have also identified areas where we need to invest in order to save in the future. The focus will be on taking preventative measures which reduce longer term costs, for example, investing relatively small sums to enable elderly people to remain living independently at home rather than needing expensive long-term residential care. Additional investment will also be earmarked to invest in our priorities and will be identified in the MTFP, which demonstrates our commitment towards ensuring that our resources remain aligned to Wiltshire's needs.

The new council will be an efficient, effective and high performing organisation that is fit for purpose and in a position to deliver the priorities and the outcomes described in this plan. We will actively promote strong financial and risk management and maintain a balanced budget, with

sufficient reserves to ensure the financial stability of the council. We intend to achieve all this whilst delivering year on year reductions in the rise of council tax.

One council - one culture
The move to one council brought together five separate organisations with their own individual strengths and weaknesses, their own ways of working and of delivering their services, and their own values and behaviours. To successfully achieve our vision and goals, we are now developing a single culture for the new organisation.

We want to be an organisation that understands its customers and focuses on people's lives, not individual services. All staff and councillors will adopt a 'can-do' attitude in the way the council works and have a commitment to help the customer and community, to help solve a problem even if it is not part of their specific job.

We must approach our work with the enthusiasm and commitment necessary to inspire confidence in our customers that we have their best interests at heart. In short, when we say "everybody matters" we must mean it.

Achieving a cultural shift takes time, focus, energy and the drive of all leaders and managers to make it happen. We consider it important that we demonstrate our values by translating them into behaviours and actions.

The values and behaviours are:

- o **Focusing on the customer** – put customers at the heart of what we do, listen to and involve them, be honest about what we can do, be an ambassador for the council.
- o **Being inclusive and supporting others** – build trust, be available, be open and listen, allow others to express their views.
- o **Creating clarity** – clear direction, focus on what's important and on actions that make a difference, communicate.
- o **Leading through change** – provide a positive vision for the future, support and involve people, trust others to deliver.
- o **Being decisive** – take ownership for decisions, take the initiative, create 'can-do' attitude.
- o **Treating others with respect** – individuals matter and deserve respect, act consistently, be open fair and honest
- o **Challenging the norm** – seek ways of doing things differently, encourage innovation, be receptive to new ideas.

Our priorities

Focus on our customers and improve access to services

Why is it a priority?

Our customers come first and foremost in our thinking and actions.

The demands and expectations of customers continue to rise with the requirement for better services, more choice and options, and easier access. We need to work harder to keep pace with these trends and rising expectations. Less than half of our residents are currently satisfied with our service delivery (47.5%). Although this is better than the national average of 43%, it remains a low figure and one which clearly needs improving.

Customer focus and access to council services formed one of the key elements in creating a new unitary council and we must deliver on those promises made. We still have much to do in transforming services that meet or exceed expectations, maximising choice in communication, capitalising on technology to make it work and adopting a *can do* approach at all times.

Key outcomes we will achieve

- Redesign the top 20 services, putting the customer at the centre of everything we do to deliver improved services. Measure customer satisfaction with these services and use this data to continuously improve them.

- Enable customers to access the council's top 20 services such as Housing Benefit, Planning, Adult Social Care etc. through scheduled appointments in their own home or business premises.

- Develop the website to be fully transactional for the top 20 services most requested by our customers.

- Through the website enable a customer post code input model to deliver all service information about that post code for the top 20 services.

- Deliver the Work Place transformation programme to include four refurbished hub buildings with state of the art customer access facilities by 2013.

- Ensure that customer telephone call connection rates of 95%+ are achieved every month in all facilities. Enable direct dial "golden numbers" for our top 20 services so that customers can contact service experts directly.

- Investigate the customer requirement for extended opening hours for services. Identify which services and implement revised times.

Work in partnership to support vulnerable individuals and families

Why is it a priority?

Growth in older people

The number of older people in Wiltshire is set to increase over the coming 16 years by 43%. As people age they often need more help and support to live the lives they want and their chances of developing dementia are significantly increased. We estimate that there are over 7,000 people currently living with dementia in Wiltshire, although approximately 2,000 have formal diagnoses.

Wiltshire Council currently helps approximately 5,000 carers per year by providing information and advice, as well as services such as respite care or by funding other organisations to help carers on the council's behalf. Nevertheless, we know that the council and NHS can work more closely to support carers.

Social care has to change across the country and this will involve the fairer distribution of council funding to people who need social care services; telling people who are entitled to support the value of their funding; and letting them chose how to use their funding to meet their needs. All people who need help and advice will receive it, whether they are responsible for funding their own care or not.

Disabled young people and living with disability

Between the ages of 14 and 25, young people usually have to make important decisions about their education, leaving home, and getting a job. These decisions and changes can be both exciting and challenging. For disabled young people it can be a confusing and complicated time, as they often receive support from a number of different agencies, including health, social care services and education. Planning should start well in advance of leaving school, so that the young person's needs and choices are fully explored.

Wiltshire currently spends around half of its learning disabilities budget on keeping 350 learning-disabled people in care homes. We want to help more people to live in the community where that is their wish. However, it is recognised that there will always be a need for care homes to meet the needs of some people.

Key outcomes we will achieve

Support for older people

- By 2014 we will help increase the opportunities for people to live independently in extra care settings.

- We will work together with the NHS to help older people avoid needing care too soon, and by 2012

  - reduce the amount of avoidable admissions to hospital on the grounds of falls by 10%
  - offer everyone discharged from hospital, who needs it, free support and help to regain their independence and necessary skills to live at home for at least 6 weeks
  - offer everyone discharged from hospital, who can benefit from it, free assistive technology for the first 6 weeks
  - offer specialist support and intermediate care services for people with dementia
  - offer joint early diagnosis and support clinics for people with dementia and their carers

Page 89

Support for people who care for others

- By 2013 the council will support at least 2,500 more carers. In addition, we estimate that Wiltshire's carer support agencies will take 1000 *new* referrals per year between now and 2013.

Self-directed support

- By 2013 everyone in Wiltshire whom the council funds to live independently in the community will have a personal budget.

Support for learning-disabled adults

- By 2014 all learning-disabled who need adult social care services when they reach adulthood will have a transition plan in place from their 16th birthday.

- By 2013 70% of learning-disabled people of working age will live in the community. This will reduce the proportion of the learning disabilities budget spent keeping people in care homes to 40% (It was 70% in 2007).

- We will help find paid employment for 25 learning-disabled people per year between 2011 and 2013.

Local, open, honest decision making

Why is it a priority?

The council must have a positive relationship with local communities so it can be responsive to their needs and aspirations. It should provide opportunities for them to be involved in discussing and shaping decisions that affect their lives.

Over recent years, there has been a loss of trust and confidence in government generally. This can result in people being sceptical about the council and becoming disengaged from the democratic process, either not voting at local elections or not getting involved in any decision making affecting their local communities. In 2008, less than a third of residents felt they could influence decisions affecting their local area. Although this is higher than the national average it needs to be substantially improved.

Local area governance formed one of the key elements of the bid for a unitary council. It was recognised that we needed to strengthen community engagement in local decision making by creating Area Boards. These are now in place and the challenge is to generate greater citizen interest and engagement, and for public services to be organised so that they can respond effectively to community priorities and issues.

Key outcomes we will achieve

- By 2014, 50% of people within communities will feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area, including a greater number of such responses from people who are currently under-represented in the process. At present 30% of residents feel they can influence decisions.

- By 2012, the council will have invested £5.5 million in community led projects and initiatives, determined and prioritised by area boards.

- By 2014, the council will have increased year-on-year funding to the Area Boards who in turn will have increased their influence.

Increase opportunities to help young people achieve their potential

Why is it a priority?

The way in which children and young people grow up affects their whole outlook, wellbeing and future life chances. The council has an important role to play in helping all young people to attain their goals and needs to focus its energy in a number of areas where more needs to be done.

The quality of education young people receive is very important and it is recognised there is a need to narrow the educational attainment gap, between children of different backgrounds and between different schools. Children with special educational needs, in care, and in receipt of free school meals, from black and other minority ethnic groups often under-perform in examinations compared to other children. There are also wide variations between schools with some performing extremely well whilst others perform poorly.

Leisure facilities and activities for young people are seen as vital in making somewhere a good place to live. Activities are often cited as needing improvement in local surveys. This provision can help to dispel negative perceptions about young people, especially in respect of anti-social behaviour.

Protecting children from abuse or neglect and supporting parents, carers and families to keep children safe is very important. In some cases of neglect, harm or for other reasons children are either accommodated by the council in agreement with parent / carers or in some instances placed in council care through a court process. The outcomes and life chances for these children can be significantly worse than other children.

Disabled children and young people and their parents/carers want better information provided, improved communications between professionals, to have a real say in the services they receive, more opportunities to make friends out of school and join in activities and to have more short break provision and choice.

Key outcomes we will achieve

In schools
- We will close the attainment gap for pupils in schools through 1:1 tuition, increasing attendance, improving the quality of school facilities and extending the school 'good' and 'outstanding' ratings from Ofsted inspections. By 2011:

    o The achievement gap of those receiving free school meals and the rest of their peer group will be reduced to 24%
    o The gap for pupils who have special educational needs and their peer group be reduced to 51% at age 11 and 43% at age 16.
    o A third of those children in care taking GCSEs will get 5+ A*-C including English and maths

- By 2011 at least 80% of children will achieve Level 4 or above in both English and maths at Key Stage 2, up from 71% in 2009.

Those with disabilities
- We will improve the health, wellbeing and opportunities for children and young people with disabilities, with over 65% of parents of disabled children being satisfied with the level of service y received to support them and their children.

- We will improve access to services and provide more support and choice for families and ask them to shape, and influence future services ensuring a better planned transition into adult life.

Safeguarding children
- Keeping children safe from harm and neglect is everybody's concern. We will improve the safeguarding of children and the lives of children in the care of the council through appropriate referral and assessment, ensuring that every child who is looked after or has a child protection plan has an allocated social worker. We will minimise the chances of preventable child deaths, and ensure that bullying is reduced to below the national average.

Activities for young people
- We will support young people to find positive things to do in their spare time and increase their participation in activities from 73% in 2009 to 82% in 2011.

- We will maximise the opportunities for all to access a range of varied and interesting organised events and activities, using for example the additional activities provided through extended schools and volunteering initiatives. This should lead to reductions in anti-social behaviour.

Support the local economy

Why is it a priority?

A strong local economy is essential to providing local jobs, creating wealth and investment, and in helping to enhance people's general health and wellbeing. A prolonged recession can have many negative consequences in terms of levels of unemployment, debt, homelessness and health and can lead to an increasing dependency on state benefits and public services.

Wiltshire has a comparatively strong economy with one of the highest gross domestic household income levels in the southwest, and therefore has not been as adversely affected by the recent recession.

However, there are some areas of economic vulnerability which must be addressed. One way of assessing the economic well-being of an area is Gross Value Added (GVA) which measures the financial output or productivity of each worker. Wiltshire is below the average GVA for England and therefore issues such as the level of out-commuting, the amount of high-value employment, lower business growth and confidence levels, skill gaps in the workforce, and town centre decline must be addressed.

The council has a lead role to play in addressing these and other issues, implementing a range of initiatives which will enable new sustainable growth and investment, diversify our business base creating high skilled job opportunities, and in regenerating our town centres.

Key outcomes we will achieve

- We will support business start-ups, expansion and secure inward investment creating 6,000 new jobs and safeguarding 8,000 jobs in Wiltshire's economy by 2014.

- We will secure growth in higher skill/value employment sectors narrowing the gap in output per worker between Wiltshire and the England average (Wiltshire GVA £44,350 England average GVA £48,300). Target sectors will be:

    o Advanced manufacturing
    o Bio-medical
    o ICT
    o Environmental Technologies
    o Food & Drink
    o Tourism
    o Creative Industries
    o Financial/business Services

- We will retain and support the growth of Wiltshire's top employers through engagement and improving our understanding of their needs, working jointly to support their future skills development and investment.

Meet housing needs

Why is it a priority?

Everyone needs somewhere to live and having a good home is vital to people's health and wellbeing. But there is not enough affordable or high quality housing to meet current and future needs.

The cost of housing in Wiltshire is around 10% higher than average, and at the same time the earnings of people working in the county is below average. This makes affordability a big issue for many people. The recent recession has further worsened the situation with less new housing being built and more people experiencing unemployment and debt problems, which could lead to an increase in home repossessions and homelessness. There are about 10,100 people on the council's waiting list for an affordable home, and this is steadily increasing.

With people living longer, the need for housing support for the elderly will increase significantly over the coming years. However, it is not feasible or desirable to simply provide more and more residential care homes. Instead the challenge is provide alternatives and help people to stay independent and live in their own homes within communities, with the development of extra care housing, supported living accommodation, disabled facilities grants, and the use of telecare products through Careconnect.

The council has a major leading role to play in improving the provision of housing in Wiltshire. This includes planning where new housing development will occur through the Local Development Framework, directly managing 5,400 council homes, preventing homelessness, and securing and allocating affordable rented housing. It is also working with other partners such as housing associations and the Ministry of Defence to develop plans to provide housing for those identified as having a housing need.

The standard of council housing is good, but the way the service is managed is currently not providing good value for money. It is taking too long to re-let homes and many repairs are not completed on time. To address these concerns the council will be implementing an improvement plan.

Key outcomes we will achieve

- More vulnerable clients will be living independently at home for longer, with the number of Careconnect customers increasing from 3,500 in 2010 to 5,500 by 2014.

- Maximise the delivery of new affordable homes built in Wiltshire to help meet local needs and maximise the use of existing properties in the county. It will achieve 2,400 new affordable homes and return 2,160 empty homes to use between 2010-11 and 2013-14.

- To be one of the best 25% of councils in the Country for housing management services.

Improve our roads and road safety

Why is it a priority?

An effective road network is vital for Wiltshire, particularly in respect of local economic prosperity, giving access to services, and in linking rural and urban areas to the principal road network.

The condition of Wiltshire's carriageways has been improving in recent years and the standards compare favourably with other shire counties in the south west. However, there is long standing dissatisfaction with the standard of road maintenance and in local surveys, road repairs is the service identified as most in need of improvement and future investment. We recognise that the expectations of residents and our communities are not being met. This position is also reflected in the early experience of Area Boards where analysis of issue logs shows that over half of all the issues raised by residents are concerns about roads and other related matters (120 out of 237 issues raised in the first 6 months of their operation).

The way that we organise and deliver the maintenance of local roads and public open spaces is being changed so that we are able to better meet the needs and the expectations of the community.

While the overall number of road accidents in Wiltshire is low, the proportion of those accidents which result in people being killed or seriously injured remains a concern. The numbers have been declining over the last decade but we need to ensure that this trend continues.

Key outcomes we will achieve

- By 2012 we will reduce the average time to repair a pothole to no more than 10 days, with the most serious potholes being fixed within 24 hours. In 2008 the average time to repair a pothole was over 30 days.

- We will continue to improve on the high standards of cleanliness of our roads by achieving a performance target 7% higher than the National Benchmarks for litter and detritus. This means that by 2014, 96% of our roads will be free or predominantly free of litter and 86% of our roads will be free or predominantly free of detritus against the National Benchmarks of 89% and 79% respectively.

- By 2012 we will have built on our current engagement and communication with Area Boards such that they are able to influence planned maintenance priorities within the work programme for their Areas, whilst ensuring that safety considerations are not compromised.

- The number of road accident fatalities and serious injuries will be targeted for at least a 15% reduction by 2014, compared with the 3 year average up to 2008.

Reduce our environmental impact

Why is it a priority?

Awareness of, and concern about, environmental issues has been on the increase for many years. We now understand that aspects of human activity are causing irrevocable damage to the planet, the cost of which is now being felt not just in physical terms but also financial. The council has both ethical and legislative motives for reducing the impact of its activities on the environment, and has a responsibility to encourage and help all businesses, communities and individuals to do their bit.

A recent survey demonstrated that the majority of Wiltshire people are concerned about climate change and they want the council to take the lead on tackling it. This challenge has significant implications for council services and activities, planning future requirements and in addressing the consequences of changing weather patterns.

It is likely Wiltshire will experience more regular severe weather events in the future, including storms, flooding, snow, and heat waves. Measures will need to be put in place to manage and minimise the disruption these events will cause and ensure a quick recovery is made.

Successfully managing the county's waste remains a key challenge for the council. The cost of burying our non-recyclable waste in landfill sites is enormous, both in environmental and financial terms. Neither the environment nor the taxpayer can continue bearing the burden of this cost and therefore a key aim for the council is to dramatically reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

Under increasing pressure from the changing climate and from the growth and development of our economy and communities, protecting and enhancing our wildlife habitats and the biodiversity they support will be essential if we are to ensure that they survive for future generations to enjoy.

Key outcomes we will achieve

- By 2014 we will have a range of pilot energy efficiency and renewable energy projects with at least one in each of Wiltshire's community areas – from micro-generation to home energy efficiency projects. These will be developed with communities with the aim of sharing and replicating best practice across the county and beyond.

- We will reduce our carbon emissions by 20% of our 2008/09 baseline by 2013/14. This is a key milestone for our overall target of a 50% reduction by 2020, improving on the National target for that date of 34%.

- By September 2010, we will produce a Local Climate Impacts Profile and undertake a comprehensive risk assessment to understand the consequences of unavoidable climate change across all community areas in Wiltshire. By April 2011, we will produce an Action Plan detailing work we will do to reduce the impacts of, and improve our response to, events such as extreme weather and flooding.

- Last year, 56% of our waste was sent to landfill. By 2014, we will have reduced that figure to 25% making Wiltshire one of the lowest landfill authorities in the country.

- We will aim to deliver over 50% of local sites with recognised value for biodiversity (e.g. County Wildlife Sites, Protected Road Verges and Regionally Important Geological Sites) in positive management by 31/03/2011, compared to the baseline of less than 40% in 31/03/2008, and will aim to maintain it at this level.

Achieve savings, be more efficient and ensure we deliver value for money

Why is it a priority?

Managing our resources effectively is essential if we are to cope with the future national public spending cuts.

Achieving savings through joining and transforming services was a key part of becoming a unitary council. The scale of savings required now is much higher, and the organisation must find new and innovative ways of working more efficiently if it is to deliver its priorities. Financial pressures come from a variety of sources, and include anticipated cuts in government grants (down 20% over five years), the recession and reduced income, carbon trading, landfill taxes, pay harmonisation, pensions, and escalating fuel and energy costs.

In addition to managing its resources well, the council also needs to earn the confidence and trust of its communities in order to support the development of its work and provide leadership to its communities. This can be achieved by demonstrating to residents that their council is a successful and high performing organisation and one which consistently achieves standards of service delivery well above the national average. Changing perceptions will be key to improving the relationship between the council and people, and in engaging them in future decision making on how and where their taxes are spent.

Key outcomes we will achieve

- We will drive out waste and increase efficiency across the organisation, whilst maintaining front line services. To achieve this we will:

    o   Deliver savings of £50m over the period 2010-11 to 2013-14.

    o   Deliver year-on-year reductions in the rise of council tax.

    o   Release £50m from our asset portfolio to enable investment in front line service areas.

    o   75% of our services will be in the top two performance quartiles nationally by 2013-14.

    o   Deliver 3% in cost reduction from procurement & commissioning each year (£9m p.a.)

    o   Deliver 3% in cost reduction from service redesign (including lean) each year (£9m p.a.)

Comments from Overview and Scrutiny Organisation and Resources Select Committee meeting 25 March 2010

Over-arching topics	Reference	Comments
Political priorities Local political mandates Councillor priorities - what do these mean?	Covering report	Cllr Jane Scott responded to this issue at the Select Committee meeting. These references in the covering report state that the plan takes into account the political aspirations and perspectives of the administration.

Departmental Delivery Plans (in place by end of May)
New Business Plan (prepared in next 6 months)
  -   Explain a little more particularly the relationship to each other?
  -   Will be vital to provide the detail and evidence for scrutiny to "measure performance against the outcomes"
	Covering report	This is work in progress. More detail will be provided in the covering report to Full Council in May.

The Key outcomes against the 9 priorities should be cross-referenced with the LAW and LAA targets and CAA comments where relevant in pages 68-78 (this will then show what are new Corporate Plan only targets) Baseline figures required for key outcome targets where relevant Reviewed and refreshed each year – surely progress against priority targets will be more regular (ie. LAA ones are quarterly at present)?	Covering report	This had already been done but it needed updating to reflect the latest changes to the Corporate Plan. This has now been completed and is attached for information at Appendix 3. Baseline figures already exist for the majority of the outcomes. However, for a small number baseline figures will need to be confirmed and this work will be undertaken shortly in the departmental delivery plans. This reference refers to the plan as a whole which will be subject to annual review and updating as required. However, more detailed and regular monitoring of the progress against the outcomes will occur, and

Over-arching topics	Reference	Comments
		this will form a part of the normal performance management process of the council.
Chief Executive - "Best local authority in the UK" -how long and how judged (and at what cost)? Also seems to contradict lower ambitions elsewhere ie. "achieve service standards well above the national average" "75% of services top two performance quartiles by 2013-14" "be one of the best 25% for housing management"	Corporate Plan introduction section by Andrew Kerr	Andrew Kerr responded to this question at the Select Committee meeting. Being the best local authority does not mean we have to be the best at everything. Instead it means we will focus our business and direct resources to priorities, be efficient and achieve good value for money, work effectively in partnership, and give local influence to people. The key measure of success will be the overall council satisfaction rating measured in Place Survey and through the CAA and other inspections.
Priorities (key outcomes)		
Need to explain how the top 20 services for redesign are to be selected?	Corporate Plan priority focus on customers and access to services	Carlton Brand responded to this question at the Select Committee meeting. The top 20 council services will be selected based on analysis of the volume of customer contacts for each service through the web (SOCITIM info) and telephone system (LAGAN info). Contacts which skew service-demand figures e.g. routine job searches, are filtered out leaving an accurate assessment of the top 20 services most requested.
Local, open honest decision making – is a goal <u>and</u> a priority? Area Boards funding and influence – so how much (by 2014) and how will increased influence be measured?	Corporate Plan vision and priority local, open honest decision making	Yes, this is correct and has been subject to previous Cabinet consideration. It recognises the importance of the localism agenda for the council and the fact that it formed a key part of the LGR bid to become a unitary council. Cabinet at its last meeting on 23 March reviewed the progress being made on area boards. It was reported considerable progress had been made and a series of recommendations were adopted to refine and build on the experience gained responding to community needs and

Over-arching topics	Reference	Comments
		aspirations. The funding and influence of area boards were considered as part of this early review and are likely to be considered again in future reviews.
Key Stage 2 target of 80% by 2011 – where will that place us against the national picture (especially if we want to be the best)?

"Ensure that bullying is reduced below the national average" – so what level is it at now?

"Reductions in anti-social behaviour" – so what is the target? | Corporate Plan priority young people | Key Stage 2 results for 2009, Wiltshire 71%, England average 72%, comparable local authorities average 72.4%. The top quartile is 75%-86%.

Bullying is measured by an annual national Tellus survey. The % of children experiencing bullying in the past year - Wiltshire 29.7%, England average 28.8%, top quartile 26% or less. These figures need to be used with some caution as it is a new indicator and is based on a small sample.

This outcome focuses on opportunities for young people to access a range of events and activities. It is intended that this will lead to many positive benefits in relation to their health and wellbeing, future aspirations etc. A reduction in anti-social behaviour may also occur as an additional benefit for the community. However, it is not the primary focus of this outcome, and as such no specific targets are included in the plan. |
| "Wiltshire has not been adversely affected by the recent recession" – how confident are we about that statement?

The impact of the current economic situation should be given a higher profile generally | Corporate Plan priority local economy | The text makes it clear that in comparison to many other areas Wiltshire as a whole has been able to avoid the worst effects of the recession. For example, unemployment rates for Wiltshire have been consistently below that for England and Wales and the South West (In Feb 2010 Wiltshire unemployment rate was 2.7% compared to England and Wales 4.3% and the South West 3.1%).

The point is accepted and an additional reference to the current economic situation has been made in the opening introduction by councillor Jane Scott. However, it is important to recognise that this is a forward looking plan covering the next four years. Whilst the current economic situation is important it should be put in context, particularly when there are signs that |

Over-arching topics	Reference	Comments
"Council has a leading role to play in……regenerating our towns" – Even with Council support the Waterside Project in Trowbridge has not materialised so how influential can we really be?		the economy is recovering. It is generally accepted the council does have an important role to play in helping to support the local economy. This can include ensuring we have the right housing, planning, and land packages in place to grasp opportunities as they arise. But it is also accepted that to do this effectively and proactively we need to further enhance our economic development service.
Will the harmonisation of Council housing potentially have implications on the future targets set for the service?	Corporate Plan priority housing needs	The landlord services inspection has been completed and a draft report has been received. Once this is formally published the council will respond to the issues highlighted and will be implementing an improvement plan. This may impact on future targets set.
Need current benchmark and performance for road cleanliness.	Corporate Plan priority roads and road safety	Against national benchmarks of 89% for litter and 79% for detritus, our confirmed performance levels for 2009/10 were 95% and 82% respectively. Such an achievement is a great testament to all staff working in this service area in the first year of the new council. With such high levels of performance, achieving improvements becomes increasingly difficult and success with the targets in the Corporate Plan will therefore be a real challenge.
Do the figures quoted for future landfill reductions assume a particular outcome of local consultation/new govt policy on waste collection?	Corporate Plan priority environ impact	The main requirements for achieving the landfill reduction target are the diversion of waste to the Energy From Waste Incinerator at Lakeside via our existing contract (waste diversion commenced June 2009), and the proposed diversion of waste via a new contract for a Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) Plant at Westbury. Cabinet have recently approved in principle the completion of this contract, subject to satisfactory final contract negotiations. Waste Collection policy will influence the quantity of material recycled from the waste stream and the quantity of residual waste requiring disposal. Collection policy will

Over-arching topics	Reference	Comments
		therefore have an influence on our ability to achieve the landfill reduction target but is not likely to be the main determinant.
What are the risks and implications associated with assumptions on the value of future asset disposals?	Corporate Plan priority savings, efficiency, value for money	At this time, this is assessed as low risk as it reflects current market pricing. In relation to various property related work occurring within the life of the corporate plan it is likely that the figures quoted will be exceeded in relation to assets that are available for disposal. But there are three major risk areas, within this overall assessment: 1) The risk is that the market for our assets may not be sufficiently developed over the Corporate Plan period. It relies, not only a willing seller, but a willing buyer across the range of assets identified for disposal. However, a disposal strategy that is designed to specifically address this will be produced. 2) The council may decide to focus on community asset transfer instead of capital receipt for the properties identified for disposal 3) That a site may not achieve planning consent for development due to local pressures for alternative uses.

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Corporate Plan priority: Focus on our customers and improve access to services Corporate Plan links to LAW, LAA, and CAA

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
Deliver the workspace transformation programme					
Enable customers to access the council's top 20 services through appointments in their own home or business premises		This Corporate Plan priority is internally focused and therefore no links exist to the LAW/LAA			
Develop the website to be fully transactional for the top 20 services					
Enable a customer postcode model to deliver service information					
Redesign the top 20 services					
Achieve customer telephone connection call rates and enable direct 'golden numbers' for the top 20 services					
Investigate customer requirements for extended open hours for services, and implement revised times					

Corporate Plan priority: Work in partnership to support vulnerable individuals and families

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
Support for older people: help older people avoid care too soon Support for older people: help to increase the opportunities for people to live independently in extra care settings	Lives not services	Support more people to have independent and fullfilling lives as part of their local community	Build more specialist housing so that people don't have to live in residential and nursing care if they do not want to, including extra-care housing and sheltered housing	NI 141 vulnerable people achieving independent living; NI 125 independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care; NI 130 self-directed support; NI 135 carers receiving needs assessment or review and specific services; NI 136 people supported to live independently through social services; NI 139 extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home	Ageing population - social care for older and vulnerable people has improved but still work to do to make sure that the most vulnerable people are safe
Support for people who care for others: Support to carers			-		
Self-directed support: personal budgets			Help more people who use our service stay in control of their lives by giving them personal budgets to choose their own care		
Support for learning-disabled adults: transition plans in place			-		
Support for learning-disabled adults: help to learning-disabled people to live in the community			-		
Support for learning-disabled adults: help to find paid employment for learning -disabled people			-		

Page 106

Corporate Plan priority: Local,open, honest decision making

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
People feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area	}	-	-	NI 004 people who feel they can influence decisions	Outcomes from area board working
Community led projects and initiatives determined and prioritised by area boards	Building resilient communities	Help local communities develop their own priorities and improvements	Establish community partnerships in all 20 community areas Assist community partnerships to refresh their community plans by mid Oct 2009 Encourage Wiltshire Council's Area Boards to use some of their budgets to fund community partnerships to employ part-time administrative support		
		Build a strong and vibrant voluntary sector	Further develop and increase the standing of the Wiltshire Voluntary Sector Assembly Increase investment in, and oppoortunities for, volunteering Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire will complete their review of the relationship between the public and voluntary sector and implement the conclusions of this review Wiltshire Council will make a decision on whether to adopt its draft policy on what buildings, land, and other assets it would be prepared to transfer to community organisations to rur Support 'Wiltshire Money', the voluntary group of organisations who help people in debt and in financial difficulties Increase the profile of the Wiltshire Compact, which sets how the statutory and voluntary/community sectors will work better together for the benefit of Wiltshire's residents	NI 006 people who have given unpaid help; NI007 environment for a thriving third sector	
Increase in year-on-year funding to area boards and an increase in their influence		Improve the way Wiltshire organisations work together to plan and deliver services in local communities	Continue to develop the 18 Area Boards Support town and parish councils to work within the Area Boards Develop the local leadership role and skills of councillors and community representatives		

Corporate Plan priority: Increase opportunities to help young people achieve their potential

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
Disabilities: improve health, wellbeing, opportunities for children and young people with disabilities Disabilities: improve access to services and provide more support for families Safeguarding children: improve the safeguarding of children and lives of children in care of the council	Lives not services	Provide the strong foundations for children and young people's development	Improve services for disabled children and young people Help children, young people, and their families to help themselves by providing good quality information and advice Help children who are dependant on the council by making sure they are well looked after, involved in decisions and receive the best possible education		
Schools: close educational attainment gap for pupils Schools: raise primary schools KS2 performance Activities for young people: support young people to find positive things to do and increase participation in activities Activities for young people: maximise opportunities for all to access a range of events and activities	Building resilient communities	Help young people to succeed at school and take part in positive activities	Narrow the attainment gaps that exist for vulnerable groups of young people by supporting schools and parents through children's centres and providing specialist services for vulnerable groups of children and young adults Improve educational attainment for everyone Get more young people to take part in a wide range of positive activities and play Increase children's and young people's access to facilities and activities	NI 075 achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE; NI 092 narrowing the educational gap; NI 099-NI101 looked after children school performance NI 073 achievement at level 4 or above english and maths at KS2	Inconsistent progress on reducing achievement gaps for different groups; Too many people lack basic skills and qualifications

Corporate Plan priority: Support the local economy

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
Retain and support the growth of Wiltshire's top employers; Support business start-ups, expansion and secure inward investment	Supporting economic growth	Improve business productivity through innovation	Support businesses affected by the economic downturn through an innovation programme called 'adapt to survive' Seek funding from the European Union to deliver a further innovation prgramme by April 2010 Deliver a programme of intensive business advice sessions	ESDECON1 number of businesses supported	
		Work with the private sector to provide adequate workspace and employment land provision	Produce a work space strategy to meet Witlshire's employment needs; identify suitable sites for employment through the LDF Secure investment opportunities at Castledown and Solstice Park Secure major developments at Porton Down. Work with MoD to identify future sites across Wiltshire Work with the Churchfields Industrial Estate's business partners to achieve the development of Churchfields Investigate Wiltshire's investment potential		
		Supporting Wiltshire during the economic downturn	Establish a new business support service and create a new emergency support scheme for small businesses Review business rate policies, promote existing business rate relief and examine the scope for rent relief or rent holidays on council-owned units Help businesses to take advantage of national support measures Help small businesses to get better access to finance work with Govt agencies to help employers experiencing 20 or more redundancies and local communities badly affected by the recession Work with Govt agencies to retrain the unemployed Provide new opportunities for developing the potential of Wiltshire's young people Invest in tourism to boost the local economy Promote and support local food and drink companies Look to improve the planning process as a way of helping businesses

Look at ways of speeding up delayed development projects

Develop a strong, well supported Wiltshire Credit Union Support young people who are not, or are at risk of not being, in education, employment, or training | NI 117 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs); NI 152 working age people on out of work benefits | NEETs have increased |
| Secure growth in higher skill / value employment sectors | | Broaden the employment base of Wiltshire, extending higher education provision in the county | Establish a new employment and skills board in Wiltshire to help businesses identify their skills and training needs, and ensure those needs are met Support the retention and growth of businesses and attract new investment through the Wiltshire Investment Strategy Bid for a university presence in south Wiltshire | NI 163 qualifications | Too many people lack basic skills and qualifcations |

Corporate Plan priority: Meet housing needs

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
Maximise delivery of new affordable homes	Improving affordable housing	Build a significant and lasting increase in the number of affordable homes	Identify land that is available, and where it makes sense, to build more homes on land which might be owned by Wiltshire Council or one of our partners Agree our plans for the next 10 years with the Govt's homes and communities agency and the tenant services authority Work with local housing associations to meet the housing challenges of the next 3 years Plan for our housing need in the next 10 years with our partners and make sure we are ready to tackle it together Work with the MOD to find out whether any of its properties could be used for affordable housing Write an action plan to ensure people's need for affordable housing is met	NI 155 number of affordable homes delivered	
More vulnerable clients living independently at home for longer		Increase access to suitable accommodation for all vulnerable people and reduce the number of people facing homelessness	Work with young people to make sure that the right services are available to them Set up a young person accommodation and support board to make sure services for young people are available across the county, including a new website for young people in need of support and housing Help single homeless people get the right support and accommodation across Wiltshire Make sure there is suitable temporary accommodation across Wiltshire Launch Wiltshire Council's new 'WiltsLet' scheme to help people get suitable private rented housing Treat all homeless people equally Review Wiltshire Council's Homes4Wiltshire housing allocation scheme after 12 months to ensure it is easy to access and use, and meets the needs of vulnerable residents	NI 141 vulnerable people achieving independent living; ESDHOU2 end use of B&B for homeless; ESDHOU3 reduce use of homeless temporary accommodation; ESDHOU4 reduce number of people facing homelessness by offering alternative housing and support options	
One of the best councils in the country for housing management services		-	-	ESDHOU1 social housing achieving decent homes standard	Housing - need for strategic housing plans to be put in place; Private sector housing and bringing more empty homes back into use; Management of council housing not providing good value for money. A landlord services inspection has been completed.

Corporate Plan priority: Improve our roads and road safety

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
Reduce time to repair a pothole	Supporting economic growth	Improve journey time reliability on the A350 corridor and condition of Wiltshire's principal road network	Deliver maintenance and bridge strengthening schemes to the value of £13.2 in 2008/09, £11.9m in 2009/10, and £12m in 2010/11	NI 168 principal roads where maintenance should be considered	
Improve on the standards of cleanliness of roads; Reduce number of road accident fatalities and serious injuries	Safer communities which also feel safe	Improve the street scene and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour	Improve the look of our streets and lanes

Reduce speeding through villages | NI 195 improved street and environmental cleanliness | Road safety is a concern |
| | | Reduce road casualties in Wiltshire | Investigate ways to reduce rates of serious injury and fatal road accidents in Wiltshire
Increase our awareness in communities of our safety campaigns, including bike safety and child safety weeks | NI 047 people killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents | |
| Engage and communicate with area boards so that they can influence planned maintenance priorities | | - | - | | |

Corporate Plan priority: Reduce our environmental impact

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
Reduce the council's carbon emissions	Protecting the environment	Reduce Wiltshire's carbon footprint	Reduce the carbon footprint from public sector businesses through energy efficiencies, new technologies, and better working practices Reduce carbon emissions from transport by supporting public transport and more pedestrian and cycling facilities	NI 185 CO2 reduction from local authority operations	Climate change - plans to reduce public sectors impact on the environment but too early to assess their success
Produce a Local Climate Impacts Profile and risk assessment to understand consequences of unavoidable climate change, plus associated action plan	Protecting the environment	Prepare Wiltshire for the consequences of unavoidable climate change	Assess the likely impacts of unavoidable climate change on Wiltshire's services Set out how Wiltshire's public services are going to adapt and propare for events like storms, flooding, and heat waves to minimise the risk of disruption	NI 188 planning to adapt to climate change	Climate change - limited environmental information available for local areas
Pilot energy efficiency and renewable energy projects	Protecting the environment; Improving affordable housing	Reduce Wiltshire's carbon footprint	Bid for funding to develop renewable energy in Wiltshire	NI 186 per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in Wiltshire	Housing - too many home are not energy efficient
		Make homes in Wiltshire more environmentally friendly	Publish new criteria for heating and energy saving standards required for all new affordable homes Identify, and make available to all, information about how to reduce heating costs and energy use, helping households to reduce their carbon footprint Identify opportunites for reducing the energy bills of households in fuel poverty, targeting vulnerable households as a priority	ESDHOU 6 carry out energy improvements to private homes	
Reduce amount of waste sent to landfill	Protecting the environment	Improve the reduction, re-use, and recycling of household waste	Promote the Green Cone food waste digester units to residents to reduce household waste Promote the use of real nappies to help the environment and save money Promote the need to minimise waste and increase recycling with groups of local school children	NI 191 residual household waste	
Local biodiversity sites in positive management	Protecting the environment	Protect Wiltshire's natural environment and biodiversity	Increase opportunities for wildlife throughout Wiltshire by bringing more local wildlife sites into positive management and increasing the habitat available for wildlife Continue to survey and monitor the county's wildlife sites	NI 197 improved local biodiversity - local sites where there is positive conservation management	

Corporate Plan priority: Achieve savings, be more efficient and ensure we deliver value for money

Corporate Plan outcomes	LAW ambition	LAW objectives	LAW actions	LAA targets	CAA issues
Drive out waste and increase efficiency across the organisation, whilst maintaining front line services	This Corporate Plan priority is internally focused and therefore no links exist to the LAW/LAA			-	Use of resources assessment score 2 out of 4 2009 assessment

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject:	**Housing PFI Scheme – Appropriation of Land for Planning Purposes**
Cabinet member:	**Councillor John Brady – Economic Development, Planning and Housing**
Key Decision:	**No**

Executive Summary

The PFI bidder's due diligence work on the PFI development sites to be provided by the Council has identified a number of title issues. While these would not normally be problematic for housing developments, they are perceived as having an increased level of risk within the PFI contractual framework, which is not acceptable to the bidder without resolution.

In relation to two sites affected by rights and covenants, the proposal is to appropriate that land for planning purposes. This has the effect of overriding a party's rights or covenants in favour of a party to prevent development of that land in accordance with the planning permission. It does not remove their right to compensation for inference with such rights or covenants, but it removes the potential for excessive claims and the potential for the development being frustrated by the grant of an injunction to prevent the interference with such rights.

Proposal

That Cabinet:

a) appropriates land at Broad Street car park, Trowbridge (as shown on the indicative plan in Appendix 1 of the report) for planning purposes under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972;

b) appropriates land at Paxcroft Mead, Hilperton (as shown on the indicative plan in Appendix 2 of the report) for planning purposes under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972;

c) agrees to dispose of such land at Broad Street car park, Trowbridge under section 233 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, subject to the Secretary of State's consent for disposal at less than best consideration and

d) agrees to dispose of such land at Paxcroft Mead, Hilperton under section 233 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, subject to the Secretary of State's consent for disposal at less than best consideration.

Reason for Proposal

To ensure the risks, in respect of rights and covenants affecting two PFI development sites to be provided by the Council, can be resolved.

Graham Hogg
Service Director, Housing

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **Housing PFI Scheme – Appropriation
                of Land for Planning Purposes**

Cabinet member: **Councillor John Brady – Economic Development,
                  Planning and Housing**

Key Decision: **No**

Purpose of Report

1.   To seek Cabinet's agreement to appropriate and dispose of land, as
        identified in the report, for planning purposes, for the housing PFI scheme.

Background

2.   An update report on progress of the scheme was provided to Cabinet on
        23 March 2010. As set out in that report, the PFI bidder, Silbury Housing
        Ltd (SHL), has recently completed its due diligence work on the PFI
        development sites to be provided by the Council.

3.   SHL's due diligence work has identified a number of title issues. While
        these would not normally be problematic for housing developments, they
        are perceived as having an increased level of risk within the PFI
        contractual framework, which is unacceptable to SHL without resolution.

4.   We have been working with SHL to resolve these issues. The preferred
        way forward involves a combination of appropriation, planning
        amendments and site fencing works.

5.   This report considers the proposed appropriation of two Council owned
        sites, for planning purposes, where it has been identified that the PFI
        development proposals will interfere with certain rights and covenants
        attached to the land. The principle of appropriating these sites has been
        endorsed by the Housing PFI Project Board on 15 March 2010.

Main Considerations for the Council

Site specific issues

6.   In relation to Broad Street car park, Trowbridge (see Appendix 1 for an
        indicative site plan), there are entries on the title register for part of the site
        relating to a 1960 conveyance, referring to rights and easements, if any,

and a 1955 deed of exchange containing a covenant limiting the use of part of the site to use as either a single residential dwelling house or a public house. The re-development will breach the covenants in the 1955 deed, since the site will be re-developed for flats. In relation to the 1960 conveyance it is not clear whether there are any rights and easements that would affect the re-development of the site and, if so, the nature of them. Therefore, it is not possible to assess the likelihood that they will be breached.

7.   In relation to land at Paxcroft Mead, Hilperton (see Appendix 2 for an indicative site plan) there is an assent dated 10 July 1953, which relates to part of the site. This states that that part of the site is subject to any tithe redemption annuity, stipulations, restrictions and to all easements and covenants made on the part of the deceased and the personal representatives and provisions binding on any of them or rights granted by any of them. Again, without knowing the terms of the covenants it is difficult to assess whether or not they would be breached.

8.   In order to deal with these title issues and having taken external legal advice, it is proposed that the above sites be appropriated for planning purposes. SHL has confirmed this to be its preferred solution.

Legal powers

9.   "Appropriation" is a term given in local government legislation to an internal process of a council designed to allow that council flexibility in its use of land. It allows a council to use land that has been acquired for one purpose for a different purpose. Under local government legislation, a council must acquire land under statutory powers.

10.   Under section 122 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council can appropriate land for any statutory purpose for which we are authorised to acquire land. Under section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Council is authorised to acquire land if the Council thinks that either the acquisition of the land will facilitate the development, re-development or improvement of the land or the land is needed for some other reason that is necessary to the proper planning of the area.

11.   Where land is appropriated for planning purposes, it will then be held by the Council under the statutory provisions within Part 9 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The practical consequence of this (by virtue of Section 237 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended) is that the erection, construction or carrying out of any maintenance of any building or work on the land and subsequent use of the land is authorised under those planning powers, if the works are done in accordance with planning permission, even if they interfere with third party rights.

12.   The purpose of Section 237 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) is to ensure that where land has been appropriated for planning purposes, then existing rights, which could prevent the development of that land from proceeding in accordance with the planning

permission, can be overridden. The rights will be overridden whether the Council or a party deriving title from us undertakes the development.

13.   The power contained in Section 237 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) does not remove the legitimate rights of parties to compensation, which may arise from the interference with their rights, but it does remove the potential for excessive claims and it also removes the potential for such parties to frustrate the development by obtaining an injunction to prevent the interference with their rights.

14.   If any affected parties claim compensation, then the Council will be liable to pay such compensation. It may be possible to obtain insurance against compensation claims, if required.

15.   Once the land has been appropriated for planning purposes, the Council will need to use an appropriate power to dispose of the land, when required. Section 233 of the 1990 Act authorises the disposal of land that is held by the Council for planning purposes, subject to the Secretary of State's consent for any disposal at less than the best consideration that could reasonably be achieved.

16.   Any decision of the Council can be judicially reviewed. Any judicial review must be lodged as soon as possible after the decision is made and, in any event, not later than three months after the date of the decision. Housing PFI guidance is that judicial review periods should have expired before the contract is entered into. The earliest date for signing the PFI contract will therefore be three months after this decision to appropriate the land.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

17.   There are no known environmental impacts of the proposal.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

18.   There are no significant equalities impacts of the proposal.

Risk Assessment

19.   By appropriating the land the Council is, in effect, transferring risk from the PFI scheme to the Council's general risks. However, in doing so, the overall level of risk is significantly reduced and this is considered to be the appropriate course of action. As stated above, it may be possible to obtain insurance for the Council's retained risks.

Financial Implications

20.   If any owners do claim compensation under Section 237 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), then the Council is liable to pay such compensation. However, the power removes the potential for excessive claims and it may be possible to obtain insurance against compensation claims, if required.

Legal Implications

21.   The Council has taken external advice on its legal powers for appropriating and then disposing of land for planning purposes. Those powers are summarised in the body of the report.

22.   There are no significant human rights or ethical governance implications affecting this report.

Options Considered

23.   The alternative to appropriating land as set out in this report would be for SHL to seek insurance in the event of any beneficiaries of the rights or covenants preventing or delaying development of the sites. Within a PFI scheme this would have significant consequential impacts in terms of loss of income as well as, potentially, of breaking the funding agreement or leading to contract termination.

24.   However, any such insurance could not prevent the worst case scenario of homes being lost from the scheme and, therefore, the appropriation route is preferable.

Conclusions

25.   The proposed appropriation and disposal, for planning purposes, of two PFI development sites to be provided by the Council is the recommended way of resolving the risks, in respect of rights and covenants, affecting those sites.

Graham Hogg
Service Director, Housing

Report Author:

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chris.trowell@wiltshire.gov.uk

20 April 2010

Background Papers

None.

Appendices
Appendix 1 – Broad Street car park, Trowbridge indicative site plan

Appendix 2 – Paxcroft Mead, Hilperton indicative site plan

Broad Street, Trowbridge
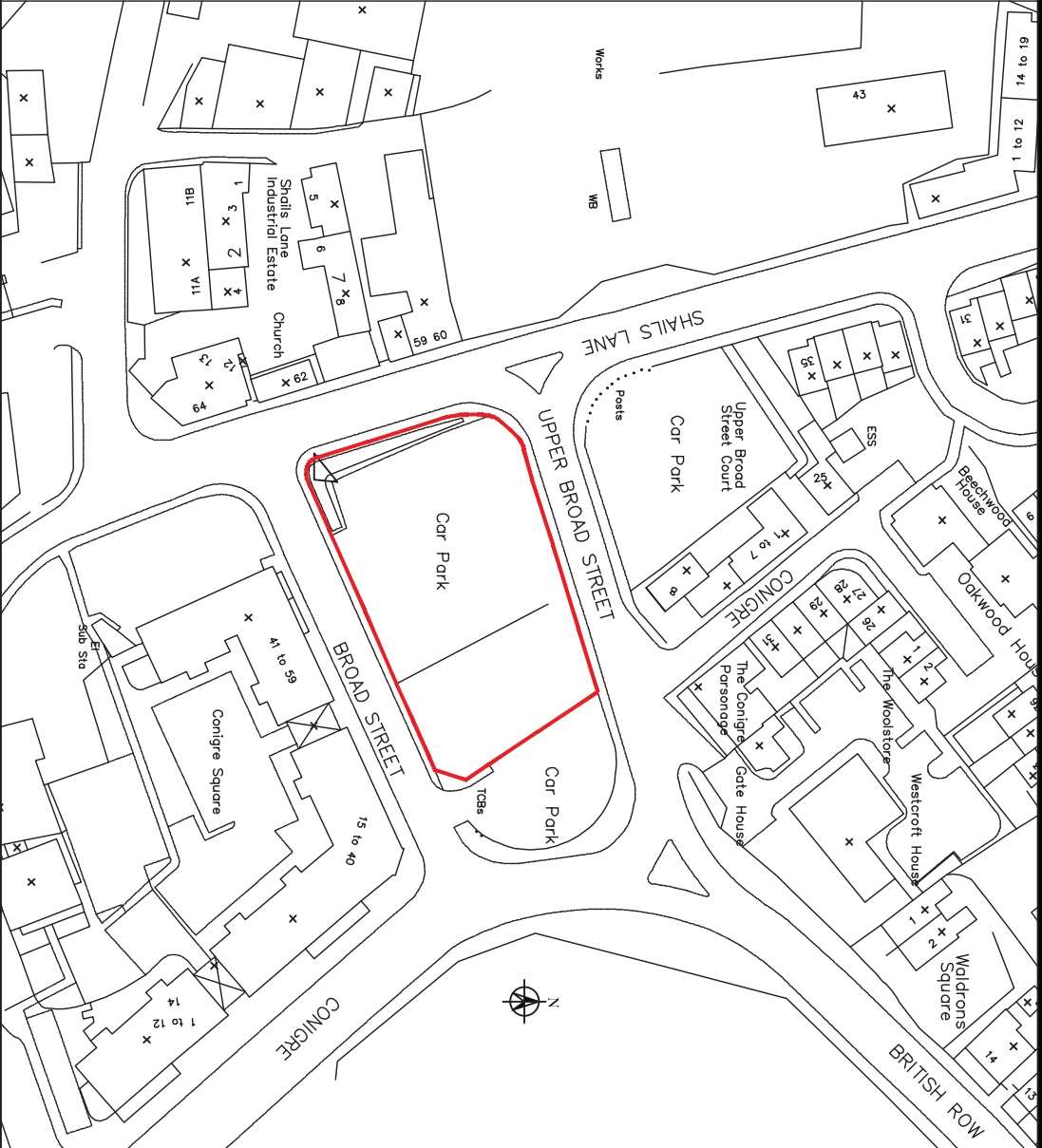
Title Plan

DRAWING TITLE: Title Plan
DRAWING NO: Broad/115
DATE: March 2010
SCALE: 1:1250 @ A4
DRAWN: MED
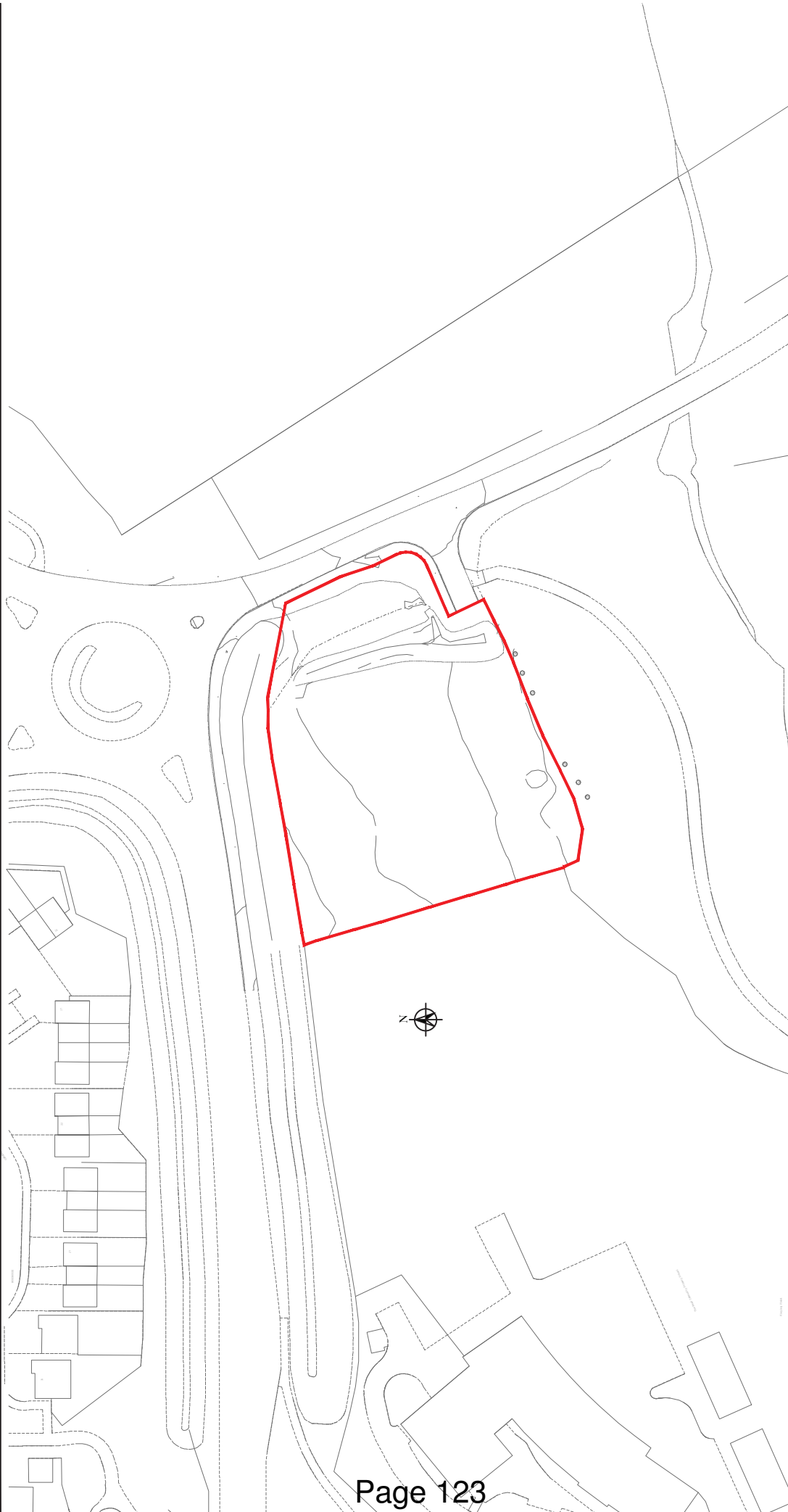
Works

WB

43

14 to 19

1 to 12

1 to 12

31

Shails Lane
Industrial Estate

11B

1

5

3

6

2

7

11A

4

8

13

12

59 60

64

62

Church

SHAILS LANE

Posts

UPPER BROAD STREET

Upper Broad
Street Court

Car Park

35

ESS

25

Car Park

41 to 59

Sub Sta

Conigre Square

BROAD STREET

15 to 40

TCBs

Car Park

CONIGRE

8

7

1

4

The Conigre
Parsonage

The Conigre
Gate House

29

28

27

26

1

2

The Woolstore

Beechwood
House

6

Oakwood House

Westcroft House

1 to 12

14

CONIGRE

Waldrons
Square

1

2

14

BRITISH ROW

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Paxcroft Mead, Hilperton

Page 123

Title Plan

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **The Next Steps in Developing the Wiltshire Core Strategy**

Cabinet member: **Councillor John Brady –**
Economic Development, Planning and Housing

Key Decision: **No**

Executive Summary

This report sets out the next steps in the preparation of a draft Core Strategy for Wiltshire following the consultation undertaken late 2009 on 'Wiltshire 2026 - Planning for Wiltshire's Future', which generated a good response. It recommends that the responses are reported to the Community Area Boards (excluding south Wiltshire) during the May/June cycle of meetings and that further public consultation is undertaken to identify the best option for strategic site(s) at Chippenham. It also considers that issues surrounding proposals at the west of Swindon should be considered through a joint working party with Swindon Borough Council.

It is important that timely progress continues to be made in preparing a Core Strategy for Wiltshire in order to ensure that a sound framework is in place to clarify where, when and how new growth should be accommodated. The timetable for the draft Core Strategy needs to be reviewed in response to the Wiltshire 2026 consultation and further consultation in developing the draft Core Strategy should be targeted to ensure that it is effective and can be undertaken in an efficient way.

Proposal

That Cabinet:

a) notes the overall outcome of the Wiltshire 2026 consultation exercise and approves feedback on the consultation responses to each Community Area Board (outside of south Wiltshire) during the forthcoming May/June 2010 cycle of meetings;

b) approves that a further public consultation exercise be undertaken on the future development options for Chippenham;

c) approves the establishment and operation of a joint working party with Swindon Borough Council to consider and advise on issues relating to the west of Swindon and other trans-boundary issues in accordance

with details to be agreed between the Service Director for Economy and Enterprise (with membership being agreed in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Housing) and Swindon Borough Council subject to prior approval by the Head of Legal Services (Wiltshire Council); and

d) authorises the Service Director for Economy and Enterprise, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to review and update the timetable for the Wiltshire Core Strategy and make this available on the Council's website at the earliest opportunity.

Reason for Proposal

To ensure that progress continues to be made on the preparation of an up to date planning policy framework for Wiltshire in line with the Council's statutory requirements.

Alistair Cunningham
Service Director, Economy and Enterprise

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject:	The Next Steps in Developing the Wiltshire Core Strategy
Cabinet member:	Councillor John Brady – Economic Development, Planning and Housing
Key Decision:	No

Purpose of Report

1. To:

    (i) Inform Cabinet of the overall outcome of the Wiltshire 2026 consultation exercise and seek approval for feedback on the consultation responses to be provided to each Community Area Board (outside of south Wiltshire) during the forthcoming May/June 2010 cycle of meetings;

    (ii) Seek approval to undertake a further public consultation exercise on the future development options for Chippenham and establish a joint working party with Swindon Borough Council to consider issues relating to the west of Swindon; and

    (iii) Seek approval to review the Core Strategy timetable and delegate authority to the Service Director for Economy and Enterprise, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to make this available on the Council's website at the earliest opportunity.

Background

2. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council is required to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF) for its area. Core Strategies are the principal Development Plan Documents in the LDF setting out a long term vision for the area and providing strategic policies and proposals to deliver the vision.

3. On 20 October 2009, the Cabinet approved 'Wiltshire 2026 - Planning for the Wiltshire's Future' for the purposes of public consultation. This document was an important step in the preparation of a Wiltshire-wide Core Strategy. It brought together the work undertaken by the former Wiltshire district councils and suggested how the employment and housing needs of north, west and east Wiltshire might be met in the period up to 2026. The document set out the Council's thinking based on the evidence

collected at that point in time and provided the opportunity for local communities to consider whether that understanding was right.

4.   A separate core strategy for South Wiltshire, corresponding to the former Salisbury district area, has been prepared to address the pressing need for additional housing land in that area. This South Wiltshire Core Strategy is currently undergoing its examination before an independent planning inspector. It is anticipated that the spatially distinctive elements of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy will be incorporated into the Wiltshire-wide Core Strategy.

5.   The public consultation on Wiltshire 2026 ran from 30 October until 31 December 2009, although responses received after the closing date have also been taken into consideration.

Main Considerations for the Council

Overall Consultation Response

6.   Overall the consultation was successful with formal written responses received from some 800 individuals and organisations, collectively comprising several thousand separate points. Significant numbers of comments were also made through the exhibitions and workshops. The consultation has provided further evidence that will enable the Council to develop its understanding of the issues facing Wiltshire's communities. Although the responses are currently being analysed in detail, from the initial analysis it is clear that there are no fundamental issues to the proposals presented with the exception of the strategic site options at Chippenham and west of Swindon.

7.   It is proposed that an overview of the responses received in relation to each community area (outside of south Wiltshire) should be presented to each Community Area Board during the cycle of meetings beginning in May 2010.

Chippenham

8.   From the consultation response we have a better understanding of the issues surrounding the potential growth of Chippenham. While there was considerable opposition to the level of development proposed for the town, new evidence was also submitted to suggest that development should take place to the south of the town. Many of the respondents considered that the alternative options, particularly the option of a southern expansion of the town, are comparable to, if not better than the preferred option, particularly in terms of its overall sustainability and viability. In order to identify the best option for a strategic site(s) at Chippenham it is proposed that a further consultation, incorporating a finer grain analysis, be undertaken within the Chippenham area. It is intended that the detail of this consultation will be brought to Cabinet for approval in early summer.

West of Swindon

9.   For the west of Swindon, Wiltshire 2026 built upon an earlier targeted consultation undertaken in February 2009 (agreed to be undertaken by the Implementation Executive, 10 December 2008). As a result of these two stages of consultation, the Council has a sound understanding of the issues surrounding the growth of Swindon in Wiltshire and the substantive opposition to the development of 3,000 additional dwellings.

10. Notwithstanding the future status of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), there is still uncertainty as to whether the area of search at west of Swindon will form part of the RSS when (and if) it is finally published. The Government Office for the South West has commissioned additional Sustainability Appraisal work to test the reasonable alternatives for the areas of search, including west of Swindon, within the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the RSS. The outcome of this work is still not known and it is unclear whether there will be the opportunity to comment on the findings*.*

11. In light of the above, it is not necessary to undertake a further round of public consultation in developing proposals for the draft Core Strategy in relation to the west of Swindon. Instead, it is recommended that a working party between Wiltshire Council Councillors (possibly of the Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area Board and Councillors from Swindon Borough Council, supported by officers, is established in order to consider these and other trans-boundary issues further. It is intended that the working party would operate on an informal basis having a technical and advisory role only. This form of joint working is highly encouraged particularly in terms of achieving outcomes and efficient use of resources. The more detailed arrangements would be agreed between the authorities by way of delegated authority to the Service Director for Economy and Enterprise in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Planning and Housing. These details will be subject to approval by the Head of Legal Services (Wiltshire Council).

Core Strategy Timetable

12. The Wiltshire 2026 consultation document outlined a vision for Wiltshire together with strategic policy objectives, and indicated the possible distribution of housing and employment sites. Once the consultation response and further evidence has been taken into account, the next stage in preparing the draft Core Strategy process is the preparation of draft strategic policies, which will ensure the implementation of the objectives.

13. The October Cabinet report anticipated that a further round of public consultation would take place in spring 2010 to focus on strategic policies for the draft Core Strategy. However, in light of the substantive evidence gathered through the consultation response (and in addition to the proposed consultation in paragraph 8) it is proposed to undertake targeted consultation, working with key stakeholders, including Town and Parish

Councils. This will be a more appropriate mechanism for testing draft policies and further proposals than undertaking a further wholesale public consultation exercise that would contribute towards consultation fatigue and be an inefficient use of resources.

14. Taking into account the proposal to undertake further consultation at Chippenham and the substantive response to the consultation requiring analysis, the programme for the Wiltshire Core Strategy needs to be reviewed in consultation with the Government Office for the South West. Government policy requires any slippage to the agreed timetable (i.e. as set out within the Council's Local Development Scheme) for core strategy preparation to be publicised. The timetable is currently being updated. As such, it is proposed that delegated authority is given to the Service Director for Economy and Enterprise, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, to make this available on the Council's website at the earliest opportunity.

15. In addition, consideration will need to be given to the programme to refresh Wiltshire's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) that is currently being developed. Given the relationship of the Core Strategy and the SCS, developing the draft Core Strategy and 'refreshed' SCS together will enable us to ensure that the key spatial planning objectives for the area continue to be aligned with the priorities identified in the SCS. Clearly this needs to be tempered with the requirement for the Core Strategy to be in accordance with Government policy.

16. It is anticipated that we will be able to bring a draft of the Core Strategy to Cabinet in early 2011. More detail of the revised timetable will be circulated to all Councillors via a briefing note and published on the Council's website during May.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

17. The Core Strategy will have major implications for the physical, economic and social environment of Wiltshire. To ensure that it fully incorporates sustainability principles, it is being prepared in tandem with a Sustainability Appraisal, as well as a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

18. The Core Strategy seeks to take account of the needs of all the members of the Wiltshire community. A full Equalities Impact Assessment will be prepared and accompany the Core Strategy when it is submitted for examination.

Options and Risk Assessment

19. The Council has a statutory duty to prepare a Core Strategy. The options concern the level of public consultation to be applied to the further stages of the process. It is suggested that the course set out in this paper best fits the need to continue to make progress with the preparation of the Core

Strategy, while seeking to take account of the need to involve the Wiltshire community and statutory consultees.

20. It is particularly important the progress continues to be made with the Wiltshire Core Strategy. New housing land needs to be identified in order to ensure that an appropriate amount of housing supply is available, and economic growth is supported. The Core Strategy will provide a clear strategy for where, how and when new housing should be provided. Without a supply of suitable land, Wiltshire is vulnerable (particularly at Chippenham) from speculative applications from developers and at risk of the appeal process and associated costs. Risks include development which undermines the Council's strategic vision (emerging by way of the Core Strategy). Such development may not provide key infrastructure and/or fall below expectations of sustainability.

Financial Implications

21. The cost of preparing the additional consultation document and the arrangements for the additional consultation will be met from existing and agreed budgets. Failure to prepare a Core Strategy may result in a substantial funding gap in the provision of future schools, roads, open space and other infrastructure.

Legal Implications

22. The preparation of a Core Strategy in accordance with the Council's Local Development Scheme (including the time scales within it) is a statutory duty. The public and targeted consultation proposed is being designed in accordance with best practice, including the Council's own recent experience, and with advice received from the Government Office for the South West. The Secretary of State has broad powers of intervention where local planning authorities fail to comply with statutory duties in relation to the LDF.

23. Joint-working arrangements with Swindon Borough Council by way of a party operating on an advisory basis only do not need to be formally constituted pursuant to a statutory framework, although a memorandum of understanding should be agreed between the authorities, the details of which should first be approved by the Head of Legal Services of Wiltshire Council.

Conclusions

24. There has been a good response to the Wiltshire 2026 consultation document. It is proposed that the responses for each Community Area (excluding south Wiltshire) are reported to their respective Community Area Boards during the May/June cycle. In addition, the consultation has indicated the need to undertake further public consultation within the Chippenham area to identify the best option for strategic site(s) at the town. Although proposals at the west of Swindon remain contentious further consultation is not considered appropriate at this stage, instead it is

proposed that the issues surrounding these should be considered through a joint working party with Swindon Borough Council.

25. In light of the substantial consultation response and proposal to undertaken further consultation in the Chippenham area the timetable for the Core Strategy should be reviewed. However, to minimise the delay in developing a Core Strategy for Wiltshire, further consultation in developing the draft Core Strategy should be targeted to ensure that it is effective and can be undertaken in an efficient way.

Alistair Cunningham
Service Director, Economy and Enterprise

Tel. No. 01225 713203

March 2010

Background Papers

Responses received to the Wiltshire 2026 consultation exercise

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **Workplace Transformation Programme - Office Decant Proposals**

Cabinet member: **Councillor John Noeken – Resources**

Key Decision: **No**

Executive Summary

To explain options for decanting Wiltshire Council staff from Old County Hall, the MECH building and Browfort, Devizes during the refurbishment planned as part of the Workplace Transformation Programme. Officers have identified two main approached to the relocation, each with advantages and disadvantages, namely;

- Two large phases of works (MECH building, followed by Old County Hall), requiring a high number of staff to be decanted.
- Multiple small phases of work, requiring smaller numbers of staff to be decanted to alternative accommodation.

Consideration of these options has identified significant advantages in decanting in two large phases, notably with regards to minimised disruption to staff, lower overall risks from building and ICT tasks, and the possibility of a more efficient, radical refurbishment programme. In light of this analysis Strategic Property Services have identified that the current George Ward site, in Melksham, which will become vacant in July 2010, would deliver the required capacity.

Proposals

a. That Cabinet approves the proposal to provide decant accommodation at the existing George Ward School, Melksham, and authorise officers to develop these plans further, including the consultation on, and development of appropriate methods to minimise the impact on staff through this period.

b. That Cabinet note that the governance and reporting line for this proposal is within the Workplace Transformation Programme, the Board of which will receive regular reports on progress and issues from the Programme Director.

c. Cabinet are asked to provide an opinion on where they and the council's Chief Officers should be located during this period.

Reasons for Proposal

1) Cabinet has previously approved the Workplace Transformation Programme (WTP), and within it the refurbishment of County Hall and Browfort office buildings.

2) Preliminary work has established proposals for the most effective approach to the required decant of Staff from Old County Hall, MECH and Browfort, which will provide modern fit-for-purpose Staff accommodation during and following the works.

3) Whilst the proposed decant solution can be delivered within the overall budgetary provision delegated to the Programme Board, the impact of the proposal on staff and members is considered significant enough to request that Cabinet confirm their approval of the proposal.

Dr Carlton Brand
Director of Resources

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **Workplace Transformation Programme - Office Decant Proposals**

Cabinet member: Councillor John Noeken – Resources

Key Decision: No

Purpose of Report

1. To propose an approach to decanting staff during refurbishment works at County Hall and Browfort related to the Workplace Transformation Programme.

2. To request Councillors' approval to proceed with the implementation of the proposal, taking note of the key areas of work involved.

Background

3. Cabinet has previously approved the Workplace Transformation Programme (WTP), and within it the refurbishment of County Hall and Browfort office buildings to provide modern, fit for purpose office accommodation for Council staff, allied to flexible working solutions. The authority to progress individual elements of the programme was delegated to the Workplace Transformation Programme Board who have identified an approach for decant.

4. The nature of the construction work to be undertaken on both County Hall and Browfort sites will be disruptive and take place over a long period of time. Both for staff wellbeing and operational delivery reasons it is not desirable to have staff remain within the Main Extension County Hall (MECH) during the rebuilding work, and hence the WTP finances included budgetary provision for decanting staff off-site during the works.

5. Preliminary work has since progressed to establish the most effective way in which to carry out the works to County Hall and Browfort. Whilst the proposed decant solution can be delivered within the overall budgetary provision delegated to the Programme Board, the impact of the proposal on staff and members is considered significant enough to request that Cabinet confirm their approval of the proposal.

Main Considerations for the Council

6. There are two main ways in which the refurbishment work to County Hall could be arranged:

a. Two large phases of works (MECH building, followed by Old County Hall), requiring a high number of staff to be decanted;

b. Multiple small phases of work, requiring smaller numbers of staff to be decanted to alternative accommodation.

7. The benefits of two large phases of work are considered to be significant:

    • Health and safety risks inherent in carrying out work within an occupied building would be minimised – although some works in occupied buildings will be unavoidable at times, these can be tightly controlled and dealt with as exceptions

    • The overall level of risk in the refurbishment programme would be significantly reduced, as individual areas of work to the buildings can be carried out consecutively, enabling contractors to carry out similar elements of work in a coherent programme, rather than in a more fragmented, piecemeal way

    • The number of staff who would be disrupted by the actual works (eg. noise, vibration and dust) would be minimised;

    • The requirement for out of hours building work would be reduced, as the need to plan disruptive work around staff working hours will be reduced, but not removed, leading to a more efficient building project operation

    • The frequency of staff moves to fit around smaller phases of works will be reduced

    • A far more holistic view of the buildings can be taken in designing solutions for the refurbishment – for example, a sustainable, low carbon non-air conditioned solution can be explored in the MECH building by introducing the ability to form penetrations through each floor which is only possible via a large scale decant programme

    • Increased ability to provide early accommodation for partner organisations within plans

    • Better strategic planning for ICT infrastructure to remain secure during the works

    • Reduced ICT risk and workload pressure

8. On this basis, decant solutions that would enable this larger-phase approach, have been explored. Such an approach requires temporary accommodation to be available for a period of around two years from the end of 2010, and to provide approximately 600 workstations. This number of workstations, assuming a level of flexible working through staff and management behaviour, could accommodate up to 900 staff, and therefore enable the entire MECH building in Trowbridge to be vacated. This level of capacity would also provide decant space for staff from Browfort to enable a similar refurbishment approach to be taken there.

9. Strategic Property Services have reviewed the options for decant and have identified that the current George Ward site, in Melksham, which will become vacant in July 2010 when the school relocates to the new Melksham Oak Community School would delivery the required capacity. Other alternatives considered are covered in paragraph 22 below.

10. The following key points are relevant to the proposal to utilise George Ward for decant and the approach to delivering it:

a. The existing school buildings will be pragmatically refurbished to provide accommodation that is fit for use as offices, with specific adaptations for accessibility made as necessary.

b. All office space will include tea and coffee making facilities.

c. Accommodation used within the school will be developed on an open plan basis and there is adequate provision for a wide range of meeting room sizes.

d. A project manager from within the WTP team will be allocated to draw together the various strands necessary to ensure a successful occupation of the building and adherence to costs and deadlines;

e. An effective staff communication and consultation strategy will be required assuming Cabinet approval is granted. This will need to include extensive involvement with the Trade Union and the Staff Disability Forum. WTP staff events are planned in June to communicate further with staff on a range of issues, including decant.

f. Consultation with services to establish their location requirements for staff will be undertaken.

g. A transport strategy will be established to ensure staff access to the school site is maintained, and that those without cars are provided for, for instance a staff bus, serving a route linking Trowbridge, Melksham and Devizes could be provided.

h. HR will be involved in ensuring that existing polices in relation to staff relocation are followed.

i. A decision is required on whether specific groups of officers, such as corporate directors, should remain at County Hall throughout the project is required. Consequently, Members are asked to provide an opinion on where they and chief officers should be based throughout the duration of the works.

j. ICT equipment provided to staff when decanted to the school site will be new, and meet the WTP specification developed to maximise the uptake of flexible working. This equipment will then be relocated into the newly refurbished office accommodation on completion;

k. It is proposed that existing furniture will be relocated to the school site as part of the decant moves, but will be rationalised as far as possible to maximise the efficiency of the space provided.

l. The Facilities Management (FM) model to be applied will be in line with that being delivered in Bourne Hill, with a dedicated FM officer on site to respond to staff needs, with on-site security provided.

m. Planning consent will be required for a temporary change of use, and initial discussions with planning officers have taken place. Further work is now required to determine the detailed approach to developing a planning application. This approach will determine the planning constraints on the number of parking spaces provided on the site, which is not physically constrained. Possible traffic surveys and neighbour consultation may take place as part of the planning application process.

n. The buildings in the poorest condition on the site, which are also surplus to the accommodation requirements, will be demolished to remove the potential for vandalism.

o. An Economic Impact Assessment will be carried out by the Economy and Enterprise Team to enable the impact of relocating a large number of staff out of Trowbridge to be understood. The consequential benefit to Melksham should also be captured.

p. The management of this decant solution would be a considerable draw on resources within existing WTP workstreams, and will be planned to minimise any overlap with Bourne Hill. Such an approach is only possible with one large decant site.

q. The existing school canteen can be reutilised to provide canteen facilities for staff.

r. Only one ICT connection to the site is required to be provided and managed.

s. The decant into one location with large, flexible spaces provides the ability for services to restructure early in the WTP process, rather than react to being moved in smaller teams where flexibility may not be achievable.

t. The site is not expected to offer customer-facing services – these would be based entirely from Bradley Road for the Western area. The provision of Customer Services during the refurbishment works at Browfort remains to be planned in detail, although early conversations with the Customer Access workstream lead have occurred.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

11. The impact on the environment of this proposal will be considered more fully in the coming stage of development. However, key areas of note are:

- Whilst a location in Melksham may cause some staff further travel, for others it may be closer to home.
- The implementation of this proposal will encourage greater flexible working as a stepping stone to achieving the objectives of WTP, and this in itself is considered to reduce the Council's overall environmental impact.
- Whilst the buildings at the George Ward are not particularly energy efficient, their occupation for decant purposes enables other retained Council buildings to be refurbished with energy efficiency in mind, which would not otherwise be the case. Where refurbishment works are undertaken at George Ward (including the building services), opportunities to improve energy efficiency will be considered.
- The provision of a staff bus service, if decided appropriate, will bring with it an environmental impact, but may additionally provide an alternative form of transport to the car for many staff based in Trowbridge.
- The complete decant from MECH will represent a significant reduction in the council's environmental impact which will go some way to offsetting the additional impact of the George Ward site.
- The complete decant from MECH offers broader opportunities with regard to environmental and energy solutions than would otherwise be

possible, this should enable us to achieve a significant reduction in the building's carbon footprint and running costs.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

12. Early consultation with the Staff Disability Forum has enabled initial issues to be captured, and further work is planned with this group and Trade Unions to ensure that staff views are taken on board as far as possible. The George Ward site does provide a large amount of fully accessible floor space, and isolated works will seek to maximise accessibility. However, there will be areas of the building that will be occupied as offices that may remain inaccessible due to planning or cost constraints.

13 It will be necessary to undertake consultation with staff and the Trade Unions to develop and assess methods of minimising the impact on staff during the decant period.

Risk Assessment

14. The proposal is considered to significantly reduce the cost and programme risk of the individual refurbishment projects planned through WTP.

15. An outline risk review has been carried out on the decant project, and an ongoing risk register will be maintained, which will be summarised on the overall WTP risk register as appropriate.

16 The proposal is considered to minimise the impact of the refurbishment programme on service delivery and will maximise the opportunity for collocation with partners at the earliest possible date.

Financial Implications

16. The overall cost of the proposal is forecast to be £2.4m, and is covered within currently approved budgets. These budgets are held either within WTP or represent items such as demolition of buildings, which are considered to be works that enhance the value of the asset prior to sale.

17. This proposal is considered to offer the best overall balance between cost, service delivery opportunity and staff health and wellbeing on the basis of the comparison contained in Appendix A.

18. The Facilities Management costs associated with running the site are considered to be manageable within the savings available from the reduced costs running costs through this period of the existing accommodation at County Hall and Browfort.

19. The George Ward site already has outline planning consent for residential use, and the funds from the sale are largely earmarked to the construction of the replacement school.

20.   However, in the current economic climate, it is considered likely that the site will realise a greater receipt when it is sold in two or three years' time, than it would now. This decant proposal therefore provides a financial benefit to the Council in due course, but also ensures that the site will not sit vacant for a long period of time with the associated risk of vandalism and other antisocial behaviour developing in the local area.

Legal Implications

21.   None identified.

Options Considered

22.   The alternative options considered are summarised at Appendix A.

DR Carlton Brand
Director of Resources

Report Author
Neil Ward
Corporate Building Manager
Tel No. 01225 713298
Date of first draft: 29 March 2010

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

None

Appendices

Appendix A - Decant Options for Workplace Transformation programme

Appendix A - Decant Options for Workplace Transformation programme

Options	Est cost	Advantages	Disadvantages	Feedback
1. External office building which would accommodate 600 workstations.	£2.15million + running costs + dilapidations	One IT line required One decant location to be managed. Increases team co-location. Fully supports service redesign and business transformation. Will allow the build programme to be delivered within the timeframe. Minimal build work required.	No current availability within the area. The cost, minimum of £900,000 an annum plus outgoings. Dilapidations costs would have to be factored in at the end of the lease period.	There are currently no available buildings for this number of workstations. The nearest we can get is 50 workstations so even if possible, we would require 12 sites with 12 times the ICT and support costs. The indicative cost assumes we could find one large site and includes rent for 2 years: £1.8 million (for 60,000 sq ft) ICT costs: £350K
2. Multiple external sites which will accommodate a total of 600 workstations.	£2.4million + running costs + dilapidations	Possibly still within Trowbridge. Minimal build work required.	Will require multiple IT links. Teams couldn't be co-located. Would limit parking. Will increase ICT/Facility support costs. Will significantly reduce the service redesign and business transformation opportunity. The rental cost, minimum of £900,000 an annum plus outgoings.	Includes rent for 2 years: £1.8 million (for 6 buildings at 10,000 sq ft each) ICT costs: £640K

| 3. George Ward School. | £2.45m + running costs | One IT line required.
One decant location to be managed.
Less risk as we own the building.
Would allow sale to be postponed, allowing time for the market to
recover and maximise capital receipt, which is recommended by Property Services.
Empty sites get vandalised, therefore our occupation will be a positive.
Parking available.
Local transport links available.
Local amenities (shops/cafes/leisure facilities).
Increase team co-location.
Lower overall cost.
Result in a shorter build programme & build costs.
Kitchen could provide a interim catering solution.
This option would reduce running costs overall
Sports hall would offer interim storage facility.
Fully supports early service redesign and business transformation. | Work required to make it suitable for office accommodation.
Extensive Asbestos removal required.
Planning consent required.
Need to support some staff in travel arrangements and time | Estimated cost includes all build work costs and ICT costs.
This would allow complete decant of both County Hall and Browfort.(Excluding members and Senior Chief officers)
The school is due to be empty from 9th July, allowing a 6 month period to carry out any work.
To be considered:
Ridge feasibility study on suitability
Change of use planning consent
A travel plan – possible use of minibus transfers to and from Browfort/Trowbridge.
Would allow a more radical change to MECH in relation to energy and carbon efficiency reducing long term costs. Will be fully DDA compliant and has sufficient space to allow the continuation of a staff 'canteen' and rest rooms. It is unlikely that any other option would offer this.
Elements of the cost (such as asbestos removal) would be incurred in any event as part of presale works, leading to lower overall cost than other options. |

		Any public access will be moved to Bradley Rd, creating a central public access point in Trowbridge.		
4.General re-shuffles within existing buildings	Significant costs as we will be using inherently unsuitable locations	Will not cost as much in accommodation costs. Will still need to take on any other buildings.	Will not accommodate decant of large numbers. Will require a large number of small moves over many years. Will prolong build programme significantly and not meet programme timeline. Will increase ICT/Facility support costs. Will significantly reduce the service redesign and business transformation opportunity and remove the opportunity for the provision of partner accommodation in County Hall. Will require staff to operate services from what would amount to a building site for three to four years with increased health and	Will only make space for an extra 150 - 200 workstations - around a floor of MECH at a time – which would not support service transformation or collocation. Estimated cost includes move and ICT costs. Additional costs will be incurred in retaining existing external leased accommodation for longer. Even with careful planning, the noise transference and general inconvenience of the building work for staff will be significant. The need to maximise utilisation would potentially delay the reopening of the new Library and Customer Access facilities at County Hall. Would limit the opportunity to maximise the overall carbon and energy efficiency of the refurbishment. Will significantly impact on the possibility of early collocation of partners on the

			safety risks	County Hall campus. Has significantly higher ICT risks relating to both the provision of extra capacity in the building and the construction and delivery of the main ICT server and switch room.
5. Refurbish Chapmans building	£200k	On County Hall campus. Parking available.	Will only provide a small area of desking, due to lack of ventilated space. Work would be required to make it suitable for office space. Currently have a pest infestation. Insufficient toilets – outside toilets? Asbestos in internal walls. Inadequate lighting, heating & cooling. Lack of DDA compliance. Will prolong build programme. Will increase ICT/Facility support costs. Will significantly reduce the service redesign and business transformation opportunities. Will remove the opportunity for early collocation of services.	Will only create very limited numbers of desks.Estimated cost includes move and ICT costs. Additional costs will be incurred in retaining existing external leased accommodation for longer. Even with careful planning, the noise transference and general inconvenience of the building work for staff will be significant. The need to maximise utilisation would potentially delay the reopening of the new Library and Customer Access facilities at County Hall. Would limit the opportunity to maximise the overall carbon and energy efficiency of the refurbishment. Will significantly impact on the possibility of early collocation of partners on the County Hall campus. Has significantly higher ICT risks relating to both the provision of extra capacity in the building and the construction and delivery of the main ICT server and switch room. Will extend the

				build programme by several years.
6. Temporary buildings on Bradley Rd car park or other council owned car parks.	Significant	Less risk as it is on our land and therefore under our control. Local transport links available. Still within Trowbridge. Will allow the build programme to be delivered on time.	Will require multiply IT links. Teams couldn't be co-located. Would limit parking. Will increase ICT/Facility support costs. Will significantly reduce the service redesign and business transformation.	To be considered: Planning consent Feasibility on the number of pratton buildings the car park could accommodate. Impact on local residents
7. Old Town Hall	£2 Million +	Local. Make use of a currently vacant building.	Will cost £2 million to make it suitable for office use. Currently used by the coroner for military inquests. Will prolong the build programme. Significant accessibility issues Capacity thought to be low – less than 250 staff	Has significantly higher ICT risks relating to both the provision of extra capacity in the building and the construction and delivery of the main ICT server and switch room. Will extend the build programme by several years.

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Wiltshire council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **Homes 4 Wiltshire Service Review**

Cabinet member: **Councillor John Brady**
                      Economic Development, Planning and Housing

Key Decision: **No**

Executive Summary

The Review of the Homes4Wiltshire service has been carried out in consultation with the Homes4Wiltshire Partnership, stakeholders and service users to address issues arising during the first 12 months of operation.

Recommendations from this review have informed proposed revisions to the Homes4Wiltshire Policy, together with further recommendations for how to progress the operation of the Homes4Wiltshire service in order to provide an efficient service to partners and service users. An action plan is attached, setting out the proposed process for implementation of the recommended changes.

Proposal

That Cabinet:

a)   approves the amended Homes 4 Wiltshire policy and agrees the implementation of the Action Plan

b)   gives delegated authority to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhood and Planning in consultation with the Cabinet member for Economic Development, Planning and Highways to make further amendments to Sections 6.7 and 6.8 of the Homes 4 Wiltshire policy if the Homes 4 Wiltshire Partnership decides that landlords should carry out the shortlisting function

Reason for Proposal

To enable amendments to the Homes4Wiltshire Policy, following an extensive consultation, which will enable Homes4Wiltshire to provide a better and more efficient service to customers and partners alike.

In order to retain credibility with our partners, stakeholder, service users and the general public, it is important that we act upon recommendations resulting from the public consultation that formed a part of the Review.

Graham Hogg
Service Director, Housing

Wiltshire council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject: **Homes 4 Wiltshire Service Review**

Cabinet member: **Councillor John Brady**
Economic Development, Planning and Housing

Key Decision: **No**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To advise Cabinet of the outcome of the Homes 4 Wiltshire Service Review and to seek endorsement of the resulting revisions to the Homes 4 Wiltshire Policy.

2. Background

2.1 Following the successful launch of the Homes 4 Wiltshire county wide allocations service in March 2009, it was felt that an early review of the service would assist in the way we give access to council and housing association homes.

2.2 An extensive consultation exercise was carried out earlier this year, in which service users, landlords, voluntary organisations and other stakeholders were asked for their views about how the service was working and any suggested improvements that could be made.

2.3 A publicly available consultation document was drawn up from this initial consultation, and responses were invited from Wiltshire residents.

2.4 Another driver for this early review was the publication in December 2009 of a new Code of Guidance, "Fair and Flexible", and we were eager to ensure that our service acts in accordance with this latest guidance.

3. Main Considerations for the Cabinet

3.1 Homes 4 Wiltshire works in partnership with social landlords across Wiltshire to allocate social housing fairly and transparently. The proposed policy changes and recommendations in the attached Action Plan have been drawn up following a review of the service, following consultation with partner landlords, stakeholders, service users and the general public.

3.2 The proposed policy changes take account of the new Code of Guidance for the allocation of social housing by local authorities, "Fair and Flexible".

3.3 Implementation of the changes recommended in the Action Plan will lead to an improved service for partners and customers alike.

4. Environmental Impact of the Proposal

4.1 Not considered applicable

5. Equality and Diversity Impact of the Proposal

5.1 The attached policy aims to deliver quality services without prejudice and discrimination to meet the needs of all the community, regardless of age, cultural or ethnic background, disability, gender, marital status, religious or political persuasion or sexual orientation and will adhere to the equality and diversity policy developed by Wiltshire Council.

5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out during the Review of the Service (Appendix 3 attached), and recommendations from that Assessment have been incorporated into the policy amendments.

6. Risk Assessment

6.1 The potential risk of not approving the amendments to the Homes 4 Wiltshire Policy are that:

- Wiltshire Council would not have an allocations policy that complies with the latest Government Code of Guidance
- Homes 4 Wiltshire would lose credibility with partners, stakeholders, service users and the general public if it carried out a consultation exercise and failed to act on the recommendations resulting from that consultation

7. Financial Implications

7.1 None of the recommendations put forward by the Homes 4 Wiltshire Partnership are expected to increase costs in the revenue budgets of Wiltshire Council.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 All Housing Authorities must comply with the provisions of Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and must have and publish an allocation scheme determining the priorities and the procedure to be followed in the allocation of Social Housing.

8.2 Under the act all Housing Authorities must also have regard to Guidance issued by the Secretary of State from time to time.

9. Options Considered

9.1 See Appendix 4 – Outcome of proposals considered as part of the Homes 4 Wiltshire Review.

10.   Conclusion

10.1   It is requested that Cabinet approve the amended Homes 4 Wiltshire policy and agrees the implementation of the Action Plan.

Background Papers

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

Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002
Part VI of the housing act relating to the allocation of accommodation

Code of Guidance for local housing authorities – Allocation of Accommodation

Code of Guidance for local housing authorities – Allocation of Accommodation: Choice Based Lettings

Fair and flexible: statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England

Homes 4 Wiltshire Policy 2009 (Version 8)

Appendices

1.   Homes 4 Wiltshire Service Review Action Plan
2.   Amended Homes 4 Wiltshire Policy
3.   Equality Impact Assessment
4.   Outcome of proposals considered as part of the Homes 4 Wiltshire Review
5.   List of agencies involved in consultation

Graham Hogg
Service Director, Housing

_____

Report Author: Kate Evans
                      Head of Homes 4 Wiltshire
                      01380 734734

Date of report: April 2010

Appendix 1 – Action Plan for Homes 4 Wiltshire Service Review

	Action	Target Date	By Whom	Progress	Completed Date
1	Establish a Marketing Working Group as a sub-group of the H4W Partnership, to look at general marketing issues including advertising properties in local newspapers, reviewing the application form, provision of information to applicants and the inclusion of an interactive map on adverts	Jun-10	All partners		
2	Set a program of bi-monthly H4W Partnership meetings for the next 12 months	Apr-10	KE/TR		
3	Ensure links are readily available from each partner landlord's website to H4W website	Apr-10	RSLs		
4	Refer issues around local connection priority for particular areas to Wiltshire Housing Partnership for consideration		Housing Strategy		
5	Build up stock of photographs of properties for inclusion in adverts	Oct-10	Landlords		
6	Carry out evaluation of Westlea pilot on RSL shortlisting and report back to H4W partnership	May-10	KE/TR		
7	Carry out a mystery shopping exercise to assess any areas of concern with information provided by Customer Services	Jun-10	KE/TR		
8	Provide information to H4W on areas of concern with information provided by Customer Services	Jun-10	RSLs		
9	If necessary, carry out targeted training to address areas of concern	Sep-10	KE/TR		
10	Include as agenda items on future H4W partnership meetings discussion on possible areas of commonality e.g. debt and occupancy levels across partners	Ongoing	KE/TR		
11	Landlords carry out pre-void inspections wherever possible	Immediate	Landlords		
12	Arrange a rolling programme of training for staff across Wiltshire Council, RSLs and stakeholders	Sep-10	KE/TR		
13	Raise issue of research into alternative methods of achieving a mixed, sustainable community balance (as per "Fair and Flexible") with the Strategic Housing Management Group	Sep-10	Derek Streek		
14	Carry out research into incorporating employment (e.g. need to move to take up employment) into the banding structure as per "Fair and Flexible"	Mar-11	Housing Strategy		

1

	Action	Target Date	By Whom	Progress	Completed Date
15	Agree a standard reciprocal agreement to facilitate referrals in case of urgent moves	Sep-10	Landlords		
16	Agree a comprehensive information and data exchange protocol	Sep-10	KE/TR		
17	Amend application form to ensure applicants are fully aware of the extent to which personal data may be shared	Sep-10	KE/TR		
18	Carry out research into housing 16 and 17 year old applicants in the light of the Southwark ruling	Sep-10	Housing Strategy		
19	H4W and Housing Options ensure all support plans and information are up to date and accurate	Ongoing	KE/TR/AR		
20	Performance Monitoring information will be amended to include: Ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality, faith and disability with regard to numbers of applications, bids and allocations	Mar-11	KE/TR		
21	In order to ensure both the delivery of the improvements outlined in this report, and to begin to develop better co-ordination with stakeholders, it is recommended that we create a Housing Commission whose existence will carry on beyond the implementation of this report to pick up improvements and stakeholder involvement generally in the Housing Service over time		Housing Strategy		

	Abritas / website actions	Target Date	By Whom	Progress	Completed Date
22	Create a link from H4W to Homeswapper, with clear advice that this option is only available to social housing tenants	Sep-10	TR/Abritas		
23	Change recent lets data to provide information on the successful applicant rather than the highest ranked bidder	Sep-10	TR/Abritas		
24	Include information on website about usual timescales and possible delays in void process	Sep-10	TR/Abritas		
25	Include information on website to advise applicants that RSLs operate separate allocations policies (available by following links to RSL websites) and policies on mixed communities	Sep-10	TR/Abritas		
26	Improve search facilities on website to allow applicants to search for properties across a wider area	Sep-10	TR/Abritas		

	Policy changes	Policy Reference	Target Date	By Whom	Progress	Completed Date
	Amend policy to include:					
27	Applicants who unreasonably refuse 3 properties for which they have bid will be demoted into the Bronze band for a period of 6 months	6.9	Apr-10	KE		
28	Advertisements will include as much information as possible about available properties, especially regarding the accessibility / adaptations of the property	6.3	Apr-10	KE		
29	Up to 20% of properties may be labelled for Transfer applicants only, in order to make best use of social housing stock in the County	6.4	Apr-10	KE		
30	Households found to be intentionally homeless will be placed in the Silver band as a result of their homelessness. This will not be taken into consideration when assessing multiple needs	4.1	Apr-10	KE		
31	Wiltshire Council will make a decision about whether a homeless applicant's refusal of an offer is reasonable within 3 working days of being notified of the intended refusal	5.4.1	Apr-10	KE		
32	The criteria relating to Sensitive Lets may be applied to the property and immediate surrounding area for a fixed period, and not just to a specific property	6.3	Apr-10	KE		
33	A clause will be added to read "Consideration will be given to extend both the notice period given to accept or reject an offer of accommodation and/or the tenancy commencement date in circumstances where a disabled person(s) requires such additional time on account of their personal circumstances"	6.10	Apr-10	KE		
34	Paragraph 5.5 to be amended to read "housing related debt" instead of arrears	5.5	Apr-10	KE		
35	A clause will be added to read "Applicants who fail to do this may be overlooked by the landlord under their own allocations policy"	5.5	Apr-10	KE		
36	A paragraph will be added to 6.6 Excluded Dwellings to cover technical allocations that are not made through H4W e.g. non-statutory succession	6.6	Apr-10	KE		

	Policy changes	Policy Reference	Target Date	By Whom	Progress	Completed Date
	Amend policy to include:					
37	RSLs operate their own allocations policies in addition to the H4W policy, and different criteria may apply. These policies are available from the RSL on request, and on their websites	1.1	Apr-10	KE		
38	Outcomes - information will be provided about the successful applicant rather than the highest ranked bidder	7	Apr-10	KE		

Appendix 2 – Amended Homes 4 Wiltshire Policy

Policy 2010
Homes 4 Wiltshire

Version 9

STATEMENT ON CHOICE

This policy has been developed to offer a choice of housing options to the widest number of applicants, including those with specialist needs. Applicants are given the opportunity to express their choice of accommodation and this choice will be maximised to cover a wide range of housing options, including RSL vacancies, private rented tenancies, mutual exchanges, supported housing and low cost home ownership options. General affordable housing has been advertised from the launch of the scheme, with the other aspects of the housing options taking a phased approach to advertising. The policy meets the statutory requirements for the allocation of social housing by ensuring that appropriate priority is given to applicants with multiple needs and that reasonable preference is given to those with the most urgent housing need.

The partnership advertises the majority of their vacant stock through the scheme. Applicants are given advice and assistance to allow them to make informed choices about the type of accommodation which best meets their housing needs and aspirations.

The partnership is committed to ensuring that their approach to letting properties is fair, accountable, provides equality of opportunity and maximises the potential for making the best use of all the available housing.

The property adverts provide valuable information about the property attributes, together with links to information about the local neighbourhood, to enable applicants to make informed decisions about which accommodation they want to be offered.

1. INTRODUCTION AND AIMS

A partnership of Wiltshire Council and housing associations within Wiltshire has come together to develop a shared vision and policy for letting and selling affordable housing in Wiltshire. Wiltshire Council together with the housing associations providing affordable homes in Wiltshire have adopted a shared approach to providing a Choice Based Lettings service. This has led to an integrated service across the Wiltshire, which has improved access for housing applicants, created better opportunities for mobility for tenants and housing customers and created opportunities to share advertising and other services. The partnership is called the Homes 4 Wiltshire partnership.

1.1 The Homes 4 Wiltshire Partnership is made up of the following:

Wiltshire Council
New Futures
A2 dominion
English Churches HA
Version 8 Page 4
Fosseway HA
Guinness Trust
Hanover HA
Hastoe HA*
Housing 21 HA

James Butcher HA
Jephson HA
John Groom HA
Kennet Housing Society*
Kingfisher HA
Knightstone HA
New Downland HA
Orbit HA
Raglan HA
Ridgeway Community HA
Salvation Army HA
Sarsen HA
Somer Community Housing Trust
Sanctuary Shaftesbury HA
Signpost Housing Association
South Western Housing Society
Sovereign HA
Swaythling HA*
Westlea HA
Western Challenge HA
West Country HA
Selwood Housing*
Wiltshire Rural HA
* Housing Associations without Charitable Status

Each RSL has its own Allocations Policy, which complements this policy. Applicants should note these different policies mean that different landlords may have different rules about who is eligible for a property. The Allocations Policy for each RSL is available on their website, or by contacting their offices.

1.2 The Aims of Homes 4 Wiltshire

The Homes 4 Wiltshire partnership has met the Government target of having Choice Based Lettings Services in operation in all districts by 2010 and has simultaneously developed a countywide Choice Based Letting Scheme.

The objectives of the shared service are:

- To help meet the housing needs of households across Wiltshire, in the most effective way.
- To maximise housing opportunities for households across Wiltshire by eliminating artificial boundaries, at the same time promoting the principle of creating sustainable communities by reducing areas with concentrations of households with high needs.
- To meet the statutory requirements of Wiltshire Council, whilst working genuinely in partnership with the partner landlords to deliver a common vision for a fair and accessible service.
- To have a Common Housing Register
- To provide a simple to use, customer-friendly lettings service for affordable housing vacancies in the County.
- To set up joint services which will improve the experience for our customers and simplify the application process.

4

- To widen the choice of properties for customers beyond the previous district boundaries and provide seamless access to one housing register across Wiltshire.
- To give preference to those with a local connection to Wiltshire.
- To simplify processes and procedures for landlord organisations advertising their vacancies so that it does not matter which part of Wiltshire a home is located in the procedures and lettings policy will be the same.
- To take full advantage of the economies of scale available through joint commissioning and procurement of services to generate savings.

2. EQUALITIES STATEMENT

Homes 4 Wiltshire is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in housing services.

We aim to deliver quality services without prejudice and discrimination to meet the needs of all the community, regardless of age, cultural or ethnic background, disability, gender, marital status, religious or political persuasion or sexual orientation.

The Homes 4 Wiltshire Partnership members will adhere to the Commission for Racial Equality's "Code of Practice in Rented Housing."

The Homes 4 Wiltshire Partnership will offer a translation service to anyone who needs to access housing services.

The Homes 4 Wiltshire partnership will adhere to the Equality and Diversity policy developed by the Wiltshire Council.

Effective monitoring of homelessness, the register and lettings outcomes will be regularly undertaken and the evaluation of this fed back into policy and service developments.

3. APPLYING TO REGISTER

Housing Authorities have a duty to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities, and for defining the procedures to be followed in allocating housing accommodation.

Homes 4 Wiltshire operates an open housing register; all members of the public are able to apply for housing within the Homes 4 Wiltshire Partnership; however there may be some occasions where a customer is not eligible for housing. This is clarified in point 3.1.

Applicants aged 16-17 will be entitled to register and will be considered for young persons supported accommodation. 16/17 year old applicants will only be considered for general needs housing if applicants have a support package in place and have engaged in life skills training. A guarantor could be requested although a landlord is expected to accept a young person who has a support package in place and has embarked upon life skills training for a tenancy.

3.1 Who is ineligible

Applicants are ineligible for the Housing Register if they are:

(i) Persons from Abroad (s.160A(1) of the Housing Act 1996) That is persons who are subject to immigration control and do not have refugee status or exceptional leave to remain in the UK

(ii) Persons whom the Authority have decided to treat as ineligible (s.160(1)(b) of the Housing Act 1996) – see below

Three requirements must be satisfied by an Authority to treat an applicant as ineligible:
(i) the applicant, or a member of his/her household, has been guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make him/her unsuitable to be a tenant of the landlord;
(ii) The unacceptable behaviour must be behaviour which would (if s/he were a secure/assured tenant of the landlord) entitle them to a possession order under s.84 of the Housing Act 1985 on any ground mentioned in Part 1 of Schedule 2 to that Act (other than ground 8). The Code advises that such conduct should be such as to justify an immediate order for possession ([4.22(ii)]); and
(iii) The circumstance at the time his/her application is considered, he/she is unsuitable to be a tenant of the landlord by reason of that behaviour.

The applicant will be entitled to be notified in writing of the decision and the grounds for it (s.160A(9)of the Housing Act 1996). The applicant may (if he/she considers that he/she should no longer be treated as ineligible by the authority) make a fresh application to the authority.

3.2 How to apply

Homes 4 Wiltshire has one joint housing application; this application gathers information about the customer's housing circumstances, future requirements and preferred areas of choice within the Homes 4 Wiltshire area.

On receipt of the customer's application, the Homes 4 Wiltshire team will administer the application, assessing the applicant's circumstances to ascertain the level of need that the household has.

This may at times require further assessment or investigation which will take place over the phone or by a home visit.

Customers will be advised in writing the outcome of their application with details of their band and the accommodation they are eligible to bid for.

At the registration process customers are required to provide a number of forms of identification and proofs. An application cannot be activated for bidding if the necessary information has not been provided. Point 3.4 indicates the information required, this information is also clearly highlighted on the application form.

Applicants can apply for housing in a number of ways, these are detailed below:
- In person at the council or Housing Association offices

- Completing an online application at www.homes4wiltshire.co.uk
- Completing an application and returning it to the Council or housing association partners

Officers will be available to provide assistance in completing the application form if required.

3.3 Local Connection

Homes 4 Wiltshire covers the whole Wiltshire Council area.

A local connection to the Wiltshire Council area is:
- Normal residence in the Wiltshire Council area for at least 6 out of the last 12 months or 3 out of the last 5 years (with the exemption of those referred to and living in Supported Accommodation from outside the area)
- Close family association with, for example, parent, grandparent, sibling or child of at least 18 years old who has been living in the Wiltshire Council area for at least 6 out of the last 12 months
- Permanent employment in the Wiltshire Council area

Applicants with a local connection to the area covered by Homes 4 Wiltshire (please refer to appendix 4 for map) will be given preference over applicants with no local connection within the same band.

In some rural locations, further local connection restrictions may apply to properties subject to planning conditions, restricting occupancy to people from a particular village or locality. (Section 106 of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990)

3.4 Identification required

3.4.1 The following evidence is required at the point of applying to activate and assess the banding:

- Proof of identification for every applicant on the register (drivers licence, birth certificate, or passport)
- Proof of address, (Utility bill, bank statement council tax statement/bill, drivers licence).
- Proof of residency of children (Child Benefit award letter, Child Tax Credit award letter, court order)
- Proof of pregnancy (maternity notes, letter from GP)
- Proof of income/benefits (bank statement, wage slips, DWP documentation)
- Proof of savings/stocks and shares (bank statement, relevant paperwork)
- If owner/occupier of property, most recent mortgage statement
- Confirmation of immigration status and workers registration certificate (if relevant) for persons from abroad
- Medical evidence (GP or occupational therapist report assessing the suitability of the applicant's current accommodation)
- Notice of eviction (notice to quit from landlord)

3.5 Change in circumstances

If a customer's circumstances change, it is their responsibility to advise Homes 4 Wiltshire of the change. The customer will be required to evidence any change in their circumstances e.g. birth of child, birth certificate required; being threatened with eviction from their accommodation, notice to quit required. If a customer fails to inform Homes 4 Wiltshire of a change in their circumstances and are subsequently offered accommodation the offer may be withdrawn.

If any member of the Homes 4 Wiltshire partnership is unable to contact an applicant using the information provided, that application will be suspended until such time as up to date contact information is provided. If this is as a result of a change in circumstances, the application will remain suspended until proofs of the change are provided.

3.6 Fraudulent Applications

If an applicant/tenant does not disclose the full facts, gives false information or does not inform Homes 4 Wiltshire of any important changes to their situation between the first contact and the time a decision about their case is made, the applicant may be breaking the law as set out in s171(i) of the Housing Act. Anyone doing so may be prosecuted by the relevant landlord and if found guilty may be ordered to pay a fine. The applicant may also lose any property that has been allocated to them.

3.7 Deliberately Worsening Circumstances

Where there is evidence that an applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances in order to qualify for higher banding on the Homes 4 Wiltshire register, the application will be placed in bronze band.

Examples of (but not limited to) where someone may have deliberately worsened their circumstances would include:

- Selling a property that is affordable and suitable for the applicant's needs in order to qualify for higher bands on the register.
- Moving from an assured/assured shorthold tenancy to insecure, overcrowded accommodation with family or friends in order to qualify for higher band.
- Moving family, friend and/or any other household into the property in order to qualify for higher band.

For an applicant to have deliberately worsened their circumstances there must be evidence that it would have been *reasonable* for the applicant to have remained in their original accommodation.

Deliberately worsening circumstances, also accounts for applicants who have a history of arrears (past or present) with a landlord (social or private) or antisocial behaviour, where the applicant's circumstances are not unacceptable to the level that they have been made ineligible for housing.

Where an applicant's housing need is assessed as platinum band, this level of need will override history of rent arrears or anti-social behaviour.

Where an applicant has made no attempt to rectify their previous behaviour (arrears or ASB) they will be considered to be deliberately worsening their circumstances and will be placed in bronze band, until efforts have been made to rectify the circumstances.

4 BANDING

Full banding definitions will be outlined in pages 10-14

4.1 Banding Structure

4.2 Multiple Needs

An applicant in silver band who has two or more needs categories will be moved into the gold band in the Multiple Needs category.

An applicant in gold band who has two or more needs will be placed in the gold plus band.

4.3 Banding Categories

The criteria for each band are detailed below.

Platinum

All applicants within platinum band will be reviewed after 3 months to ensure their circumstances haven't changed. The Homes 4 Wiltshire IT system will flag all customers within the platinum band after 3 months to enable the Homes 4 Wiltshire staff to review the customer's needs for housing.

Applicants within platinum band will be expected to actively bid for accommodation due to the urgency of their housing need. Applicants within this band will be regularly monitored. If no bid has been made within 3 months the Housing Options Team will work with the customer to actively bid for accommodation. Consideration will be given to the households' requirements and the availability of the relevant stock.

Exceptional circumstances

Such as a medical emergency, applicants under the Witness Protection Programme, extreme harassment, some tenancy successions, ADHAC (Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committees) referrals, and applicants who need to move to a suitable adapted property as a result of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of service in the Armed Forces.

Statutory Requirements

Applicants who meet the statutory requirements of Wiltshire Council:

Statutorily Homeless
Statutorily overcrowded

Applicants living in a property assessed by the Private Sector Housing Team in accordance with the HHSRS as being sufficiently serious that a prohibition notice might be appropriate.

Applicants who are lacking 3 bedrooms or more will be assessed by a Home Visiting Assessment Officer and once confirmed as being statutorily overcrowded will be placed in platinum band.

Move on (priority need)

This applies to applicants in shared or supported accommodation where there is a move on protocol in place with Homes 4 Wiltshire. The applicant must have been assessed as ready to move into independent living accommodation by the Housing Options link worker. The Housing Options Advisor will then make their recommendations to the Homes 4 Wiltshire Assessment Officers.

Gold Plus

Applicants meeting 2 or more criteria within gold.

Applicants within gold plus band will be reviewed after 6 months to ensure their circumstances haven't changed. The Homes 4 Wiltshire IT system will flag all customers within the gold plus band after 6 months to enable the Homes 4 Wiltshire staff to review the customer's needs for housing.

Gold

Seriously Overcrowded
Applicants living in overcrowded accommodation (in need of at least two additional bedrooms)

Hazards
Applicants living in a property assessed by the Private Sector Housing Team in accordance with the HHSRS as having 3 or more category 1 hazards that cannot be remedied.

High medical needs
Applicants assessed as having high medical needs, who are living in unsuitable accommodation and medical condition would be improved by being re-accommodated.
There are 2 levels of Medical Need; an assessment will be required to establish the level of need.
Applicants assessed as having a high medical need will be reviewed after 6 months to ensure their circumstances haven't changed.

Insecurity of tenure
Where an applicant is under written notice to leave their accommodation and this has been verified by a Homes 4 Wiltshire officer. This includes armed service

applicants with priority need and local connection to the Wiltshire Council who have insecurity of tenure i.e. 93 day notice to vacate married quarters.

Applicants assessed as being insecure in their accommodation will generally be under a 2 month or 93 day notice to vacate their accommodation. After 6 months all customers will be reviewed to establish their continued eligibility for this band.

High welfare or support needs

Where an applicant has an identified support need which cannot be alleviated in the current accommodation.
Applicants may need to live closer to family or support networks to give or receive support. Consideration will be given to the obstacles relating to the applicants need, such as the distance and transport links between the two areas.
There are 2 levels of support need; an assessment will be required to establish the level of need.
Applicants assessed as having a support need will be reviewed after 6 months to ensure their circumstances haven't changed

Applicants who are receiving support from a recognised support provider may be awarded welfare needs if their need to move is evidenced by that support provider, at the discretion of the Assessment Team Leader or the Head of Homes 4 Wiltshire.

Move on

Applicants who need to move from residential care homes into alternative affordable accommodation
Applicants who are ready to move on from supported accommodation where there is no move on protocol in place with Homes 4 Wiltshire. The applicant must have been assessed as ready to move into independent living accommodation by the Housing Options link worker. The Housing Options Advisor will then make their recommendations to the Homes 4 Wiltshire Assessment Officers.

Harassment
Applicants who are suffering from serious harassment, violence, or threat of violence at their current property, providing evidence exists to substantiate their claim.

Underoccupation
Current partner RSL and Council tenants under-occupying accommodation and willing to move into a smaller home. For example an applicant in a partner RSL property not occupying all of the bedrooms and wishing to move to smaller accommodation. This criterion will only apply to tenants of a partner RSLs who are listed at the beginning of this document and does not apply to households in flats or maisonettes, except in exceptional circumstances with agreement between Homes 4 Wiltshire and the landlord.

Multiple needs
Applicants meeting more than two needs criteria within silver band.

No fixed accommodation

Applicants who have no fixed accommodation, who are not considered to be in priority need. This includes prisoners with a confirmed release date but no suitable accommodation.

Split households
Applicants whose family have formerly lived together as a household unit, with dependent children or expecting a child, who are unable to live together because of factors beyond their control, and as a result are living in separate households.

Silver

Medium medical needs
See Gold Band "High Medical Need" for definition

Medium welfare or support needs
See Gold Band "Welfare or Support" for definition

Serious Disrepair
Applicants living in a property assessed by the Private Sector Housing Team in accordance with the HHSRS as having 1 or 2 category 1 hazards that cannot be remedied.

Overcrowded
Applicants living in overcrowded accommodation (in need of one additional bedroom).

Children in flats
Applicants with a child / children under 10 and living in a flat above the ground floor.

Sharing Facilities
Applicants sharing facilities - e.g. kitchen, bathroom, and toilet - with people who are not included on the housing register application form. This does not include applicants who choose to share their home with someone who is not included on the housing application.

Armed Forces
Applicants from armed forces with a local connection to the Wiltshire Council area, due to be discharged within the next 12 months and in need of affordable housing.

Tied Accommodation
Applicants living in accommodation tied to their employment.

Intentionally Homeless

Applicants who have been found to be intentionally homeless by the Housing Options Team. Please note that this category will not be considered when assessing Multiple Needs, as the applicant will be considered to have deliberately worsened their circumstances.

Bronze

Adequately Housed
Applicants who are currently housed in a property that is appropriate for their needs in terms of size and facilities.

Deliberately worsening circumstances
See 3.7

Financial capability
See 5.8

4.4 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) clarification

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System is a way of assessing properties to calculate the level of hazard or risk to a household of living in that property. It was introduced across England and Wales in 2006, and is used by all Local Authorities.

For the purposes of the HHSRS assessments, "cannot be remedied" is explained below:

Wiltshire Council would look to ensure that the owner of the property makes the necessary improvements to alleviate category 1 hazards. This may be through informal negotiation or formal action.

Where the property is occupied by the owner, the Private Sector Housing Team will ask the applicant prove or disprove that they are able to get financial assistance from the council or borrow the money commercially.

To evidence this the applicant should be required to see if they can get a loan or remortgage to raise the necessary funds.

Once this has been established the Private Sector Housing Team will advise Homes 4 Wiltshire if they property "cannot be remedied".

For the purposes of HHSRS assessments, the Private Sector Housing team will not include overcrowding when considering the hazards as this is assessed in a separate way.

5. HOMES 4 WILTSHIRE HOUSING REGISTER

5.1 Assessment of applications

The scheme will assess all applicants according to their level of housing need whilst facilitating more choice of accommodation to its applicants. Upon registration, eligible applicants will be placed into one of five bands in accordance with the guidelines set out in this chapter and in the light of appropriate advice.

Reasonable preference will be given to the following categories of people, as set out in s167 (2) of the 1996 Act:

(a) people who are homeless (within the meaning of Part 7 of the 1996 Act); this includes people who are intentionally homeless, and those who are not in priority need;

(b) people who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under section 192(3);

(c) people occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions;

(d) people who need to move on medical or welfare grounds; and

(e) people who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the housing authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others).

However, there is no requirement under the Act to give equal weight to each of the reasonable preference categories.

Factors that may be taken into account include:
- The financial resources available to the applicant.
- The behaviour of the applicant (or any member of the household) which affects his/her suitability to be a tenant. Examples may be unacceptable behaviour or rent arrears.
- Any local connection between the applicant and the area covered by the allocations scheme

Additional preference can also be given to people with an urgent housing need, such as victims of domestic violence, racial harassment, witnesses of crime and victims of crime at risk of intimidation amounting to violence and people with urgent medical reasons.

5.2 General Need Applicants

General need applicants are customers seeking affordable housing who are not currently a tenant of a partner RSL or Council within the Homes 4 Wiltshire area; and who are have not been accepted by Wiltshire Council as statutorily homeless.

Once a general need applicant has applied for housing and provided the relevant information they will be advised of their band and allowed to bid.

If a general need applicant has previous arrears with a private or social landlord the applicant may be deemed to have deliberately worsened their circumstances, and may be placed in the bronze band. If, however, the applicant has been making regular payments in an attempt to clear the debt they may be eligible for bidding. Please see section 5.5 for further information.

General need applicants are advised of the number of bedrooms they can bid for at the point of applying.

5.3 Transfers

All existing Housing Association / Council tenants living in the area covered by Homes 4 Wiltshire can register for a transfer and will be assessed and banded accordingly.

At the point of applying, the Homes 4 Wiltshire team will contact the landlord and request that a landlord reference is completed. A transfer applicant will not be activated and eligible to bid until the reference is completed. The landlord reference will include:

- Right to transfer
- Clear rent account
- Satisfactory condition of the property
- Anti-social behaviour

If an applicant is a joint tenant of a housing association/council and wishes to give up their part of the tenancy to live elsewhere, they will be registered and eligible to bid for accommodation. If they are successful in bidding, they will be required to relinquish their interest in the tenancy before a formal offer can be accepted.

5.4 Homeless Applicants

Applicants who are homeless, or believe they are under threat of losing their home will be assessed under a separate housing approach.

The Housing Options Team will identify the applicant within one of the following categories:

5.4.1 Statutorily Homeless

Applicants with a homeless duty accepted will be placed in platinum band and will be expected to actively bid for suitable accommodation. The applicants will be monitored and where an applicant is not bidding for accommodation a member of staff will actively work with them to ensure they bid when suitable properties become available.

Applicants with a homeless duty will be considered to have an urgent need for accommodation and will, therefore, be expected to accept an offer of a property they have bid for. Should they refuse a property the homelessness duty will cease unless the applicant has a valid reason for refusal. The applicant must put their reasons for refusal in writing within 2 working days of viewing the property to Wiltshire Council who will assess within 3 working days if it is unreasonable to accept.

When a homeless applicant's duty ceases due to one offer being refused, they will be re banded accordingly and still allowed to bid, however, any temporary accommodation provided by Wiltshire Council will be withdrawn.

Applicants who are owed the main homelessness duty and occupying temporary accommodation provided under part 7 of the Housing Act 1996:

Temporary accommodation is in short supply throughout the county and Wiltshire Council is under pressure from government targets to reduce the number of households and amount of time spent in temporary accommodation.

If the homeless applicant has not bid successfully within a 3 months period a bidding assessment will take place. The assessment will take into account the pressure on social housing in the area of their choice, the applicants' reasons for not bidding and any special requirements.

If working with the customer to encourage involvement in the bidding process is unsuccessful, the Housing Options Team may then bid on the applicant's behalf in order to make them a final offer of accommodation under Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 and discharge the duty owed to them. Housing Options will aim to bid for a property in one of the 5 preferred areas of the applicant's choice but this cannot be guaranteed.

Where the applicant has been accepted under the homelessness legislation, Wiltshire Council will cease to be subject to the homelessness duty if the final offer of accommodation is considered to be suitable and reasonable to occupy following a review of suitability by a senior member of staff.

5.4.2 Homelessness & Insecurity of Tenure

Applicants who have insecurity of tenure or are unintentionally homeless, but do not have a priority need, will be assessed and placed in gold band. Their circumstances will be monitored every 6 months to identify if they still require this priority.

5.4.3 Intentional Homelessness

Applicants who have been found to be intentionally homeless can register their need and will be placed in silver band unless they or a member of their household has been found guilty of unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable to be a tenant (see point 3.1 ineligible applicants). This category will not be considered when assessing Multiple Needs, as the applicant will be considered to have deliberately worsened their circumstances.

5.5 Rent arrears and anti-social behaviour

All eligible applicants will be considered for suitable accommodation through Homes 4 Wiltshire, including applicants who have an outstanding housing related debt (current or previous) to any landlord (private or social) or who have a history of anti-social behaviour.

Applicants with current or previous housing related debt to the landlord however, will be required to maintain a consistent repayment plan. Applicants who fail to do this may be overlooked by the landlord under their own Allocations Policy.

Any applicant with a history of anti-social behaviour, (which is not serious enough to make them ineligible for housing but has lead to action being taken by the landlord) will have to have maintained a successful tenancy for 1 year since

behaving anti-socially or demonstrate that the person who had been guilty of such anti-social behaviour is no longer part of the applicant's household.

If applicants' do not meet the above requirements then they may be considered under the criteria for deliberately worsening their circumstances (see 3.7) which may lower their priority.

Partner landlords will be expected to consider all applicants for their properties where they are placed in platinum band.

The landlord will also be expected to consider any applicant who has housing related debt, where there is evidence to suggest that the housing related debt accrued as a result of insufficient support being provided or where the rent has been shown to have been unaffordable.

If an applicant with housing related debt or a history of anti-social behaviour is successful in bidding for accommodation, and the managing landlord is minded to refuse the application due to its exceptional nature, the landlord must advise Homes 4 Wiltshire their reasons for refusing the applicant.

The managing landlord will be required to write to the successful applicant advising them why they are not being considered for the property and setting out the process of appeal as indicated in section 9.

Landlords will be expected to set out their intentions through the advertising process.

5.6 Waiting Time

The date of application will be determined by the date the application has been received by the local authority. Applicants who are subsequently reassessed and are moved to a higher band will begin a new start date (the date moved into the higher band) and those applicants who are moved to a lower band will retain their original start date.

5.7 Vulnerable Applicants Assessment

Homes 4 Wiltshire will identify applicants who may need support from the information contained in the application form.

Where it is evident from the application form that a person may require support, contact will be made to establish what support or advice is required. This may in some cases require a home visit to assess a person's need.

A vulnerable applicant's policy and procedure has been produced to enable Homes 4 Wiltshire to identify potentially vulnerable people who may have difficulties in accessing suitable accommodation.

The policy aims to highlight vulnerable applicants when initially assessing the application and from this the local authority will contact the applicant to arrange an assessment.

Please refer to the policy for full terms, which is attached at the end of the policy as Appendix 2

5.8 Financial Capability

The aim of the Homes 4 Wiltshire scheme is to provide affordable housing for people who need it most. People who have the financial means to purchase a suitable property in the open market (including home owners with sufficient equity in a property they currently own and are able to sell) will be placed in the bronze band on the register.

All applicants will be asked to provide evidence of their income, savings and capital assets, which will be assessed against an affordability matrix. The affordability matrix based on government affordability criteria will assess the families current income and the Wiltshire average house prices to ascertain whether the applicant is financially capable. A copy of the matrix is available on request.

Homes 4 Wiltshire reserve the right to check an applicants financial capability at the point of offer.

Any home owner housed from the Housing Register will be expected to sell their property within 12 months of accepting a tenancy unless there are legal grounds preventing the sale. This will be monitored annually; any cases failing to meet this requirement will be investigated in line with the fraudulent applications process.

6. FINDING A PROPERTY

The majority of properties will be advertised through Homes 4 Wiltshire. The properties will be advertised on the website, in the local authority's and housing associations main reception areas and at information points across the County.

For a full list of advertisement points, please contact Homes 4 Wiltshire.

6.1 Bidding Cycle

The properties will be open for bidding on Thursday 00:01am and will close on Monday 23:59 pm.

6.2 Bidding Method

- Online – www.homes4wiltshire.co.uk
- By phone – Bid line 0845 270 2500
- In person at Local Authority offices
- In person at your local library
- By phoning 01380 734734

6.2.1 Assisted bidding

Staff are available to take bids over the phone for vulnerable applicants who have no way of accessing any option of bidding.

Training will be given to external agencies that would also be in a position to help their clients with bidding.

Vulnerable applicants will be identified from the application form. Homes 4 Wiltshire staff will contact potentially vulnerable clients and offer them a home visit or interview. Staff will seek to establish what the support needs are, and identify ways of enabling the applicant to participate in the lettings system. If the applicant agrees, staff will contact any family member, professional or voluntary worker from health or social services with whom the applicant is involved; to ensure that they understand the procedures and that necessary support is provided. All agencies funded through Supporting People will be able to provide their clients with help on housing issues.

6.2.2 Autobid

Where an applicant is identified as vulnerable and unable to actively participate in bidding for accommodation, the autobid function is available to automatically bid for suitable properties.

This option will be used as a last resort as it reduces the element of choice for the customer and goes against the ethos of choice based lettings.

6.3 Advertising

All properties are advertised to all active bands and customers will be invited to bid for the properties they are eligible for. The order of banding is platinum, gold plus, gold, silver, bronze. However, there may be occasions when platinum may not have the highest priority. This could be because of one of the following:

- The Landlord wants to let a property sensitively. This is where there is a single property on a street, estate or within a block of flats that has been a cause of significant problems and the landlord wants to be sensitive to the neighbours with the new tenant. This approach may also be taken for properties in the immediate vicinity of the property in question, for a fixed period, by agreement with Homes 4 Wiltshire.
- On new schemes, lettings with a new build letting plan will be agreed to ensure the sustainability of the new development. For example, child density may be evaluated to allow for some natural growth of the families housed. This means that some homes, particularly flats, may be allocated to individuals or families without children. This will also include letting the properties to a mixture of bands.
- A local lettings plan may be developed for any neighbourhood where it is considered that the community will benefit from such a plan. The local lettings plans will be drawn up in consultation with the Homes 4 Wiltshire and all local lettings plans will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- In extra care schemes where a balance of care needs are sought in order to make such schemes sustainable.

Occasions where properties will not be allocated to applicants within the highest band will be at Homes 4 Wiltshire's discretion in agreement with the landlord.

Landlords will provide as much information as possible in the property advertisements, in order to allow applicants to make informed choices. This

particularly applies to the accessibility of a property, and to any adaptations that have been carried out to or installed in the property.

6.4 Property Labelling

Landlords will advertise their properties as they become aware of imminent vacancies.

The landlord will input the following information into the advert for the customer to view when bidding.
• Type of property
• Location of property
• Number of bedrooms
• Any adaptations done to the property
• Any services provided (e.g. warden)
• Rent level
• Council tax band
• Energy rating for the property
• If you are able to have pets
• Heating type
• If it is a shared ownership property
• Service charges
• If the property is only suitable for an applicant with a local connection to that village
• Any restrictions to applying (i.e. age restrictions for sheltered housing)

In order to make best use of housing stock, landlords may label up to 20% of properties for Transfer applicants only (i.e. for current tenants of that landlord). Overall, in line with legislation, priority must be given to applicants in the Reasonable Preference categories.

Please see appendix 4 which refers to the household make up and the property types they are eligible to bid for.

6.4.1 Adaptations

General needs properties that have been adapted to meet the needs of disabled people will be offered in the first instance to those applicants requiring adaptations. If no such person is available and the property is considered to be suitable it may be used as temporary accommodation for a homeless household until such a household is identified.

6.5 Monitoring of labelling and its effects on lettings

Both Homes 4 Wiltshire and individual landlords will be responsible for monitoring the effect of labelling to ensure that communities are sustainable and that there is consistency and fairness throughout the letting process by monitoring;
• Number of properties advertised by type, area and landlord
• Number of properties with s106 (exception site)
• Number of bids and method of bidding
• Number of bids for each property by band
• Profile of those bidding, i.e. ethnicity, transfer, vulnerable, homeless applicant

• Number of accepted offers by band and application type
• Number of tenancies refused and reasons
• Number of properties re-advertised due to hard to let
• Number of properties for new households

6.6 Excluded Dwellings

There are some exceptions to the Policy based on Primary and Secondary Legislation:

Part 6 of the 1996 Act does not apply to Mutual Exchanges between tenants of RSLs or Councils (including those arranged via national schemes such as Homeswapper)

The following cases are also exempted:
• Where a tenant dies (whether secure, assured or fixed term) and a succession takes place under the Housing Act 1985
• Where a secure or assured tenancy is granted by order of a Court under Matrimonial Causes Act 1973, or Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984, or Children Act 1989
• Where an Introductory Tenancy, Assured Shorthold Starter, or Probationary Tenancy becomes an assured or secure tenancy
• Where a Tenancy is demoted by Court Order, or, following the expiry of the Demotion period, where a Demoted Tenancy reverts to Assured Tenancy status

Occasionally the Homes 4 Wiltshire partnership will exclude properties from the letting system. This will include the following occasions:
• Where a property is allocated to a relative or carer of a tenant who has died, but there is no statutory right for that person to succeed to the tenancy
• Changes to a tenancy that do not result in a vacancy e.g. from joint to sole or sole to joint tenancy
• A vacancy is required to enable Wiltshire Council to discharge their duty to statutorily homeless households.
• A vacancy is required for a customer with acute support needs from supported housing
• A landlord needs to temporarily rehouse an existing tenant in order to carry out repairs, renovation or refurbishment.
• A vacancy is required under the high risk offenders' protocol.
• A vacancy is required because a Homes 4 Wiltshire Partnership member has management reasons to provide accommodation.
• Other exceptional circumstances agreed by the partnership.

At the end of each year, the partnership will publish how many excluded dwellings have accrued.

6.7 Short listing

When the bidding cycle concludes on Monday night at 23:59 a shortlist of all bidders is available to Homes 4 Wiltshire.

The process involved in short listing is simplified by the IT system which automatically places customers into their correct position and generates the list ready for the Homes 4 Wiltshire team.

On a Tuesday, Homes 4 Wiltshire will aim to match the applicants who have come top of all of the properties. This information will be sent to the landlord to enable them to accept or reject the successful bidder. A list of reasons detailing why Homes 4 Wiltshire may not match the top bidder and a list of reasons detailing why the landlord may not accept a bidder are shown in section 6.8.

The list of bidders is based on the standard short listing criteria indicated below:
1 – Band
2 – Local Connection to Homes 4 Wiltshire area
3 – Use of accommodation
4 – Effective date

1 – Band
All lists are prioritised in order of band. Generally platinum will be given the highest priority (see 6.3 for an explanation of when platinum will not be the highest priority). For example, applicants within platinum band will come above applicants within gold plus and applicants in gold plus coming above applicants in gold etc.
Within the banding priority there have to be other methods of identifying the applicant who is successful otherwise all applicants in platinum will be of the same priority and the decision would not be fair, transparent and consistent. Therefore other prioritising criteria must be in place as per points 2, 3 and 4.

2 - Local Connection
Where a customer has a local connection to the Homes 4 Wiltshire area, they will be prioritised above those who do not have a local connection to the Homes 4 Wiltshire area but are within the same band.

There are two types of local connection that Homes 4 Wiltshire refers to:
- Local connection to Homes 4 Wiltshire. This relates to the short listing criteria and those who have a local connection to the Homes 4 Wiltshire area will be prioritised above those with no local connection to the area who are within the same band.
- Local connection to a particular village or parish. This relates to the eligibility criteria. Properties with a s106 planning restriction will be advertised to only those who have an identified connection to that village or parish. If a customer does not have a connection to the advertised village or parish they will be restricted from bidding for that property.

For the purpose of this short listing section of the policy the first point is how local connection will be assessed.

3 – Use of accommodation
Customers are given a minimum and maximum bedroom allowance. In some cases this minimum and maximum allowance is the same and in other cases it is different. When a customers maximum is higher than their minimum allowance

this enables customers to bid for a property larger than their minimum requirement. This is to allow for growth into the property resulting in sustainable tenancies.

However, due to the large demand for housing it would be unacceptable to allow couples to occupy all 2 bed houses or couples with 1 child to occupy a high percentage of 3 bed houses. Therefore Homes 4 Wiltshire needs to ensure that the household who best suits the accommodation is prioritised above those who will not need all of the bedrooms. Therefore the "use of accommodation" considers a family with 3 children for a 3 bed house, before considering a family with 1 child.

This "use of accommodation" criteria sorts the maximum, minimum bedroom requirement in descending order. A number of examples have been provided later in this section.

4 – Effective date

When a customer applies for housing, they are given an effective date. This is the date that the application is received by Homes 4 Wiltshire. If an applicant's circumstances change and they move into a higher band, the effective date will become the date that they have moved into the higher band.

The date is used to prioritise those applications that have the same criteria allowing for the time customers have accrued on the register to make a difference to their success in being offered accommodation.

If two or more applicants have equal band, local connection priority, use of accommodation and effective date, the date that they applied for housing (if different from their effective date) will be the deciding factor. If this date is also equal, Homes 4 Wiltshire will consider the personal circumstances of each applicant to assist in making the decision.

An example based on this standard short listing criteria.

The order for a 2 Bed House:

Name	Band	Min bed	Max bed	Local Connection to Homes 4 Wilts area	Effective
Smith	Platinum	2	3	Y	19/08/2005
Lewis	Platinum	2	3	Y	22/09/2005
James	Platinum	2	3	Y	31/10/2005
Richards	Platinum	1	2	Y	30/04/2005
Ford	Platinum	1	2	Y	21/09/2005
Small	Platinum	2	3	N	28/06/2005
Jones	Platinum	1	2	N	25/06/2005
Brown	Gold +	2	3	Y	21/07/2004
Hills	Gold +	2	3	Y	25/01/2005
Price	Gold +	2	3	Y	19/02/2005
Lewis	Gold +	2	3	Y	22/09/2005

Davis	Gold +	1	2	Y	30/11/2004
Edmund	Gold +	2	3	N	28/06/2005
Phillips	Gold	2	3	Y	31/08/2004
Robins	Gold	2	3	Y	30/04/2005
Cole	Gold	1	2	Y	21/02/2005
Sharp	Gold	2	3	N	21/09/2004

The above shortlist, places those with a local connection above those with no local connection within the same band. However those in platinum that have no local connection will be placed above those in gold plus with a local connection. This allows for the need of accommodation to be prioritised above those who have been assessed as having less need for accommodation.

As local connection is 2 in the order of priority, this comes above "use of accommodation" therefore if an applicant in platinum had a local connection to the area, but did not make best use of the accommodation they would come above someone who did not have a local connection to the area but made best use of accommodation.

If there was more than one successful bidder who were in the same band; had a local connection and made use of accommodation, they would be distinguished by their effective date, subsequently the person who has been waiting the longest would be placed at the top of the equal applicants.

Adapted accommodation
Where a property has been adapted to suit a certain client group, Homes 4 Wiltshire will strive to allocate that accommodation to a household that will best suit the property and make use of the adaptations.

There are two ways to advertise this type of accommodation. One way is to advertise the property and only allow those who have been identified as requiring adapted accommodation to bid. This will restrict anyone who doesn't need this type of accommodation from bidding. Alternatively the property can be advertised to everyone but prioritising those households who require adapted accommodation above those who do not within the same band.

The shortlist criteria would therefore look like this:
1 – Band
2 – Local connection to Homes 4 Wiltshire
3 – Adapted required
4 – Use of accommodation
5 – Effective date

An example of this short listing criteria is outlined below. This is based on a 3 bed house, with full adaptations for a wheelchair user:

Name	Band	Min bed	Max bed	Local Connection to H4W	Adapted Required?	Effective
Ford	Platinum	3	3	Y	Y	30/04/2005
James	Platinum	2	3	Y	Y	31/05/2005
Small	Platinum	3	3	Y	N	28/06/2005

Richards	Platinum	3	4	Y	N	21/04/2005
Jones	Platinum	2	3	N	N	25/06/2005
Smith	Platinum	2	3	N	N	19/08/2005
Lewis	Gold +	3	4	Y	Y	21/09/2004
Brown	Gold +	2	3	Y	N	22/09/2004

This example shows that if there was a family who had an adapted requirement but didn't make full use of the accommodation, they would come above a household who would make full use of the accommodation. This is because a fully adapted property is very rare therefore it needs to be prioritised to those families in need of this type of accommodation.

Ground floor
In some schemes, particularly retirement schemes, ground floor flats will be prioritised to those evidencing a need for ground floor accommodation. To enable us to do this, customers requiring ground floor accommodation will be sorted above those who have not stated a need for ground floor accommodation.

The short listing criteria would be in this order:
1 – Band
2 – Local connection to Homes 4 Wiltshire
3 – Ground Floor required
4 – Use of accommodation
5 – Effective date

A shortlist for a 2 bed ground floor flat would look like this:

Name	Band	Min bed	Max bed	Local Connection to H4W	Ground floor?	Effective date
Ford	Platinum	1	2	Y	Y	30/04/2005
James	Platinum	1	2	Y	Y	31/05/2005
Small	Platinum	1	2	Y	N	21/04/2005
Richards	Platinum	1	2	Y	N	28/06/2005
Smith	Platinum	1	2	N	Y	19/08/2005
Jones	Platinum	1	2	N	N	25/06/2005
Lewis	Gold +	1	2	Y	Y	21/09/2004
Brown	Gold +	1	2	Y	N	22/09/2004

The above shortlist places those with a local connection above those with no local connection and those with a ground floor need above those with no ground floor need. However evident from this shortlist, those with a ground floor need but with no local connection are below those with a local connection but no ground floor need. This is because local connection is above ground floor need in the order of priority.

Local connection, adapted and ground floor requirements are all identified at the application stage.

Homes 4 Wiltshire will identify the local connection from section 7 of the application form to ascertain the connection that the household has to the Homes 4 Wiltshire area.

Similarly with adapted and ground floor requirements, these are identified from the application form and customers are advised in their registration letters what they are eligible to bid for and what they have been assessed as requiring.

6.8 Unsuitable bidders

As stated above in 6.7, the Homes 4 Wiltshire team, the RSL or the Council may believe that the successful bidder is not suitable for the property.

6.8.1 Homes 4 Wiltshire reasons for overlooking an applicant.

It is Homes 4 Wiltshire's responsibility to advise the household that they have been overlooked for a property, detailing the reason for this.

The reasons that Homes 4 Wiltshire may overlook an applicant will be for one of the following reasons:
- Does not meet the age criteria

On some properties, age restrictions may apply. Generally the IT system will prevent anyone from bidding on a property if they do not meet the age restrictions however if for some reason a customer bids and they do not meet the age restrictions they may be overlooked to enable the Homes 4 Wiltshire team to identify the next suitable bidder.
- Does not meet the Local Lettings Plan

Some properties/developments/estates throughout the area may have a local lettings plan. Local lettings plans can be developed for a number of reasons:
- Sometimes there is a high density of children on a particular street and the landlord wants to limit the number of families with lots of children
- There has been a history of anti-social behaviour in the area and the landlord is working on regenerating the area.

A local lettings plan will be developed by the landlord in agreement with Homes 4 Wiltshire and any property being advertised under such an agreement will be clearly highlighted on the advert. On these grounds if the successful bidder does not fulfil the local lettings plan criteria Homes 4 Wiltshire may overlook the applicant.
- Sensitive Letting

As stated in 6.3, at times a landlord may want to allocate a property sensitively. This could be to protect a prospective tenant or the tenants around the vacant property. The exact criteria will be agreed between the landlord and Homes 4 Wiltshire prior to advertising. However some examples could be:

- There is a block of flats with a known drug problem. The landlord is trying to alleviate the problems and has therefore requested that the vacant flat is not allocated to an applicant with known drug problems who is not engaging with support. On this occasion Homes 4 Wiltshire may overlook the top applicant if they are known to have a drug habit and are not engaging with the relevant support workers.

- A tenant has recently been evicted due to anti-social behaviour; the landlord has spent a significant amount of time on the particular case and wants to ensure the neighbours surrounding the property are not subject to any further anti-social behaviour. In this instance Homes 4 Wiltshire may overlook an applicant with a history of antisocial behaviour.
- Non engagement of services. If an applicant requires support to enable him/her to sustain a tenancy, however they are not engaging in support and there are concerns that the tenancy will fail without engagement. Homes 4 Wiltshire may overlook the applicant and they will not be considered for accommodation until he/she is actively engaging with the required support worker.
- Offered on another shortlist. An applicant can only be considered for one property, therefore if they have been matched to one property they will be overlooked on any subsequent properties.
- Does not meet shared ownership criteria. Generally applicants meeting the shared ownership criteria will be assessed as eligible to bid for all shared ownership properties within their bedroom ranges. However the prices of low cost home ownership vary and although a household may be suitable for one property they may not meet the criteria of all properties. Therefore on occasions Homes 4 Wiltshire may need to overlook a household if they do not meet the criteria.

6.8.2 RSL/Council reasons for rejecting an applicant

RSLs or the Council may need to refuse an applicant for one of the following reasons.

In that case, it is RSL/Council's responsibility to inform applicant of the reasons.

- Area unsuitable/Anti-social behaviour

Where there is evidence that an applicant might endanger the health and safety or well being of neighbouring residents because they have a history of violent or abusive behaviour against particular individuals in the area, the landlord may refuse the right to offer them accommodation in that particular area. However if the client's behaviour is not unacceptable and they are eligible to register, the partnership must agree what areas will be acceptable and ensure appropriate support is in place.

For example, where an applicant has been prosecuted for assaulting a local resident or where the applicant is a Schedule 1 Offender and there are a number of young children living locally.

- Property unsuitable – Health and Safety

Where there is reasonable evidence to suggest a property is unsuitable for the applicant due to health and safety concerns.

For example, where the applicant has mobility needs that cannot be met without making considerable adaptations to the property. Every effort will be made to find a property that meets the requirements of the customer.

- Suspected fraudulent application

Where there is reasonable evidence that an applicant has provided false information in their application for housing, the Homes 4 Wiltshire partnership reserves the right not to offer accommodation.

- Does not meet financial criteria

Where an RSL/Council has charitable status, households on certain incomes (varies depending on RSL/Council) may be refused access to their accommodation.

- Rent Arrears

Where rent arrears have accrued since registering and the applicant is unable to clear, the RSL/Council may refuse the applicant

- No vacant possession guarantee

Where an RSL/Council has advertised a property which has since become unavailable

- Where a landlord refuses an applicant because they will not allow underoccupation on the property, the Homes 4 Wiltshire team will not suggest any further matches where the household make-up is the same of the household that has been refused.

6.9   Refusals by applicants

Where an applicant refuses an offer of a property for which they have placed a bid, Homes 4 Wiltshire will consider whether or not the refusal is reasonable.

If the refusal is considered unreasonable, the applicant will be advised in writing of this, and given the opportunity to appeal against this decision.

If an applicant unreasonably refuses 3 properties for which they have bid, their application will be placed in the bronze band for a period of 6 months.

Applicants will be advised of the potential consequences of refusing properties after each unreasonable refusal.

This sanction will not apply to applicants for whom the autobid function is used, as they have not specifically bid for the properties in question.

6.10 – Disabled applicants

Consideration will be given by the landlord to extend both the notice period given to accept or reject an offer of accommodation and/or the tenancy commencement date in circumstances where a disabled person(s) requires such additional time on account of their personal circumstances.

7. OUTCOMES

All outcomes of advertised properties will appear on the website once the property has been let. The details in the outcomes page will be of the applicant who has been offered the property, and has accepted the tenancy.

The outcomes will provide details of the successful applicant, such as the band, bedroom requirements, whether they had a local connection to the Homes 4 Wiltshire area, their effective date and any other information relevant to the property that was advertised. No personal details of the applicant will be displayed. This will give customers an indication of the priority of the successful applicant how long they had been waiting for accommodation.

This information can be used by applicants to assist them in assessing the likelihood of their bidding for a property being successful.

8. OTHER HOUSING OPTIONS

The additional housing options will not be introduced at the initial launch of Homes 4 Wiltshire, but will be implemented in a phased approach.

8.1 Supported Housing

Throughout the Homes 4 Wiltshire area, there are a number of supported housing schemes. These vary from customers with specific needs for the accommodation such as support for customers with learning disabilities or those with mental health requirements to supported accommodation for young people. Following the launch of Homes 4 Wiltshire, the team will be working with the relevant agencies to develop a supported housing module enabling certain schemes to be advertised through choice based lettings, allowing all customers freedom to choose their accommodation, whether that may be general affordable housing or something more specialist.

8.2 Extra Care

Extra care vacancies will be advertised and short listed within the Homes 4 Wiltshire choice based lettings policy. However, extra care schemes in the county have the requirement for a balance of individual care needs in order to be sustainable. Therefore, Homes 4 Wiltshire will make available to RSLs a list of all bidders in order of banding priority. The final decision will rest with the allocations panel for each scheme which includes representatives from Homes 4 Wiltshire, the RSL and The Wiltshire Council Adult Care Department which provides the support packages within the schemes. The customer who the panel decides best meets the care criteria for the vacancy will be allocated the accommodation.

8.3 Alternative Affordable Housing

Homes 4 Wiltshire will not only advertise social rented housing but will also aim to advertise:

8.3.1 Low Cost Home Ownership

Properties owned or managed by one of the partner RSLs or the Council on a part buy/part rent or reduced market value scheme will be advertised by both the Homebuy Agent and through Homes 4 Wiltshire. It is a requirement of the Homes and Communities Agency that all Government funded Low Cost Home Ownership schemes are allocated through the Homebuy agent. Only those identified as eligible for this type of accommodation will be eligible to bid.

8.3.2 Homebuy

Additional opportunities for alternative affordable housing are provided by Homebuy Agents. The Homes 4 Wiltshire website will provide a link to the Homebuy agents covering this area who are South West Homes. There are a number of schemes available for people who would like to buy a property but lack the financial resources to purchase on the open market.

8.4 Short listing of alternative affordable housing

At the application stage of Homes 4 Wiltshire, any customers requesting low cost home ownership schemes will be advised to apply to the Homebuy Agent and will be considered eligible when they have been assessed and accepted by the Homebuy Agent. When a low cost home ownership property is advertised only those identified as eligible will be able to bid and the list of bidders will be short listed in order of priority which is explained in point 6.7.

8.5 Private rents

Privately rented properties may also be advertised through the Homes 4 Wiltshire system. Landlords accredited with Wiltshire Council can advertise their properties on Homes 4 Wiltshire.

Applicants will not be able to bid for these properties but will need to contact the landlord directly. All information relating to private rented accommodation will be made clear on any adverts.

8.6 Mutual Exchanges
Current housing association or council tenants will be advised of the services offered by Homeswapper. A link to this service will be available on the Homes 4 Wiltshire website and all tenants wishing to exchange will be directed to this service. Where the landlord has signed up to this service their tenants can view the site free of charge. If the landlord is not a member of the Homeswapper scheme the tenant is charged a nominal fee. Homes 4 Wiltshire will work with all RSL/Council partners to encourage them to sign up to the scheme.

There will be no need for the tenant to be on the housing register for this service, however, the tenant must be a secure / assured tenant. Both tenants must have clear rent accounts before an exchange will be granted. Restrictions may apply i.e. s106, household size, adapted properties etc.

Any mutual exchange must be agreed by both landlords.

9. REVIEWS & APPEALS

An applicant has the right to request a review of Homes 4 Wiltshire partnership decisions on the following:
* They consider they have not been awarded the correct banding

Any review requests must be in writing to the Homes 4 Wiltshire team and within 21 days of receiving notice of the banding status. Any necessary evidence or information must be supplied at this stage to substantiate the request. Requests

to review banding, will be undertaking initially by the Home Visiting Assessment Officers. If the applicant is still unhappy with the outcome, 2nd line appeals will go to the Assessment Team Leader. Customers who are unable to put their appeal in writing can arrange a meeting with a Home Visiting Assessment Officer where the appeal will be heard and any supporting evidence can be provided. Where necessary the customer may bring a support worker or advocate to the meeting.

Where a review is requested on the following grounds:
- Not having their application included on the Homes 4 Wiltshire register or
- Removing someone from the Homes 4 Wiltshire register other than at the applicant's request;

In these cases a senior officer from Homes 4 Wiltshire who has not been involved in the original decision will carry out the review. As above any review request will need to be made in writing and within 21 days of receiving notification. As above, if the applicant is unable to put their review request in writing they can request a meeting for their review to be heard and any supporting evidence to be provided. Where necessary the customer may bring a support worker or advocate to the meeting.

If the applicant does not agree with the outcome of the review, they will be advised of the Wiltshire Council complaints procedure. With further grounds of appeal to the Local Government Ombudsman.

If an applicant is unhappy with a partner landlord decision to refuse them for a vacant property they will be required to follow the landlord's appeal/complaints procedure.

10. MONITORING

The scheme will be closely monitored by Homes 4 Wiltshire to ensure that it is operating equitably and fairly. This will include:

• Number of applications received
• Number of applications registered within ten working days
• Number of applications excluded from the register
• Number of inactive applicants
• Number of properties advertised by type, area and landlord
• Number of properties with s106 local connection required
• Number of bids and method of bidding
• Number of bids for each property by band
• Profile of those bidding, i.e. ethnicity, transfer, homeless applicant
• Number of accepted offers by band
• Number of tenancies refused at sign up & reasons
• Number of properties with multiple adverts and no bids
• Number of review requests
• Number of complaints
• Number of properties excluded from choice based lettings
• Mobility across the County

Other information will be collected in order to complete the P1E returns and in order to assess any additional areas of operation, as appropriate. The Partnership will review the policy twice a year and minor amendments may be

proposed. Should any significant amendments be required, consultation would be undertaken with relevant stakeholders prior to a decision being made.

11. REFERENCES

This policy has been framed with reference to:

Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002
Part VI of the housing act relating to the allocation of accommodation

Code of Guidance for local housing authorities – Allocation of Accommodation

Code of Guidance for local housing authorities – Allocation of Accommodation: Choice Based Lettings

Fair and flexible: statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England

Acts of the UK Parliament
This policy has been framed with reference to the following Acts of the UK Parliament

Data Protection Act 1998
Homes 4 Wiltshire is committed to adhering to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. Individuals are entitled under the Act to request details of their personal data held by Homes 4 Wiltshire. There may be a charge for providing this information.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995
The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes it unlawful for Homes 4 Wiltshire to discriminate against disabled people.

Freedom of Information Act 2004
Homes 4 Wiltshire complies with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2004.

Human Rights Act 1998
In accordance with articles 8 and 14 of the Human Rights Act 1998, the Lettings Policy ensures that the right to respect for applicant's private and family life is taken into account when assessing housing need. The housing need is assessed taken into consideration a variety of factors including support requirements; bearing in mind the need to not discriminate on grounds such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, or association with a national minority.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places the Council under a general duty to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups. Homes 4 Wiltshire will not tolerate any form of racial discrimination.

Sex Discrimination Act 1975
The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 makes it unlawful for Homes 4 Wiltshire to discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in the provision of housing.

12. APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Vulnerable Applicant's Policy
The Allocation of Accommodation Code of Guidance for Local Housing Authorities has highlighted the fact that certain applicants, for example those with physical or mental impairments, who may have difficulty in making an application for accommodation should not be denied the opportunity of exercising choice over the type and location of property offered.

Housing authorities should therefore ensure that help and support is made available to people who are likely to have problems in making an application without assistance. This is especially the case when the allocations scheme involves the participation of applicants in actively choosing their accommodation and housing authorities must ensure that these, more vulnerable applicants, are offered the assistance and support they require. Those considered potentially vulnerable include people who are or have experienced:
- 16-17 year olds
- Care leavers
- Chaotic lifestyles and those of NFA, including rough sleepers
- Deaf
- Domestic violence and other serious harassment victims
- Dual sensory impairment
- Equality group – religion and belief
- Equality group – sexual orientation
- Families with identified needs
- Homeless or in temporary accommodation (individuals and families)
- Learning disabilities
- Low literacy levels
- Mental health issues
- Offenders/Ex-offenders
- Older people and housebound people
- People in hospital ready for discharge
- People with HIV/AIDS
- Physical disabilities
- Prostitution
- Refugees and others for whom English is not their first language
- Substance misuse
- Teenage parents and lone parents
- Travellers
- Unemployed and those on low incomes
- Visual impairment
- Youth offenders

However, not every person in a vulnerable group will need support in order to participate in this scheme and there will be other individuals, not considered to be in a vulnerable group who will need assistance and support.

Identifying Vulnerable People

There are several ways to identify people who may need assistance in making appropriate choices:

- Identifying those who are supported by a statutory or voluntary agency
- Asking people on the application form to indicate whether or not they are in need of support
- Identified by housing officer at the point of application
- Identifying those either not bidding or bidding for inappropriate properties

For vulnerable applicants there are three main barriers to active participation in Choice Based Lettings:
- Lack of access to advertising / scheme information
- Lack of access to bidding mechanisms
- Difficulty with making or articulating choices

Access to advertising/scheme information

Properties will be advertised as widely as possible throughout the County, this will include the Homes 4 Wiltshire website, all council and housing association reception areas and at information points across the County eg Libraries, Doctors surgeries and Health Centres, Hostels, voluntary agencies and shops.

If the applicant cannot access any of these methods of advertising then the advert will be sent to the applicant's home or to a nominated contact for the applicant.

Access to bidding mechanisms

Applicants are able to bid in person at council and housing association offices, on the website, by telephone through the bidline or by a nominated proxy bidder. There is also an option for the Homes 4 Wiltshire IT system to bid for suitable properties on behalf of the applicant.

Difficulty with making or articulating choices.

Cooperation and good communication between partners in the scheme and all appropriate agencies in Wiltshire is vital to Homes 4 Wiltshire.

Homes 4 Wiltshire officers will establish what support needs the applicant has and how the applicant should be supported in order to participate in the scheme.

Training will be offered to support agencies to enable them to assist their clients in making informed choices.

All agencies funded through Supporting People will be able to provide their clients with help on housing issues.

Monitoring

The effective use of monitoring information can be used to identify people who need assistance in bidding;

- Homes 4 Wiltshire will monitor:
- People not bidding
- People bidding for unsuitable properties
- People needing assisted bidding
- Speed of success for people considered vulnerable, comparing those with and without support

Appendix 2

Multiple need matrix

Multiple needs Gold Plus band
X 2

Gold band criteria

High medical needs
High welfare or support needs
Insecurity of tenure
Move on
Harassment
Under occupation
No fixed accommodation
Multiple needs (2 x silver)
Split household

Multiple needs Silver band X 2

Silver band criteria

Medium medical needs
Medium welfare or support needs
Serious disrepair
Overcrowded
Children in flats
Lacking facilities
Armed forces
Tied accommodation

Appendix 3

Bedroom eligibility

Any expected child will be included as part of the household when calculating minimum bedroom requirements

Household make-up	Minimum Bedroom	Maximum Bedroom
Single person	1 Bed	2 Bed
Couple	1 Bed	2 Bed
Single or Couple with 1 Child	2 Bed	3 Bed
Single or Couple with 2 Children (both under 10yrs)	2 Bed	3 Bed
Single or Couple with 2 Children (one of which over 10yrs)	3 Bed	3 Bed
Single or Couple with 3 Children (all under 10yrs)	3 Bed	3 Bed
Single or Couple with 3 Children (one of which over 10yrs)	3 Bed	4 Bed
Single or Couple with 4 Children (all under 10yrs)	3 Bed	4 Bed
Single or Couple with 4 Children (one of which over 10yrs)	4 Bed	5 Bed
Single or Couple with 5 Children (all under 10 yrs)	4 Bed	5 Bed
Single or Couple with 5 Children (one of which over 10yrs)	4 Bed	6 Bed
Single or Couple with 6 or more Children	4 Bed	6 Bed

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Equality Impact Assessment.
Homes 4 Wiltshire Review.

Stage 1: Screening for Relevance

Please use the following template to help determine whether an equality impact assessment (EIA) is required.

Name of the Strategy / Policy / Procedure / Practice
Homes 4 Wiltshire Review

Author;
Housing Strategy & Support

Name: Sarah Hartley	Job title and directorate: Performance & Research Officer, EDPH	Date:	Signature:

Does the strategy / policy / procedure / practice require an equality impact assessment (EIA)?
Please answer the following questions.

1. What are the main aims, purpose and outcomes of the strategy / policy / procedure / practice and how do these fit in with the wider aims of the organisation?

Purpose:

Following on from the successful launch of the partnership's Wiltshire wide allocations service in March 2009 it was felt that an early review of the service would assist in improving the way we give access to council and housing association homes. The partnership currently has around 10,000 customers and over thirty landlords offering over 22,000 homes across the county. We want to be sure that landlords are able to make the best use of their homes and that all customers, including the most vulnerable, have good and ready access to the service.

This fits into the following organisational goals:

- High quality, low cost, customer-focused services;
- Local, open, transparent decision-making;
- Working together to support Wiltshire's communities, building social capital.
- Being inclusive and supporting others

2. How will these aims affect our statutory duty to:

1. Promote equality of opportunity?
2. Eliminate discrimination and harassment?
3. Promote good community relations and positive attitudes towards disabled people?
4. Encourage participation of disabled people, including the consideration of more favourable treatment of disabled people?

1. Promote equality of opportunity – enabling all people to have appropriate accommodation for their needs
2. Eliminate discrimination by providing a service open to everyone.
3. Community relations are of course key to social housing – encouraging communication between communities and positive attitudes. The housing criteria within Homes4Wiltshire encourage the development of mixed and sustainable communities.
4. Encourage participation of disabled people – WSUN has been involved in identifying needs, and the Review specifically considers e.g. accessibility to the CBL system, alternative formats to improve access, and the accommodation needs of disabled people, in order to encourage participation in the housing register.
5. Protect and promote human rights – HRA duty to provide (accommodation) support to asylum seekers; to provide equitable treatment for minority groups.

3. Are there any aspects of the strategy / policy / procedure / practice, including how it is delivered, or accessed, that could contribute to inequality? This should relate to all areas of our statutory duties.

N/a – this Review is intended to enable equality in housing provision and should not contribute to inequality.

4. Will the strategy / policy / procedure / practice have an impact (positive or negative) upon the lives of people, including members of particular communities and groups? What evidence do you have for this?

The Review has been implemented in order to enable service users, stakeholders and interested parties to comment on the Homes4Wiltshire service. In this sense, the uptake of recommendations made during the consultation period will, it is hoped, positively impact the lives of people in Wiltshire. Assessing the feedback and making changes to the Homes4Wiltshire policy and service in relation to this feedback is an ongoing process (see action plan at end of document).

5. Are particular communities or groups likely to have different needs, experiences and attitudes in relation to the strategy / policy / procedure / practice?

The consultation on the Review identified a different attitude between service users and the H4W Partners in regard to the maximisation/minimisation of the housing register; whereby service users on the whole wanted to see a smaller list, thus maximising their own chances of making a successful bid; whereas the Partners wanted to ensure that all in housing need were registered with H4W.

The consultation also identified some competition between the different bands, such that there was a widespread (mis-)conception expressed by applicants not in the platinum band that all available properties were going to applicants in the platinum band.

Is an EIA required?

If the policy is not relevant to any aspect of the statutory duties or wider equality responsibilities, there is

no need to conduct an EIA. **In this event, please contact the Corporate Equality and Diversity team to discuss this decision**

Remember:

   'High' relevance will have potential / actual impact on 3 out of the 5 areas under the statutory duties

   'Medium' relevance will have potential / actual impact on 2 of the areas

   'Low' relevance policies will not have any impact relating to the areas under the statutory duties

The strategy / policy / procedure / practice is assessed as (please delete appropriately):

- HIGH Relevance, therefore a full EIA will be done by 20th April 2010

Author of Screening for Relevance			
Name:	Job title and directorate:	Date:	Signature:
Director Level Sign-off (if EIA will not be done)			
Name:	Job title and directorate:	Date:	Signature:

Stage 2: Full Assessment

Step 1– scoping the equality impact assessment (EIA)

Building on the material included at the screening stage, you should begin the EIA by determining its scope. The EIA should consider the impact or likely impact of the policy in relation to all areas of our remit, including human rights. The EIA should be proportionate to the significance and coverage of the policy.

1.1.   Name of the strategy / policy / procedure / practice
Homes 4 Wiltshire Review
1.2.   What are the main aims, purpose and outcomes of strategy / policy / procedure / practice and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation?
Purpose: Following on from the successful launch of the partnership's Wiltshire wide allocations service in March 2009 it was felt that an early review of the service would assist in improving the way we give access to council and housing association homes. The partnership currently has around 10,000 customers and over thirty landlords offering over 22,000 homes across the county. We want to be sure that landlords are able to make the best use of their homes and that all customers, including the most vulnerable,

have good and ready access to the service.

This fits into the following organisational goals:

- High quality, low cost, customer-focused services;
- Local, open, transparent decision-making;
- Working together to support Wiltshire's communities, building social capital.
- Being inclusive and supporting others

1.3. List the main activities relating to the strategy / policy / procedure / practice and identify who is likely to benefit from it

The main activities under the Review are;

- Gauging current service provision for households
- Identifying gaps in the provision of current services
- Identifying methods of improvement to the services.

Those who benefit from it will be

- People on the housing register in Wiltshire
- People in need of affordable housing
- Wiltshire Council and other partner agencies because they will work within a common framework to ensure the smooth and equitable delivery of the Homes4Wiltshire service.
- Homes4Wiltshire staff because they will have clear guidance as result of the strategy that will be developed from this strategy statement

What do you already know about the relevance of the strategy / policy / procedure / practice? What are the main issues you need to consider?

Some things to consider:
- *How is the policy likely to affect the promotion of equality in the areas of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or human rights?*
- *How do you think that the policy will meet the needs of different communities and groups?*
- *What consultation has already been undertaken which is relevant to the development of this policy?*
- *Are there any examples of existing good practice in this area – such as measures to improve access to the policy among particular groups?*
- *Do you think that your policy presents any problems or barriers to any community or group?*

1.4. What data, research and other evidence or information is available which will be relevant to this EIA?

Please note that this Impact Assessment is draft and ongoing – assessment to continue in line with the Review.

1. The Review is likely to affect the promotion of equality in the areas of age and disability, as it considers the housing needs of elderly, young and disabled service users in relation to the provision of adapted or suitable accommodation.
2. The Review aims to address the needs of these groups by ensuring an equitable provision of housing, suitable to their specific needs, and by ensuring access to the service is catered to user needs.
3. The Review involves an open consultation period which ended on 5th March 2010; the feedback from this consultation will directly inform the recommendations of the Review.

4. Existing good practice in the area of choice-based lettings identifies access to information and support in bidding as key. The Review expands upon the provision already made in the H4W Policy for providing support to service users unable to make bids on their own, allowing for support in the making of bids and describing the different means of accessing the service.

5. The Review aims to lessen problems or barriers, identified in the consultation process, in accessing the service. The aim is to ensure that all communities and groups are able to access and use the service, with targeted support provided as required. Homes 4 Wiltshire officers will establish what support needs the applicant has and how the applicant should be supported in order to participate in the scheme. Training will be offered to support agencies to enable them to assist their clients in making informed choices. All agencies funded through Supporting People will be able to provide their clients with help on housing issues.

1.5. What further data or information do you need to carry out the assessment?

As the Review process is taken forward, further data and information needs will be identified so that future impact assessments can be strengthened.

Step 2 – Involvement, Consultation and Partnerships

When considering how you will involve and consult other people in developing the policy, you need to think about internal and external audiences and all areas of the statutory duties.

2.1. Please use the table directly below to outline any previous involvement or consultation which is relevant to this strategy / policy / procedure / practice

Equality target group	Briefly describe what you did, with whom, when and where. Please provide a brief summary of the responses gained and links to relevant documents, as well as any actions.
Age	Age Concern, WASS4YP (Focus group)
Disability	Mental Health and Learning Disability teams, Housing OT, Reablement and the emergency duty team (Focus group)
Gender	
Gender reassignment	
Race	WREC (Focus group)
Religion or belief	WREC (Focus group)
Sexual orientation	
Human rights	
Other	DCS, CAB, Community 4, Alabare, Action for the Blind, Splitz (single parents) (Focus group)

2.2. If consultation and involvement of specific groups did not take place, please state why

Involvement/consultation with agencies other than those listed above has not been directly undertaken as the Policy sets a broad framework which reflects a range of relevant legislation and guidance.

2.3. What do previous consultations show about the potential take-up of any resulting activities or services?

In the development of the Review, consultation with partner agencies took place which included information gathering days and an open consultation with service users, stakeholders and local agencies.

We achieved a balance of partner and service user input by:
- Using a web-based consultation process supplemented by mail-outs and advertising at local access points in order to increase accessibility to the consultation process by service users.

| | - | Providing regular updates and holding partnership meetings attending by partner RSLs, in order to identify unmet needs and to consider options for service improvement. |

2.4. How are external partners involved, or how do you are intend to involve external partners, in delivering the aims of this strategy / policy / procedure / practice? (if applicable)

The following external partners were involved in consulting on the H4W Review:

New Futures
A2 dominion
English Churches HA
Fosseway HA
Guinness Trust
Hanover HA
Hastoe HA*
Housing 21 HA
James Butcher HA
Jephson HA
John Groom HA
Kennet Housing Society*
Kingfisher HA
Knightstone HA
New Downland HA
Orbit HA
Raglan HA
Ridgeway Community HA
Salvation Army HA
Sarsen HA
Somer Community Housing Trust
Sanctuary Shaftesbury HA
Signpost Housing Association
South Western Housing Society
Sovereign HA
Swaythling HA*
Westlea HA
Western Challenge HA
West Country HA
Selwood Housing*
Wiltshire Rural HA

* Housing Associations without Charitable Status

Step 3 – data collection and evidence

3.1. What evidence or information do you already have about how this policy might affect equality, and what does this tell you?

Please cite any quantitative (for example, statistical or research) and qualitative evidence (for example, monitoring data, complaints, surveys, focus groups, questionnaires, meetings, interviews) relating to groups having different needs, experiences or attitudes in relation to this project. Describe briefly what evidence you have used.

Statistical research and surveying indicates:

- That people with learning disabilities and mental health difficulties are considerably more likely to have difficulties accessing the service (source: Social Exclusion Unit, 'Mental Health and Social Exclusion', 2004).

- The Disability Rights Commission states that when organisations impact assess CBL schemes they need to ask the following questions:
  is advertising accessible?
  are a property's accessible features advertised?
  does a mechanism exist to identify the requirements of disabled applicants?
  is there a mechanism to allow extra time for disabled applicants [for example to make decisions or view properties] if they need it?
  is there a mechanism for providing support in making applications?

- The ODPM CBL research document ('Piloting Choice Based Lettings – An Evaluation', ODPM, May 2004') published in May 2004 centred on ten programmes that had operated across the country between April 2001 and March 2003. The research identified that in certain circumstances CBL can have a differential impact on certain vulnerable households, both in registering with the system and taking an active part in the bidding process. In particular, rates of bidding from older persons was low. However, the overall message emanating from the pilot projects was not to underestimate the ability of vulnerable households to actively take part in the system. For example, this same research reported a greater uptake in BME households both registering for and accessing accommodation. The research also found no evidence to suggest that CBL would have a differential impact on account of faith or sexual orientation.

- As an update to the above the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2006 published an updated research programme centred on thirteen case study CBL schemes ('*Monitoring the Long term Impact of Choice Based Lettings,* Department for Communities and Local Government, October 2006')*. Whilst the report struggled to obtain the necessary data to make any firm conclusions, where data was available it found that the quantitative share of vulnerable households accessing accommodation was higher in representation when compared against like representation on associated waiting lists. What it could not determine however was whether the CBL schemes had acted to the detriment of vulnerable households in accessing the more popular housing stocks. The paper also reported that by and large most schemes had experienced a rising proportion of properties let to BME households with a growing representation from Afro-Caribbean and 'Other' BME households.

3.2. What does available data tell you about the potential take-up of any resulting activities or services?

Assessing national and local research and data (both qualitative and quantitative) has enabled us to assess the potential take-up of the service, and this has informed the Review's key priorities of ensuring equitable access for all to the service. As described above, some vulnerable applicants are known to have difficulties accessing information / making a bid, and the H4W Policy and Review makes provision for the identification of these service users and for their support by the H4W staff. Rural communities are also known to have difficulties in accessing the service, and there is the aim to address this by instituting the Marketing Working Group, which will examine the accessibility provisions of the service. It was noted that initiatives such as the mobile libraries already serve as H4W access points, with the aim of improving access for those living in rural communities.

3.3. What additional research or data is required to fill any gaps in your understanding of the potential or known effects of the strategy / policy / procedure / practice? Have you considered commissioning new data or research?

As the Review process is taken forward, the effects of the Review and of amendments made to the H4W Policy and service as a result of the Review will be monitored by the H4W Partnership Group. Advice will be sought from the Corporate Equality & Diversity Team and from the Housing E&D officer (appointment forthcoming).

In line with CLG good practice guidance, it is a recommendation of this EIA that monitoring take place of the H4W register in order to assess whether specific needs groups are being fairly catered for. Ideally, we should know the type of property bid for, and allocated to, in terms of specific demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability) and monitor bidding and allocations in order to ensure that local trends are equitable.

Step 4 – Assessing impact and strengthening the strategy / policy / procedure / practice

What evidence do you have about how the strategy / policy / procedure / practice will affect different groups and communities in relation to equality and human rights?

4.1. How does / will the strategy / policy / procedure / practice and resulting activities affect different communities and groups?

Some things to consider:
- *Is there any potential for, or known, adverse or positive impacts of the policy?*
- *You should consider how the policy might affect communities with small populations; people affected by discrimination in multiple areas of equality (age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation); specific interest groups such as small businesses, voluntary sector agencies and other service providers.*
- *Are there examples of good practice that can be built on?*
- *You may wish to consider how the policy will be delivered or communicated.*

The Review will currently be published in English, but we recognise that it will need to be accessible in various formats, including;

- Translations
- Easy Read
- Audio

We also aim to ensure staff familiarity with the results of the Review process, such that staff are able to understand, adopt and use the principles of the H4W Policy.

The Review aims to identify gaps and to improve the Homes4Wiltshire Policy, that is, to identify housing need and respond to it in a fair and balanced manner. For example, the protection of rural communities through the prioritisation of 'local connection' in the allocation of housing need may adversely impact urban communities; but the Review will aim to balance these needs, and will actively work towards improving housing for all groups.

4.2. What measures does, or could, the strategy / policy / procedure / practice include to help promote equality of opportunity?

For example, positive measures designed to address disadvantage and reach different communities or groups?

The H4W service aims to deliver quality services without prejudice or discrimination to meet the needs of all the community; in consultation with interest groups the Review will identify specific measures to help promote equality of opportunity; and this will be monitored in an ongoing and continual manner by the H4W Partnership Group.

4.3. What measures does, or could, the strategy / policy / procedure / practice include to address existing patterns of discrimination, harassment or disproportionally?

As the Review process is taken forward, the consultation is intended to identify any issues of discrimination, harassment or dis-proportionality. In this manner, we can address any such issues from a position of knowledge. Where necessary, advice will be sought both from the corporate Equality and Diversity team and the Housing E&D officer (appointment forthcoming). The H4W Partnership will have responsibility for monitoring.

4.4. What impact will the strategy / policy / procedure / practice have on promoting good relations and wider community cohesion?

Community participation through consultation and engagement.

4.5. If the strategy / policy / procedure / practice is likely to have a negative effect ('adverse impact'), what are the reasons for this?
Consider and include comments on direct or indirect discrimination.

The implementation of the findings of this Review process will NOT have any direct adverse impact.

Any indirect discrimination in the implementation of the strategy statement will be monitored through;

- Quantitative data analysis
- Qualitative data analysis
- Assessment of outcomes under relevant performance measures, NIs and comparative data

See also 4.7 below.

4.6. What practical changes will help reduce any adverse impact on particular groups?
For example:
- *Changes in communication methods, providing language support, collecting data, revising programmes or involvement activities.*
- *Have you considered our legal responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act, including treating disabled people more favourably where necessary?*

Providing accessible communications in accordance with DDA.
This Review acknowledges and upholds the social model of disability provided by the DDA.

4.7. What evidence is there that actions to address any negative effects on one area of equality may affect other areas of equality or human rights?

As described above, the issue of local connection vs. housing need is known to involve balancing. That is, the protection and sustainment of rural communities involves the prioritisation of a local connection in the allocation of rural properties, through rural exception sites, the provisions for local connection in the H4W service, and also through the section 106 agreements. This action to protect rural communities involves an indirect discrimination against people living in towns, who are proportionally less likely to obtain housing within these rural communities.

4.8. What will be done to improve access to, and take-up of, services or understanding of the policy / strategy / function or procedure?

- Communicating the strategy statement to various interest groups / external partners
- Capacity building across staff
- Raising staff awareness

Please note that you may need to revisit this section once you have completed the policy development process.

Step 5 – Procurement and Commissioning

5.1. Consideration of external contractor obligations and partnership working

The Review process will have partnership involvement. If within the partnership arena, considerations are made to procure contracted services, this will be subject to our equalities and procurement guidelines and relevant strategy

Step 6 – making a decision

6.1. Summarise your findings and give an overview of whether the strategy / policy / procedure / practice will meet the Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and human rights

The Review process will further strengthen our commitment to helping those in housing need and to ensure the well being of communities. It will;

- Identify gaps in provision and seek improvement

- Strengthen our response, with our partners, in providing suitable and affordable accommodation to all those in housing need
- Develop citizen-focussed services which involve and reflect the needs of applicants.
- Equip staff to contribute toward the aims of the Review.

We believe that the Review meets the council's responsibility in relation to equality and human rights.

6.2. What practical actions do you recommend to reduce, justify or remove any adverse / negative impact?

Please note that these should be reflected in the action plan (see Step 8).

This assessment endorses the post-consultation recommendations of the Review that:
1. Mystery shopping be carried out in order to ensure that all staff are treating our customers equitably.
2. That a rolling programme of staff training be instituted in order to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and good practice guidance.
3. That 'local connection' should NOT be further prioritised in the banding system, as rural communities already possess high levels of protection and increasing this further would result in indefensible discrimination against urban communities.
4. That the H4W application form be reviewed and possibly changed in order to ensure compliance with the latest EHRC guidance on the monitoring of equalities.
5. That the H4W application form be reviewed and possibly changed in order to ask applicants how they would like to access the service, in order to increase our knowledge of accessibility.
6. That a Marketing Working Group be instituted to examine the logistics and costs of increasing access to the H4W service, for example through newspaper advertising.
7. That research be carried out into the restrictions on banding involved in the 'mixed communities' guidance to ensure that we are not inappropriately categorising people by reference to their band. It is recommended that this research be carried out in conjunction with research into the new 'Fair and Flexible' guidance on banding, which emphasises employment as a criterion of demarcation.
8. That property adverts carry access information, in line with DRC guidance.

The EIA further recommends that:
9. In line with CLG good practice guidance, that monitoring take place of the H4W register in order to assess whether specific needs groups are being fairly catered for. Ideally, we should know the type of properties bid for, and allocated to, in terms of specific demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, faith, disability) and monitor bidding and allocations in order to ensure that local trends are equitable.
10. That currently there are no written provisions to allow extra time for disabled applicants (for example to make a decision or view a property) in the H4W Policy, which contravenes the DRC guidance. We note that property turnaround times and associated lost rental income is a key landlord performance indicator, thus putting pressure on the landlord to ensure that this time span is kept to a minimum. It is however recommended that the following text is inserted into the H4W Policy to address this matter and comply with DRC guidance: **'*Consideration will be given to extend both the notice period given to accept or reject an offer of accommodation and/or the tenancy commencement date in circumstances where a disabled person(s) requires such additional time on account of their personal circumstances.*'**
11. One of the key objectives of CBL is that it will contribute to community sustainability. Two of the key indicators around community cohesion involve measuring firstly tenancy sustainability and secondly the location of tenancies by socio-economic status (i.e. to ascertain for example if CBL is creating 'clusters' of households that were economically inactive or from the same ethnic background). We recommend that monitoring of this data take place.

Step 7 – monitoring, evaluating and reviewing

7.1.   How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes?

This may include policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems.

The implementation of any recommendations as result of this Review process will be monitored by the H4W Partnership Group. This will include recommendations for undertaking further reviews and amendments as monitoring information is assessed. This will be a continual process.

7.2. How will you monitor the impact and effectiveness of the strategy / policy / procedure / practice?

This could include adaptations or extensions to current monitoring systems, relevant timeframes and a commitment to carry out an EIA review once the policy has been in place for one year.

Any direct / indirect impact resulting from the implementation of the Review will be assessed through;
- Quantitative data analysis
- Qualitative data analysis
- Assessment of outcomes under relevant performance measures, NIs and comparative data

The implementation of the findings of this Review will be the responsibility of the Homes 4 Wiltshire Partnership. This is a multi agency group that will meet bi-monthly for the next 12 months in order to ensure delivery of the findings of the Review.

7.3.   Give details of how the results of the impact assessment will be published

There is legal requirement to publish assessments. Completed assessments should be first be quality assured and then, once signed off, be published on the Council website, via the Web Team.

- Impact assessment will be published, once signed-off and approved, on our website and made available to the public via freedom of information
- Outcomes of this impact assessment, and any future subsequent assessments will be made available in to the public

Step 8 – action plan

Taking into consideration the responses outlined in Steps 1-7, complete the action plan below (if appropriate).

	Actions	Target date	Responsible post holder and Directorate	Monitoring post holder and Directorate
Involvement, Consultation and Partnerships	To continue the H4W Partnership meetings for the next 12 months in order to ensure successful delivery of the findings of the Review	March 2011		
Data collection and evidence	The Review recommends data collection and evidencing through the Marketing Working Group and the changing of the H4W application form to monitor equalities and accessibility.			
Assessment and analysis	The Review is ongoing at this stage and will be assessed bi-monthly	Ongoing		
Procurement and Commissioning	n/a at this stage			
Monitoring, evaluating and		Ongoing		

reviewing	The H4W Partnership meetings will monitor and evaluate, and make provision for any further reviews.			

Sign-off

The final stage of the EIA is to formally sign off the document as being a complete, rigorous and robust assessment
The strategy / policy / procedure / practice has been fully assessed in relation to its potential effects on equality and all relevant concerns have been addressed.

Author of strategy / policy / procedure / practice and EIA			
Name: Graham Hogg	Job title and directorate: Service Director – Housing	Date:	Signature:
Quality check: screening document has been checked by:			
Name: Sarah Hartley	Date:		Signature:
Director level (sign-off)			
Name: Graham Hogg	Job title and directorate: Service Director – Housing	Date:	Signature:

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Appendix 4 – Outcome of proposals considered as part of the Homes 4 Wiltshire Review:

Proposal	Responses	Partnership Recommendation
Question 1 – Access and Publicity		
Undertake a piece of work to follow up with applicants who have not re-applied for housing	Yes – 2 No – 6	Disagree with recommendation – instead concentrate on improved marketing of Homes 4 Wiltshire
Re-consider newspaper advertising, providing details to the landlords of costs and looking at how we can accommodate those raising concerns about the newspapers by direct mail out	Yes – 9 No – 4	Agreed to establish a Marketing Working Group to consider general marketing issues and resource implications
Question 2 – Refusals		
Introduce a limited number of bids available each week	Yes – 11 No – 10	No change recommended as goes against the principles of choice
Introduce a limited number of refusals allowed	Yes – 16 No – 2	Agreed that if an applicant unreasonable refuses 3 offers on properties for which they have bid, they will be "demoted" to the Bronze band for a period of 6 months
Enable applicants to select their first, second and third choices when bidding	Yes – 9 No – 3	Postpone decision until outcome of further discussions on Question 3 is known
Make photographs compulsory with any advert	Yes – 18 No – 1	Agreed, but giving landlords a period of 6 months to build up a portfolio and not in exceptional circumstances
Question 3 – Reducing process time		
To roll out the pilot to the remaining landlords on a permanent basis allowing shortlisting to be undertaken by the landlords with two sub-proposals, either: • Landlords shortlisting and sending matches for approval from Homes 4 Wiltshire. Homes 4 Wiltshire will ensure that landlords are applying their policies	Yes – 21 No – 5	Agreed to defer this decision until after the next Partnership meeting, at which feedback from a full evaluation of the pilot be presented to the Partners.

consistently • Landlords shortlisting without input from Homes 4 Wiltshire with a spot check on 10% of all lets		
Question 4 – Local connection in villages		
To continue advertising rural properties openly for all applicants to bid for, or To restrict a certain percentage of properties for applicants with a local connection only	Openly – 12 Restricted – 7	Agreed to refer this matter to Wiltshire Housing Partnership, as it impacts on Planning as well as allocations, and is primarily a political not an operational decision.
Question 5 – Status of private sector tenants		
Consider introducing a new Private Rented category in the silver band for applicants living in private rented accommodation (regardless of whether or not it is suitable)	Yes – 8 No – 18	That the issue is not private / social status but housing need. No recommendations for change.
If it is agreed that a new category is introduced, should Private Rented count towards multiple needs	Not applicable	
Question 6 – Waiting Time		
Consider if application date should override housing need	Yes – 4 No – 13 Application date needs to be factored in – 13	The principle of choice-based lettings is as a register of housing need; and application date is already factored in as a decision element within the bands. No recommendations for change.
Question 7 – Information on winning bids		
Change the recent lets data to display information based on the applicants who was actually successful	Yes – 21 No – 7	That the recent lets data be changed to provide information on the successful applicant.
Question 8 – Marketing Information		
Improve the amount of marketing information available and its distribution	Yes – 7 No – 4	Passed to the Marketing Working Group for consideration
Question 9 – Customer Services		
Develop the knowledge of the service with Customer	Yes – 8	Agreed a rolling programme of training for

Services	No – 0	Wiltshire Council, partner RSL and stakeholder staff
Question 10 – Eligibility for property type		
Either amend the system to enable customers to be given set property eligibility, therefore knowing what they are eligible to bid for; or Leave the system as it is, enabling customers to be given minimum and maximum bedroom eligibility but leaving the property type open to the landlord	Change – 9 Leave as is – 10	Agreed to leave the system as it is, in order to accommodate the different policies of partners regarding occupancy levels.
Question 11 – The role of the landlords		
Landlords to conduct pre-void inspections to enable an indication of when the property will be available to be advertised with the property details Could adverts contain a projected "available for letting" date to guide bidders?	Yes – 20 No – 4	Agreed that landlords will conduct pre-void inspections wherever possible. This will not lead to the provision of a projected "available for letting date", as the properties are advertised before an inspection can be carried out.
Question 12 – Improved search facility		
Liaise with Abritas to ascertain if the search options can be amended and if so at what cost	Yes – 10 No – 7	Agreed
Question 13 – Knowledge base for front line staff		
Ensure all staff are adequately trained and able to deal with a wide range of customer queries	Yes – 9 No – 0	Agreed to identify any areas of concern and provide targeted training
Question 14 – Allocation of Council Housing		
Amend the Homes 4 Wiltshire policy to accommodate flexibility for Wiltshire Council's Housing Management and internal transfer arrangements	Yes – 4 No – 8	Agreed policy amendment to clarify that all landlords can label some properties for transfer applicants only – no need to make specific provision for Wiltshire Council Housing Management

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Appendix 5 – Homes 4 Wiltshire Service Review consultation

Consultation took place with:

Age Concern
Citizens Advice Bureau
Community 4
Alabere
Action for Blind
Splitz
WASS4YP (Wiltshire Accommodation Support Scheme for Young People)
Wiltshire Racial Equality Council
Support Providers

Wiltshire Council departments:

Homes 4 Wiltshire
Housing Options
Adult Care
Customer Services
Libraries

Customers (4 meetings were held – one in each district – for existing applicants on Homes 4 Wiltshire register and applicants who had recently been housed through Homes 4 Wiltshire)

Public consultation was via the internet, libraries and hub offices.

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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject :	**Revenue Budget Monitoring: April 2009 To February 2010**
Cabinet Member:	**Councillor Fleur de Rhé-Philipe, Finance, Performance and Risk**
Key Decision:	**No**

Executive Summary

Overall it is projected that the Council will outturn in line with the budget. Continued close monitoring of the budget is on-going.

Proposal

The Cabinet is asked to note the report.

Reason for Proposal

That Members are aware of the Council's budgetary pressures.

Martin Donovan
Chief Finance Officer

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject :	**Revenue Budget Monitoring: April 2009 To February 2010**
Cabinet Member:	**Councillor Fleur de Rhé-Philipe, Finance, Performance and Risk**
Key Decision:	**No**

Purpose of Report

1.   To advise Cabinet of the latest position regarding the revenue budget monitoring for 2009-10.

Background

2.   During the 2009-10 financial year, departments have developed budget action plans to ensure their outturn position is within budget. As reported last month there is a corporate contingency of £1 million to help ensure the Council remains within budget.

3.   Although the foreast outturn is within budget, departments have taken action to offset significant cost pressures during the financial year, particularly around demand led services and the impact of the economic downturn. These pressures have totalled over £9 million during the year and are summarised below.

Department	Pressure	£m
TEL and EDPH	Loss of income due to economic downturn e.g. car parking and development services	3.90
TEL and EDPH	Additional growth e.g. winter gritting programme and Climate Change	1.05
DCS	Pressure on demand led services e.g. adult social care	1.38
DCE	Pressure on demand led services e.g. looked after children and SEN transport	1.75
DOR	ICT related cost pressures	1.00
Total Cost Pressures absorbed during the year		**9.08**

4.   These pressures have been actively managed through the budget action plans as developed by the departments during the year.

5. This month's budget monitoring report represents month 11 of the financial year. The next budget monitoring report will be the outturn report which will be reported to Cabinet in June.

6. The successful management of the £9.08 million costs pressures is in addition to the efficiency measures that were already built into the budget for 2009-10. These efficiency measures were over £10 million and included the £8.5 million efficiencies delivered from One Council for Wiltshire.

    Department of Transport, Environment and Leisure

7. As per last month, it is forecast that the projected outturn will be in line with the budget. The budget continues to be closely monitored, with specific focus on the cost of winter gritting. Currently it is forecast that this will be managed within budget.

    Department of Economic Development, Planning & Housing

8. As per last month, the Department continues to forecast an underspend of £35,000. The budget continues to be closely monitored.

    Department of Community Services

9. The department is continuing to take appropriate action to address residual financial pressures of £0.349 million. These are needed to ensure the Department remains within budget.

10. As a result of the demand led nature of the Adult Social Care budgets such as Services for Older People, the department is continuing to keep under review the level of demand it is facing. The current level of known demand is reflected in the budget forecasts. However, there is evidence, both locally and nationally, to suggest that the demand for services has grown and is growing and as a result, the service continues to face budget pressures, which will potentially continue into the next financial year. In particular, there is evidence of growing demand as a consequence of the current economic climate. Within Adult Care services this is reflected in increasing numbers of self funders becoming eligible for local authority funded services.

    Department of Children and Education

11. The department is continuing to take appropriate action to address residual financial pressures of £0.686 million. As previously reported these are as a result of increased external placements for Looked after Children following increased number of asylum seekers and movements from other local authorities. The department is also having to address increased pressures in other budget areas such as After Care.

12.	The Department continues to forecast to outturn with a slight underspend of £15,000. The budget continues to be closely monitored.

Main Considerations for the Council

13.	To note the current budget monitoring report.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

14.	None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

Equality and Diversity Impact of the Proposal

15.	No equality and diversity issues have been identified as arising from this report.

Legal Implications

16.	None have been identified as arising directly from this report

Risk Assessment

17.	SAP provides the Council's new financial management system. Consequently it has been necessary to confirm the integrity of SAP's financial reporting. One of the particular areas of focus has been the need to link financial information with other management data to support reliable forecasting of demand led budget within the Department of Community Services and the Department of Children and Education. Work continues to be undertaken in this respect.

Financial Implications

18.	Overall the Council is forecast to outturn within budget. However this is dependent upon all departments remaining within budget.

Martin Donovan
Chief Finance Officer

Report Author: Martin Donovan

Unpublished documents relied upon in the preparation of this report: NONE
Environmental impact of the recommendations contained in this report: NONE

Appendices :

Appendix 1 – detailed revenue budget monitoring statement.

Wiltshire Council Revenue Budget Monitoring Statement   **28-Feb-10**

		Approved Budget 2009-10	Profiled Budget at 28-02-2010	Actual Position 28-02-2010	Projected Position for Year	Projected Variation for Year	Variation as % of Approved Budget
		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	
SUMMARY							
Children and Education	Gross	378.500	347.684	122.628	379.186	(0.686)	(0.2%)
	Income	-324.859	-68.242	-60.045	-324.859	-	-
	Net	**53.641**	**279.442**	**62.583**	**54.327**	**(0.686)**	**(1.3%)**
Community Services	Gross	153.116	141.003	144.208	154.049	(0.933)	(0.6%)
	Income	-38.140	-34.343	-33.782	-38.724	0.584	(1.5%)
	Net	**114.976**	**106.660**	**110.426**	**115.325**	**(0.349)**	**(0.3%)**
Transport, Environment & Leisure	Gross	118.331	107.104	104.048	115.722	2.609	2.2%
	Income	-32.585	-30.037	-26.434	-29.976	(2.609)	8.0%
	Net	**85.746**	**77.067**	**77.614**	**85.746**	**(0.000)**	**(0.0%)**
Economic Development, Planning & Housing	Gross	26.416	24.214	21.835	24.862	1.554	5.9%
	Income	-15.204	-13.937	-11.632	-13.685	(1.519)	10.0%
	Net	**11.212**	**10.277**	**10.203**	**11.177**	**0.035**	**0.3%**
Department of Resources	Gross	188.144	176.126	160.324	188.019	0.125	0.1%
	Income	-129.684	-118.829	-122.411	-129.574	(0.110)	0.1%
	Net	**58.460**	**57.297**	**37.913**	**58.445**	**0.015**	**0.0%**
Corporate Headings							
Movement To / From Reserves		-11.897	-10.906	-	-11.897	-	-
Capital Financing		20.085	18.411	4.412	20.085	-	-
GRAND TOTAL		**332.223**	**538.248**	**303.151**	**333.208**	**(0.985)**	**(0.3%)**

Note: Approved Budget is original budget plus authorised changes.   **Note overspendings are shown in brackets**

Wiltshire Council Revenue Budget Monitoring Statement **28-Feb-10**

		Approved Budget 2009-10 £m	Profiled Budget at 28-02-2010 £m	Actual Position 28-02-2010 £m	Projected Position for Year £m	Projected Variation for Year £m	Variation as % of Approved Budget
DETAIL							
Children and Education							
Commissioning & Performance	Gross Costs	250.856	230.904	9.455	250.854	0.002	0.0%
	Income	-250.614	-0.248	-36.960	-250.614	-	-
	Net	**0.242**	**230.656**	**-27.505**	**0.240**	**0.002**	**0.8%**
Children & Families	Gross Costs	30.471	27.936	29.770	31.171	(0.700)	(2.3%)
	Income	-0.447	-0.409	-0.654	-0.447	-	-
	Net	**30.024**	**27.527**	**29.116**	**30.724**	**(0.700)**	**(2.3%)**
Targeted Services	Gross Costs	17.553	15.960	15.436	17.375	0.178	1.0%
	Income	-7.586	-6.890	-1.956	-7.586	-	-
	Net	**9.967**	**9.070**	**13.480**	**9.789**	**0.178**	**1.8%**
Schools & Learning	Gross Costs	79.620	72.884	67.967	80.044	(0.424)	(0.5%)
	Income	-66.212	-60.695	-20.475	-66.212	-	-
	Net	**13.408**	**12.189**	**47.492**	**13.832**	**(0.424)**	**(3.2%)**
Agreed Recovery Actions still to be actioned	Gross Costs	-	-	-	-0.258	0.258	
Sub Total	**Gross Costs**	**378.500**	**347.684**	**122.628**	**379.186**	**(0.686)**	**(0.2%)**
	Income	**-324.859**	**-68.242**	**-60.045**	**-324.859**	**-**	**-**
	Net	**53.641**	**279.442**	**62.583**	**54.327**	**(0.686)**	**(1.3%)**

Note: Approved Budget is original budget plus authorised changes. **Note overspendings are shown in brackets**

All DSG related projections are highlighted *

Wiltshire Council Revenue Budget Monitoring Statement   28-Feb-10

		Approved Budget 2009-10 £m	Profiled Budget at 28-02-2010 £m	Actual Position 28-02-2010 £m	Projected Position for Year £m	Projected Variation for Year £m	Variation as % of Approved Budget
Community Services							
Older People	Gross Costs	47.330	42.409	43.633	49.084	(1.754)	(3.7%)
	Income	-7.902	-6.883	-7.067	-8.318	0.416	(5.3%)
	Net	**39.428**	**35.526**	**36.566**	**40.766**	**(1.338)**	**(3.4%)**
Physical Impairment	Gross Costs	7.636	7.084	8.374	8.666	(1.030)	(13.5%)
	Income	-1.062	-0.981	-0.811	-0.904	(0.158)	14.9%
	Net	**6.574**	**6.103**	**7.563**	**7.762**	**(1.188)**	**(18.1%)**
Learning Disabilities	Gross Costs	44.151	41.626	41.519	42.606	1.545	3.5%
	Income	-12.892	-11.995	-11.520	-13.040	0.148	(1.1%)
	Net	**31.259**	**29.631**	**29.999**	**29.566**	**1.693**	**5.4%**
Mental Health	Gross Costs	24.888	22.850	22.994	24.639	0.249	1.0%
	Income	-4.007	-3.588	-3.710	-4.086	0.079	(2.0%)
	Net	**20.881**	**19.262**	**19.284**	**20.553**	**0.328**	**1.6%**
Resources Strategy & Commissioning	Gross Costs	7.012	6.416	7.554	7.177	(0.165)	(2.4%)
	Income	-2.667	-2.073	-1.522	-2.692	0.025	(0.9%)
	Net	**4.345**	**4.343**	**6.032**	**4.485**	**(0.140)**	**(3.2%)**
Supporting People	Gross Costs	8.285	8.052	8.065	8.285	-	-
	Income	-8.175	-7.493	-7.392	-8.175	-	-
	Net	**0.110**	**0.559**	**0.673**	**0.110**	**-**	**-**
Libraries Heritage & Arts	Gross Costs	8.512	7.707	7.575	8.337	0.175	2.1%
	Income	-1.091	-1.013	-1.511	-1.091	-	-
	Net	**7.421**	**6.694**	**6.064**	**7.246**	**0.175**	**2.4%**
Community Safety	Gross Costs	1.159	1.062	0.927	1.232	(0.073)	(6.3%)
	Income	-0.291	-0.267	-0.049	-0.365	0.074	(25.4%)
	Net	**0.868**	**0.795**	**0.878**	**0.867**	**0.001**	**0.1%**
Community Leadership & Governance	Gross Costs	4.143	3.797	3.567	4.023	0.120	2.9%
	Income	-0.053	-0.050	-0.200	-0.053	-	-
	Net	**4.090**	**3.747**	**3.367**	**3.970**	**0.120**	**2.9%**
Sub Total	**Gross Costs**	**153.116**	**141.003**	**144.208**	**154.049**	**(0.933)**	**(0.6%)**
	Income	**-38.140**	**-34.343**	**-33.782**	**-38.724**	**0.584**	**(1.5%)**
	Net	**114.976**	**106.660**	**110.426**	**115.325**	**(0.349)**	**(0.3%)**

Note: Approved Budget is original budget plus authorised changes.   **Note overspendings are shown in brackets**

Wiltshire Council Revenue Budget Monitoring Statement   28-Feb-10

		Approved Budget 2009-10 £m	Profiled Budget at 28-02-2010 £m	Actual Position 28-02-2010 £m	Projected Position for Year £m	Projected Variation for Year £m	Variation as % of Approved Budget
Transport, Environment & Leisure							
Highways	Gross Costs	17.204	15.798	15.332	17.357	(0.153)	(0.9%)
	Income	-1.040	-0.954	-0.850	-0.983	(0.057)	5.5%
	Net	**16.164**	**14.844**	**14.482**	**16.374**	**(0.210)**	**(1.3%)**
Sustainable Transport	Gross Costs	35.529	31.174	30.240	34.440	1.089	3.1%
	Income	-15.429	-14.310	-14.362	-14.347	(1.082)	7.0%
	Net	**20.100**	**16.864**	**15.878**	**20.093**	**0.007**	**0.0%**
Waste Disposal	Gross Costs	21.653	19.848	16.579	19.255	2.398	11.1%
	Income	-1.128	-1.034	-0.037	-0.961	(0.167)	14.8%
	Net	**20.525**	**18.814**	**16.542**	**18.294**	**2.231**	**10.9%**
Waste Collection & Amenities	Gross Costs	21.272	19.500	19.685	21.218	0.054	0.3%
	Income	-7.824	-7.172	-4.467	-7.167	(0.657)	8.4%
	Net	**13.448**	**12.328**	**15.218**	**14.051**	**(0.603)**	**(4.5%)**
Leisure	Gross Costs	10.201	9.351	10.260	10.482	(0.281)	(2.8%)
	Income	-5.001	-4.584	-4.527	-4.671	(0.330)	6.6%
	Net	**5.200**	**4.767**	**5.733**	**5.811**	**(0.611)**	**(11.8%)**
Property	Gross Costs	9.215	8.448	9.510	9.621	(0.406)	(4.4%)
	Income	-2.163	-1.983	-2.186	-1.847	(0.316)	14.6%
	Net	**7.052**	**6.465**	**7.324**	**7.774**	**(0.722)**	**(10.2%)**
Management Support Servs & Emerg Pla	Gross Costs	3.257	2.985	2.442	3.349	(0.092)	(2.8%)
	Income	-	-	-0.005	-	-	
	Net	**3.257**	**2.985**	**2.437**	**3.349**	**(0.092)**	**(2.8%)**
Sub Total	**Gross Costs**	**118.331**	**107.104**	**104.048**	**115.722**	**2.609**	**2.2%**
	Income	**-32.585**	**-30.037**	**-26.434**	**-29.976**	**(2.609)**	**8.0%**
	Net	**85.746**	**77.067**	**77.614**	**85.746**	**(0.000)**	**(0.0%)**

Note: Approved Budget is original budget plus authorised changes.   **Note overspendings are shown in brackets**

Wiltshire Council Revenue Budget Monitoring Statement   28-Feb-10

		Approved Budget 2009-10 £m	Profiled Budget at 28-02-2010 £m	Actual Position 28-02-2010 £m	Projected Position for Year £m	Projected Variation for Year £m	Variation as % of Approved Budget
Economic Development, Planning & Housing							
Economic Development	Gross Costs	8.476	7.769	6.691	8.476	-	-
	Income	-5.651	-5.180	-4.085	-5.651	-	-
	Net	**2.825**	**2.589**	**2.606**	**2.825**	**-**	**-**
Housing Management	Gross Costs	4.889	4.481	3.908	4.427	0.462	9.4%
	Income	-2.358	-2.161	-1.559	-1.829	(0.529)	22.4%
	Net	**2.531**	**2.320**	**2.349**	**2.598**	**(0.067)**	**(2.6%)**
Public Protection	Gross Costs	5.065	4.643	4.405	4.965	0.100	2.0%
	Income	-1.074	-0.985	-1.035	-1.074	-	-
	Net	**3.991**	**3.658**	**3.370**	**3.891**	**0.100**	**2.5%**
Development Services	Gross Costs	7.986	7.321	6.831	6.994	0.992	12.4%
	Income	-6.121	-5.611	-4.953	-5.131	(0.990)	16.2%
	Net	**1.865**	**1.710**	**1.878**	**1.863**	**0.002**	**0.1%**
Sub Total	**Gross Costs**	**26.416**	**24.214**	**21.835**	**24.862**	**1.554**	**5.9%**
	Income	**-15.204**	**-13.937**	**-11.632**	**-13.685**	**(1.519)**	**10.0%**
	Net	**11.212**	**10.277**	**10.203**	**11.177**	**0.035**	**0.3%**

Note: Approved Budget is original budget plus authorised changes.   **Note overspendings are shown in brackets**

Wiltshire Council Revenue Budget Monitoring Statement   28-Feb-10

		Approved Budget 2009-10 £m	Profiled Budget at 28-02-2010 £m	Actual Position 28-02-2010 £m	Projected Position for Year £m	Projected Variation for Year £m	Variation as % of Approved Budget
Resources							
Chief Executive	Gross Costs	0.590	0.510	0.630	0.568	0.022	3.7%
	Income	-0.013	-	-0.191	-0.013	-	-
	Net	**0.577**	**0.510**	**0.439**	**0.555**	**0.022**	**3.8%**
Policy & Communications	Gross Costs	3.710	3.398	3.053	3.710	-	-
	Income	-1.865	-1.672	-0.658	-1.755	(0.110)	5.9%
	Net	**1.845**	**1.726**	**2.395**	**1.955**	**(0.110)**	**(6.0%)**
Transition Fund	Gross Costs	9.053	8.299	6.244	9.053	-	-
	Income	-	-	-	-	-	
	Net	**9.053**	**8.299**	**6.244**	**9.053**	**-**	**-**
Corp Director / Central Resources	Gross Costs	0.278	0.255	0.215	0.278	-	-
	Income	-	-	-	-	-	
	Net	**0.278**	**0.255**	**0.215**	**0.278**	**-**	**-**
Finance (including Revs & Bens)	Gross Costs	134.741	127.234	107.054	134.741	-	-
	Income	-122.220	-112.035	-117.145	-122.220	-	-
	Net	**12.521**	**15.199**	**-10.091**	**12.521**	**-**	**-**
HR	Gross Costs	2.185	2.004	1.913	2.085	0.100	4.6%
	Income	-0.380	-0.349	-0.364	-0.380	-	-
	Net	**1.805**	**1.655**	**1.549**	**1.705**	**0.100**	**5.5%**
ICT & Business Transformation	Gross Costs	17.411	15.961	21.025	17.411	-	-
	Income	-0.034	-0.031	-0.048	-0.034	-	-
	Net	**17.377**	**15.930**	**20.977**	**17.377**	**-**	**-**
Corporate Procurement	Gross Costs	2.989	2.741	2.809	3.061	(0.072)	(2.4%)
	Income	-0.800	-0.734	-0.556	-0.800	-	-
	Net	**2.189**	**2.007**	**2.253**	**2.261**	**(0.072)**	**(3.3%)**
Legal & Democratic	Gross Costs	7.630	6.963	7.135	7.530	0.100	1.3%
	Income	-2.239	-2.053	-1.712	-2.239	-	-
	Net	**5.391**	**4.910**	**5.423**	**5.291**	**0.100**	**1.9%**
Performance & Risk	Gross Costs	0.426	0.391	0.544	0.366	0.060	14.1%
	Income	-	-	-	-	-	
	Net	**0.426**	**0.391**	**0.544**	**0.366**	**0.060**	**14.1%**
Shared Services & Customer Care	Gross Costs	9.131	8.370	9.702	9.216	(0.085)	(0.9%)
	Income	-2.133	-1.955	-1.737	-2.133	-	-
	Net	**6.998**	**6.415**	**7.965**	**7.083**	**(0.085)**	**(1.2%)**
Sub Total	**Gross Costs**	**188.144**	**176.126**	**160.324**	**188.019**	**0.125**	**0.1%**
	Income	**-129.684**	**-118.829**	**-122.411**	**-129.574**	**(0.110)**	**0.1%**
	Net	**58.460**	**57.297**	**37.913**	**58.445**	**0.015**	**0.0%**

Note: Approved Budget is original budget plus authorised changes.   Note overspendings are shown in brackets

Page 224

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject :   **Capital Budget Monitoring: April 2009 to February 2010**

Cabinet Member: Councillor Fleur de Rhé-Philipe –
Finance, Performance and Risk

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary

The report reflects the position of the Capital Budget as at the end of February 2010.

There is a projected variation of £3.296m against the full year budget for 2009/10.

The report details budget changes which are to be noted by Cabinet.

Proposal

That Cabinet:

a.) note the current financial position of the 2009/10 Capital Budget and

b.) note the budget changes in sections 1 and 2 of Appendix B.

Reasons for Proposals

To inform cabinet of the current financial position of the 2009/10 capital budget and to identify schemes within the programme where expenditure is not progressing as anticipated.

Martin Donovan
Chief Finance Officer

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

20 April 2010

Subject :	Capital Budget Monitoring: April 2009 to February 2010
Cabinet Member:	**Councillor Fleur de Rhé-Philipe – Finance, Performance and Risk**
Key Decision:	**No**

Purpose of Report

1.   To update Cabinet of the position of the Capital Programme after 11 Months (1st April 2009 to 28th February 2010) of the 2009/10 financial year.

Background

2.   Since the last Cabinet meeting the budget has been adjusted as follows;

	£m	Notes
Capital budget (as at 26th January 2010)	**129.254**	
Budget amendments;		
Budget adjustments awaiting Cabinet approval in April's meeting (CFO Delegations)	-7.471	Net budget adjustments as detailed in Appendix B of this report.
Capital budget 2009/10	**121.783**	

3.   Appendix B to the report contains budget adjustments which Cabinet are asked to note (Section 1 and 2).

Summary of Current Position

4.   The financial position of the 2009/10 capital budget is summarised below;

Department	Budget 09/10 £m	Actual Spend as at end of Period 11 £m	Projected Outturn for the year £m	Full Year Projected Variance* £m
Children & Education	61.771	44.674	61.601	-0.170
Resources	13.929	11.229	13.929	-
Transport, Environment and Leisure	32.936	23.828	30.780	-2.156
Economic Development, Planning and Housing	11.530	8.651	10.599	-0.931
Community Services	1.617	1.081	1.578	-0.039
Total:	**121.783**	**89.463**	**118.487**	**-3.296**

* A negative variance indicates a underspend

5.   A breakdown of the position of schemes within the capital programme can be seen in appendix A.

6.   The variance on the full year projection is driven mainly by the need for schemes to be reprogrammed. Of the £3.296 projected underspend, £2.998m relates to reprogramming of expenditure and £0.348m has been identified as an underspend; the variance is reduced slightly by small projected overspends on various schemes. This is reflected in Appendix A.

7.   Various comments on schemes are included below;

7.1   Local Transport Plan – Integrated Transport

The scheme is currently showing a forecasted variance of £0.906m against the 2009/10 budget, an increase variance since last month (projected variance in March report to cabinet of £0.840m). This variance is made up from delays on a number of schemes within the

budget and requires the reprogramming of expenditure. The budget will be reprofiled to move the variance into 2010/11 budget.

7.2   Local Transport Plan – Maintenance of Principal/Non Principal roads

The majority of the £0.644m forecasted variance relates to the Pewsey Road Scheme which experienced delays and is confirmed will not start until the new financial year. As a result the budget will be reprofiled to move funds into the 2010/11 financial year.

7.3   Major Highways Improvements

The forecasted variance (£0.648m) is made up of £0.300m slippage relating compensation agreements which have not progressed as anticipated. The budget will be reprofiled to reflect this. The remaining £0.348m variance is an identified underspend against the budget. Last month's report requested Members approve the underspend be used to fund purchase of highways vehicles. If approved the £0.348 underspend will be transferred to the appropriate budget.

7.4   Aiming High for Disabled Children

It was highlighted earlier in the financial year that a large element of the grant will not be spent in 2009/10 and be required to be slipped into 2010/11. The forecast spend for this financial year is £0.030m. The budget will be reprofiled to move remaining grant into 2010/11.

7.5   Disabled Facilities Grant

The scheme is currently showing a forecasted variance of £0.250m against the £2.650m budget in 2009/10. The budget covers providing grants to help disabled people adapt their properties to ensure they remain accessible. The variance is highlighted as slippage and the budget will be reprofiled to move funds into 2010/11.

7.6   Tidworth Castledown

It was identified in last month's report that the scheme has experienced delays and as a result not all of the 2009/10 budget will be spend prior to the end of the 2009/10 financial year. Currently it is forecasted that £0.671m of the £1.037m will be spent this financial year. The remaining budget is to be reprogrammed into 2010/11.

Main Considerations for the Council

a) To note the current financial position of the 2009/10 Capital Budget.

b) To note the budget changes in section 1 and 2 of Appendix B.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

9.   Wiltshire Council is preparing for its mandatory inclusion to the Carbon Reduction Commitment (CRC). The CRC is the UK's mandatory climate change and energy saving scheme, due to commence in April 2010. The objectives of the scheme are to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. It's calculated that 79% of the Council's carbon footprint comes from energy use in buildings. Capital schemes therefore have the potential to greatly increase or decrease carbon emissions, for example schemes making council buildings more energy efficient will reduce the Council's carbon footprint. The budget setting process for the 2010-11 is assessing the perceived impact of schemes on the Council's carbon footprint and using this as part of the basis to form a decision on the 2010-11 budget.

Equality and Diversity Impact of the Proposal

10.   No equality and diversity issues have been identified arising from this report

Risk Assessment

11.   The capital budget for 2009/10, as detailed in this report, is approximately £122 million. Robust project management is employed in order to ensure projects are effectively managed.

Financial Implications

12.   These have been examined and are implicit throughout the report

Legal Implications

13.   There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Martin Donovan
Chief Finance Officer

Report Author: Lloyd Brown

Unpublished documents relied upon in the preparation of this report: NONE
Environmental impact of the recommendations contained in this report: NONE

Appendices :

Appendix A – Capital budget monitoring statement
Appendix B – Budget changes

A P P E N D I X   A

C A P I T A L   B U D G E T   M O N I T O R I N G   S T A T E M E N T :   A P R I L   2 0 0 9   T O   F E B R U A R Y   2 0 1 0

SCHEME NAME	DEPARTMENT	2009/10 BUDGET	SCHEME SPEND AT THE END OF PERIOD 11 £
Wellington Academy	DCE	7,533,000	6,648,354
Salisbury Academy	DCE	353,000	16,419
Extended Schools	DCE	1,571,066	595,222
Additional Accommodation	DCE	1,941,501	624,044
Access and Inclusion	DCE	711,820	506,212
NDS 07/08 & 09/10	DCE	2,752,170	2,481,175
NDS Modenisation	DCE	4,663,010	4,297,842
Devolved formula Capital	DCE	9,898,000	8,373,022
DCSF Primary Capital programme	DCE	892,610	439,801
Melksham Oak School	DCE	18,580,830	13,515,305
Other DCSF Initiatives	DCE	270,000	267,420
Targeted Capital Food Technology General	DCE	80,000	20,886
Targeted Capital School Kitchens General	DCE	745,000	745,427
Other Projects New Schools	DCE	347,301	242,295
Other Schools Projects - Expansions	DCE	1,580,150	1,008,499
Other Schools Projects - Replacements	DCE	1,045,880	199,362
DCSF Specialist Schools	DCE	650,000	650,000
DCSF 14-19 Diplomas reforms	DCE	300,000	250,580
DCSF Information System Parents & Providers	DCE	31,000	34,930
Sure Start early years	DCE	7,297,934	3,509,657
Aiming High for Disabled Children	DCE	205,000	95
Youth Projects	DCE	321,750	247,244
SUBTOTAL:		**61,771,022**	**44,673,791**
BMP/SAP	DOR	1,452,000	0
ICT Hardware	DOR	751,000	739,384
LPSA PRG (Resources)	DOR	31,250	31,250
OWTP	DOR	11,612,430	10,458,153
Area Boards	DOR	82,200	0
Other DOR Initiatives	DOR	0	0
SUBTOTAL:		**13,928,880**	**11,228,787**

SCHEME NAME	DEPARTMENT	2009/10 BUDGET	SCHEME SPEND AT THE END OF PERIOD 11 £
LTP – Integrated Transport	TEL	5,003,000	3,370,262
Buildings repair & Maintenance	TEL	3,016,180	1,277,342
DDA Works	TEL	133,000	57,056
LTP – Maintenance of Principal/Non Principal roads	TEL	12,280,000	9,801,594
Additional Highway Maintenance	TEL	1,964,000	464,965

**CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER (CFO) - EXERCISE OF DELEGATED POWERS & REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
WITHIN THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Month: **April**
Financial Year: **2009/10**

SECTION 1 - DELEGATED CFO POWERS

*"Adjustment/addition of scheme in the capital programme which has no effect on the net funding position of the programme
i.e. Additional resources available in the form of Grant, Section 106 contributions etc,etc which fund the addition, "*

Project Name:	Other School Projects - Replacements		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	14,500		

Funding Source: School Contribution
Description: Increased funding for East Melksham School provision element of budget through a contribution
from the School.

Project Name:	Additional Highway Maintenance		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	319,000		

Funding Source: Grant
Description: Increased Asset Management funding received from Department of Transport.

Project Name:	Sure Start, Early Years		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	20,000		

Funding Source: Other Contributions
Description: Increased School Contribution towards a refurbished mobile on school grounds for wraparound
childcare and pre school facilities.

Project Name:	Extended Schools		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	70,000		

Funding Source: Other Contributions
Description: Increased School Contribution towards refurbishment of caretakers bungalow and towards a joint
project to create new entrance/reception and extended schools hub facilities.

SECTION 2 - DELEGATED CFO POWERS

*"Schemes within the capital programme which require the reprogramming of expenditure between years due to scheme
not progressing as originally anticipated or other circumstances"*

Project Name:	LPSA Performance Reward Grant; DCE and Resources		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-150,420	150,420	

Funding Source: Grant
Description: Capital budget allocated to the Department for Children & Education and Department of Resources
is being reprofiled to allowed expenditure to occur in 2010/11. The budget is funded by the
Performance Reward Grant achieved by Wiltshire Council under the Local Public Service
Agreement (LPSA).

Project Name:	Malmesbury Skatepark		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-36,950	36,950	

Funding Source: Other Contributions
Description: Due to planning issues the scheme has not progressed as anticipated. The scheme is ongoing and
requires the uncommitted budget in 2009/10 to be made available in 2010/11.

Project Name:	Leisure & Amenities		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-50,000	50,000	

Funding Source: Capital Receipts and Revenue Contributions
Description: Work on replacing fuel tanks at Chuchfields depot Salisbury has not progressed as anticipated.
The budget is to be reprogrammed to allow the majority of work to take place in the 2010/11
financial year.

Project Name:	Wellington Academy		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-130,000	130,000	

Funding Source: Unsupported Borrowing
Description: The reprogramming of expenditure relates to a delay in the off site works of the Wellington
Academy scheme.

Project Name:	Economic Development		
Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-1,429,000	1,429,000	

Funding Source: Various funding sources
Description: The Economic Development budget is made up a number of smaller schemes. Some of the
schemes have experienced delays and as a result require budget to be reprogrammed into
2010/11.

Project Name: Highways Depot and Office Strategy

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-485,000	485,000	

Funding Source: Capital Receipts & Other Contributions
Description: Scheme has experienced delays due and start date for work at Marlborough Depot has been rescheduled to start in the 2010/11 financial year. The budget is being reprogramed accordingly.

Project Name: Libraries Heritage Arts Minor Capital Works

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-10,000	10,000	

Funding Source: Other Contributions
Description: Simple recashflowing of £10k budget relating to Wiltshire & Heritage Centre from 2009/10 to 2010/11

Project Name: Other DOR Initiatives

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-34,000	34,000	

Funding Source: Capital Receipts
Description: The budget relates to professional fees associated with Cotswold Community Archaeology project. Expenditure has been delayed and as a result the budget is being reprofiled to make budget available in 2010/11

Project Name: Additional Accommodation

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-1,345,269	1,345,269	

Funding Source: Other Contributions and Supported Borrowing
Description: Schemes at Chapmanslade and Pembroke Park schools have experienced delays and will not start until the new financial year. Budget is being reprofiled accordingly.

Project Name: Access and Inclusion

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-541,180	541,180	

Funding Source: Supported Borrowing
Description: A number of individual school schemes within the access and inclusion budget have experienced delays and expenditure is expected to occur in 2010/11. Budget is being reprofiled accordingly.

Project Name: DCSF Targeted Capital 14-19 SEN

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-300,000	300,000	

Funding Source: Grant
Description: All projects covered by the grant now have an anticipated start date in 2010/11. The whole of the budget is being reprofiled to move the £300,000 into 2010/11.

Project Name: Targeted Capital Food Technology General

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-80,000	80,000	

Funding Source: Grant
Description: A scheme at Bishops Wordsworth school has experienced planning delays and requires budget to be slipped into 2010/11. A scheme at Downlands school is now programmed to start in 2010/11. The budget is being reprofiled accordingly.

Project Name: Other Projects New Schools

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-1,747,719	1,747,719	

Funding Source: Developer Contributions
Description: A number of schemes within the budget have been delayed due to problems with developer contributions from Housing development. As a result the schemes have been delayed and budgets are being reprogrammed from 2009/10 to 2010/11.

Project Name: Other Schools Projects - Expansions

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-904,920	904,920	

Funding Source: Capital Receipts and Other Contributions
Description: Various schemes within the budget are managed by the schools themselves. The schools have indicated that expenditure will occur in 2010/11 and so the budget is being reprogrammed.

Project Name: DCSF 14-19 Diplomas reforms

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	-700,000	700,000	

Funding Source: Grant
Description: The majority of the expenditure is planned to occur in 2010/11. The budget is being reprofiled to remove budget into 2010/11.

Project Name: Sure Start, Early Years

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*
	50,000	-50,000	

Funding Source: Grant
Description: £35000 2010/11 budget transferred from Play Builder Everleigh and Broad Hinton and £15000 2010/11budget to be allocated from Play Builder General to fund Play Builder Wootton Bassett.

SECTION 3 - REQUESTS TO CABINET FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

"Adjustment/addition of scheme to the capital programme which places an additional funding requirement on the programme"

Project Name:

Budget Change:	*2009/10*	*2010/11*	*2011/12*

Funding Source:
Description:

In the exercise of my delegated powers (Section 1 and 2), I hereby authorise the amendments to the Capital Programme summarised above.

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER: Martin Donovan

SIGNED:

DATE: