

# AGENDA

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**Meeting:** Cabinet  
**Place:** Council Chamber - Council Offices, Bradley Road, Trowbridge,  
BA14 0RD  
**Date:** Tuesday 17 January 2012  
**Time:** 2.00 pm (or on the rising of the earlier Cabinet meeting whichever  
is the later)

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## Membership:

Cllr John Brady	Cabinet Member for Finance Performance and Risk
Cllr Lionel Grundy OBE	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Keith Humphries	Cabinet Member for Public Health and Protection Services
Cllr John Noeken	Cabinet Member for Resources
Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philippe	Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Strategic Planning
Cllr Jane Scott OBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Waste, Property Environment and Development Control Services
Cllr John Thomson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Adult Care, Communities and Housing
Cllr Dick Tonge	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport
Cllr Stuart Wheeler	Cabinet Member for Campus Development and Culture (including Leisure, Sport and Libraries)

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Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 718024 or email [Yamina.Rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Yamina.Rhouati@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](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

## Part I

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

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

1. **Apologies**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

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

3. **Leader's announcements**

4. **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 13 January 2012. Anyone wishing to ask a question or make a statement should contact the officer named above.

5. **Adoption of South Wiltshire Core Strategy** (*Pages 1 - 6*)

 Report by Service Director for Economy and Enterprise.

The appendices referred to in the report are enclosed separately for Cabinet members. Due to the volume of papers involved, these are available on the Council's website along with this agenda and available on request from Democratic Services (see head of agenda for contact details).

6. **Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document** (*Pages 7 - 18*)

 Report by Service Director for Economy and Enterprise.

The draft Wiltshire Core Strategy Submission document and related appendices are enclosed separately for Cabinet members. Due to the volume of papers involved, they are available on the Council's website along with this agenda together with the various Topic Papers and available on request from Democratic Services (see head of agenda for contact details).

7. **Urgent Items**

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

## **Part II**

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

None

*The items on this agenda reflect the key goals of Wiltshire Council, namely  
'Work together to support Wiltshire's Communities', 'Deliver high quality, low  
cost, customer focused services and 'Ensure local, open, honest decision  
making'*

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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Subject: Adoption of South Wiltshire Core Strategy**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Fleur de Rhé Philipe - Economic Development and Strategic Planning**

**Key Decision: Yes**

## **Executive Summary**

Wiltshire Council has received the Inspector's Report into the examination of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD). It concludes that, subject to the changes set out in the Report, the submitted Core Strategy is sound. The Inspector's Report is binding on the authority and the Core Strategy, as amended in response to the Inspector's recommendations, can now be adopted.

When adopted by Full Council, an adoption notice will be published providing a six week period for legal challenge during which any person or organisation may make an application to the High Court on the grounds that preparation of the Plan did not comply with the correct procedures.

Upon adoption, the Core Strategy will become part of the statutory development plan for Wiltshire and will be an important document in guiding development in the south of the county.

## **Proposals**

That Cabinet:

- (i) Recommends to Full Council that the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, as amended by the changes identified in the Inspector's Report, be adopted as part of the statutory development plan for Wiltshire.
- (ii) Following approval of Full Council, agrees that the Service Director for Economy and Enterprise in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Economic Development, undertakes the final stages associated with the formal adoption of the Core Strategy.

**Reason for Proposal**

The South Wiltshire Core Strategy will form part of the Council's Policy Framework. In line with the Local Government Act and the Council's constitution it must first be approved by Cabinet before it is adopted by Full Council. The Inspector's Report is binding on the Council and his recommendations must be acted upon. As the document has been found sound its adoption by the Council would ensure up-to-date planning policy is in place for southern Wiltshire.

**ALISTAIR CUNNINGHAM**  
**Service Director for Economy and Enterprise**

## Wiltshire Council

### Cabinet

17 January 2012

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**Subject:** Adoption of South Wiltshire Core Strategy

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Fleur de Rhé Philipe - Economic Development and Strategic Planning

**Key Decision:** Yes

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### Purpose of Report

1. To:
  - (i) Note the content of the Inspector's Report into the examination of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and his conclusions regarding soundness; and
  - (ii) Seek approval that the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, as amended by the changes identified in the Inspector's Report, is recommended to Full Council for adoption.

### Background

2. On 10 November 2009, Full Council resolved that the 'Proposed Submission Document South Wiltshire Core Strategy' (draft SWCS) be submitted to the Secretary of State. Formal hearing sessions took place during March and April 2010. Following these sessions, the Council published proposed changes to the submitted Core Strategy that were discussed during the course of the Examination in Public. These were published for public consultation over the period 13 May 2010 to 11 June 2010, and the consultation response submitted to the Inspector for his consideration.
3. Prior to the Inspector issuing his report, the Examination was suspended, in order to allow the Council to review the housing and employment requirements in light of the Government announcing its intention to revoke Regional Spatial Strategies. Full Council on 22 February 2011 agreed Focussed and Consequential changes to the submission draft SWCS arising from the review. These set out lower housing and employment figures and identified fewer Strategic Site Allocations. The changes were consulted on between 14 April and 27 May 2011, together with other Proposed Changes made during the course of the Examination and the hearing sessions reopened during August 2011.
4. The Inspector presented his Report to the Council on 14 October 2011. This is attached at **Appendix 1**.

## **Main Considerations for the Council**

5. The Inspector's Report considers whether the Core Strategy is sound and complies with legal requirements. Government policy, as set out in Planning Policy Statement 12, clarifies that to be sound a Core Strategy should be justified, effective and consistent with national policy.
6. The Inspector has recommended a number of changes that need to be made to the submission draft Core Strategy to make it sound. Most of these changes (including those referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 above, and minor amendments in the interests or accuracy and clarity) were put forward by the Council and have been the subject of further consultation. These are set out in **Annexes 1 to 5 and 7 to 9 of Appendix 1**. All consultation responses have been taken into account by the Inspector in writing his report. The Inspector has also recommended two additional changes (**Annex 6 of Appendix 1**). The first in relation to the employment site at Station Works, Tisbury requiring the removal of wording which states that the site is capable of intensification and modernisation, as this is not backed up by evidence. The second, changes the affordable housing 'requirement' to 'target'. These changes proposed by the Inspector do not alter the substance of the plan and its policies or undermine the sustainability appraisal and participatory processes.
7. The Core Strategy as intended to be adopted is attached at **Appendix 2**. Once adopted, the South Wiltshire Core Strategy will replace a number of saved policies in the Salisbury Local Plan and form part of the statutory development plan for the south of the county.

## **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

8. The adoption of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy will update the statutory development plan for south Wiltshire and balances the need for new development with environmental protection.
9. Spatial Planning has implications for the physical, economic and social environment. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken during the preparation of the Core Strategy. A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has also been undertaken. Both have helped shape the strategy and will ensure that negative environmental impacts are avoided and sustainable development can be delivered.

## **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

10. The South Wiltshire Core Strategy aims to positively manage growth and development in South Wiltshire. The consultation processes and community involvement has ensured that everyone has had the opportunity to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy.



11. An Equalities Impact Assessment was prepared to support the submission draft Core Strategy and considered through the examination process by the Inspector. The adoption of the Core Strategy does not alter the conclusions of the original EIA.

### **Risk Assessment**

12. At the point of adoption of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, there will follow a period of six weeks for legal challenge.

### **Financial Implications**

13. The financial implications of adopting and publishing the Core Strategy are to be met by existing budget allocations. The most significant financial risk associated with the adoption process stems from the potential for legal challenge, which would need to be met from within the Economy and Enterprise budget.

### **Legal Implications**

14. Once adopted the Core Strategy will form part of the statutory development plan for the area and be used as such for the purpose of determining planning applications in the south of the county. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states requires that the Core Strategy can only be adopted in the form recommended by the Inspector, i.e. his report is binding.
15. There are legal implications associated with the adoption of the document. These are limited to the potential for judicial challenge in accordance with legislation. Any such challenge would be limited in terms of scope and could only challenge whether a procedural step in the process of preparing the document has been missed or not complied with fully.
16. When the Core Strategy is formally adopted by Council, an 'Adoption Statement' will be published in the local press advertising the availability of the Inspector's Report and the adopted Core Strategy. If at this stage anyone wishes to lodge a judicial challenge to the document, they must do so within six weeks of the date it is adopted by the Council.

### **Options Considered**

17. The Inspector's Report is binding on the Council and the recommendations it contains must be adhered to. Rejection of the Inspectors Report at this stage would result in there being no up to date development plan for the southern part of Wiltshire. This would leave a policy vacuum at a time when the Government has stated its intention to ensure that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the absence of an up to date plan.

## **Conclusions**

18. The Inspector's Report on the examination into the South Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document concludes that the document, subject to amendment, is 'sound'. The Council can now formally adopt the plan in line with the Inspector's Recommendations.
19. Adoption of the plan will provide an up to date development plan for southern Wiltshire. This will enable the effective management of development and ensure that homes and jobs are provided in the most sustainable way that maximises benefits for local communities.
20. Once formally adopted, the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, along with the Inspector's Report and final sustainability appraisal report, will be published and made available for inspection.

**ALISTAIR CUNNINGHAM**  
**Service Director for Economy and Enterprise**

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Date of report: 14 December 2011

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

None or specify the documents relied upon

## **Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Inspector's Report - 'Report on the Examination into the South Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document, 14 October 2011'

Appendix 2: South Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adoption Version)

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Subject: Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD)**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Fleur de Rhé Philipe**

**Key Decision: Yes**

## **Executive Summary**

The Wiltshire Core Strategy has been in development since early 2009, taking forward the work started by the former district councils. A Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document has now been prepared. It has been developed in consultation with the local community, partner organisations, and other stakeholders. The Council has reached the final stage of consultation where representations will be invited on the soundness of the document. At this stage in the process, the Council will be publishing what it considers to be a sound document and should be able to proceed to the Submission stage following the consultation.

At the Submission stage, the Core Strategy is formally submitted to the Secretary of State who will appoint an Inspector to undertake an Examination in Public into the soundness of the document. In examining the document, the Inspector will consider the robustness of the evidence base and representations received on the final stage of consultation. The Inspector will set out his/her findings in a report to the Authority.

Publication of the Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy for this final stage of consultation to start on or around 20 February 2012 will ensure that the Council meets the timescales set out within the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS), and adoption of the Core Strategy can be achieved as early as possible. This will enable the saved policies of the former district Local Plans to be substantially replaced, thus ensuring up-to-date planning policies are in place for Wiltshire.

## **Proposals**

That Cabinet:

- (i) Recommends to Full Council on 7 February 2012 that the Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy be approved for publication for a final six week statutory consultation period commencing on or around 20 February 2012.

- (ii) Endorses the Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy and recommends that Full Council approves the document for the purpose of Submission to the Secretary of State subject to there being no representations received during the consultation which, in the opinion of the Director for Economy and Enterprise in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Economic Development, raise fundamental issues on the soundness of the Strategy.
- (iii) Authorises the Service Director for Economy and Enterprise, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Economic Development, to make any necessary changes to the Draft Core Strategy in the interests of clarity and accuracy before it is published, and to make arrangements for consultation.

### **Reason for Proposals**

To ensure that progress continues to be made on preparing an up-to-date development plan for Wiltshire, in line with the timetable set out in the Council's recently approved Local Development Scheme and statutory requirements.

**Alistair Cunningham**  
**Service Director for Economy and Enterprise**

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**17 January 2012**

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**Subject: Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD)**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Fleur de Rhé Philipe**

**Key Decision: Yes**

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To:
  - (i) Seek Cabinet's recommendation to Full Council that the Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy DPD should be formally published for a final stage of consultation.
  - (ii) Request Cabinet to endorse the Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy DPD and recommend that Full Council approves the document for the purpose of Submission to the Secretary of State.
  - (iii) Set out the arrangements for consultation and next steps.

### **Background**

2. The Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD), when adopted, will provide up-to-date strategic planning policy for Wiltshire and ensure that Wiltshire develops in the most sustainable way. Core Strategies set out the long-term vision for an area and provide strategic policies and proposals to deliver the vision. Subsequent DPDs including the Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation DPD will need to be in general conformity with the Core Strategy, as will Neighbourhood Plans.
3. In line with the Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS), approved at the Cabinet meeting on 15 November 2011, appropriate policies within the South Wiltshire Core Strategy (as proposed to be adopted) will be integrated into the Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy to ensure delivery of a single Core Strategy for Wiltshire. Cabinet is considering the adoption of the South Wiltshire Core Strategy as a separate agenda item to this meeting.
4. Cabinet on 24 May 2011 approved an additional stage of consultation for the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Consultation on the 'Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document, June 2011 - Working towards a Core Strategy for Wiltshire' was completed on 8 August 2011. This additional consultation was considered necessary in light of the Government's clear intention to abolish

Regional Spatial Strategies and Structure Plans. As a result, it would become Wiltshire Council's responsibility for establishing the right level of jobs and homes to be planned within the area. This consultation allowed for public engagement on the proposed:

- (i) Amount of employment land to deliver the number of jobs and new homes required for Wiltshire over the period 2006 to 2026;
  - (ii) Spatial Strategy for Wiltshire to deliver this growth and ensure sustainable development takes place;
  - (iii) Strategies for Community Areas (outside of South Wiltshire), including proposals for employment land and homes at the main settlements; and
  - (iv) Core policies relating to other matters, such as affordable housing and the design of new developments.
5. The Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (June 2011) has formed the basis for the development of the Pre-submission Draft Core Strategy for Wiltshire.

### **Main Considerations for the Council**

6. The Pre-submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy DPD is the result of substantial work undertaken by the Council and former district councils and builds on the Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (June 2011). This takes into account up to date evidence and the consultation response. In addition, appropriate policies from the South Wiltshire Core Strategy (as proposed for adoption), which are based on sound and robust evidence as determined by the Inspector, have been integrated into the document. The document can be found accompanying the Agenda papers for the meeting on the website at:  
<http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=6630&Ver=4>  
Hard copies have also been provided to Cabinet Members and will be available to other Councillors on request.
7. The Consultation Statement on the Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (June 2011) has been prepared. This makes reference to earlier consultation stages in the development of the Core Strategy. This document is available on the website at:  
<http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=6630&Ver=4>  
and hard copies in the Members' Rooms. The Consultation Statement sets out how the Council consulted on the document and what the outputs of the consultation were. Part 2 of the Statement will be available online for the start of the consultation period. This includes responses by officers to all comments received, indicating how these have informed the development of the Pre-submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy. A brief summary of the key issues raised is provided in Sections 5 to 7 of the Consultation Statement. A detailed summary of issues raised for the community areas is provided at Appendix 11 and comments on the other core policies are summarised within the related topic paper (see paragraph 9 below). Appendix 13 summarises the

main changes that have been made to the document following the consultation.

8. By endorsing the Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy for publication (i.e. the consultation on the soundness of the draft DPD) and subsequent submission to the Secretary of State, the Council considers that the document is sound. At this stage in the process, the draft DPD is being published to allow representations to be made relating to issues of soundness.
9. The evidence base to be published alongside the draft DPD will comprise:
  - (i) Draft Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - to demonstrate that the Strategy is sustainable and suggests mitigation measures to avoid or reduce negative impacts through an appraisal of reasonable options. The SA is an iterative document that will continue be updated to take into account any further changes to the Core Strategy that are made leading up its adoption, which require further assessment.
  - (ii) Habitats Regulations Assessment - to demonstrate that the Strategy would not have significant effects on the integrity of internationally important wildlife sites in line with European legislation.
  - (iii) Topic Papers, including addenda, providing the detailed background and evidence underpinning the Pre-Submission Draft Core Strategy. These draw on studies and technical reports (for example, the Wiltshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Wiltshire Workspace Strategy) as well as the consultation responses to explain how the policies and proposals within the document have been developed.
  - (iv) Consultation Statement - setting out who has been involved in the preparation of the Core Strategy, how they have been involved and a summary of the consultation response and how the issues raised have been addressed.

(i) and (ii) will be made available at the time of publication of the Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy. (iii) and (iv) can be found accompanying the Agenda papers for the meeting on the website and available for inspection in the Members' Rooms, with hard copies of the Topic Papers available to Members on request. These documents will undergo a final proof read prior to the consultation.

#### Pre-submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy DPD

10. The document sets out a spatial planning framework for the long-term development of Wiltshire for the period to 2026. The principles underpinning the Spatial Strategy have generally been supported through the consultation and can be found at paragraph 1.2 of the document.

11. The overall format of the document is similar to the June 2011 document, it sets out:
- Introduction (Chapter 1).
  - Spatial Portrait of Wiltshire and the key challenges for Wiltshire around the themes of economic development, climate change, provision of new homes, planning for resilient communities, environmental quality and infrastructure delivery (Chapter 2).
  - Spatial Vision for Wiltshire and strategic objectives to deliver the Vision and address the six challenges (Chapter 3).
  - Spatial Strategy for Wiltshire, which includes three overarching policies (Chapter 4):  
Core Policy 1: Settlement Strategy - classifies Wiltshire's settlements based on an understanding of their role and function to inform where sustainable development should take place.  
Core Policy 2: Delivery Strategy - identifies the level of growth to be provided in Wiltshire and how Wiltshire's settlements will deliver this growth in the most sustainable way.  
Core Policy 3: Infrastructure Requirements - describes how infrastructure will be provided to support future development.
  - Area Strategies - sets out spatial strategies, including at least one core policy for each of Wiltshire's Community Areas. Each Area Strategy includes an overview of the characteristics of the area, issues that should be addressed in the planning for development in the area and how the area will change by 2026 (Chapter 5).
  - Delivering the spatial objectives: core policies - sets out core policies that together with Core Policies 1, 2 and 3 and those within the Area Strategies underpin the delivery of the strategic objectives to manage and shape development within Wiltshire. Policies are presented under each of the six strategic objectives.
12. The main changes to the document can be summarised as follows:
- The objectives (Chapter 3) have been reduced from ten to six in number with the outcomes and of a number of objectives amalgamated to improve clarity of the Core Strategy as a whole.
  - The Spatial Strategy policies have been developed (Core Policies 1 to 3) in light of latest evidence, consultation responses, the emerging National Planning Policy Framework and to improve clarity. Core Policy 1 simply states the settlement strategy and specific settlements that are within each category, with specific detail relating to the type and scale of development set out in Core Policy 2. The jobs and homes requirements are discussed in paragraphs 13 to 15 below. Core Policy 3 has been strengthened and amended for clarity.



- New policies have been included from the South Wiltshire Core Strategy. Those that are spatially distinctive and relate to the Community Areas have been integrated in full with minor changes to the wording and format to ensure consistency with the other Area Strategies. Some of the supporting text has been removed or redrafted in the interests of clarity, although the substance has not been lost. Other core policies (e.g. relating to affordable housing) have been updated where consultation has been undertaken through the Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (June 2011) and/or new evidence has indicated revisions to policy to be necessary. Policy relating to Tourism development (new Core Policy 39) and Hotels, Bed and Breakfast, Guest Houses and Conference Facilities (new Core Policy 40) have been applied to the whole of Wiltshire.
- Chapter 7 has been included that sets out the provisions for Monitoring and Review of the Core Strategy and information is included at the bottom of each core policy regarding 'target', 'monitoring and review' and 'delivery responsibility' to clarify how each policy will be monitored for its effectiveness.
- Significant changes have been made to a number of policies in light of the consultation and/or new evidence including:
  - Core Policy 34: Additional Employment Land - brings together parts of the previous rural diversification and enterprise Core Policy 25 and additional employment land Core Policy 21;
  - Core Policy 37: Military Establishments - now supports operational development of MOD sites, as well as reuse of redundant sites;
  - Core Policy 43: provision of affordable homes - updates previous Core Policy 28 to reflect viability work and simplify policy to apply 40% affordable housing on sites of three or more dwellings, with no contribution being required for smaller sites;
  - Core Policies 45: Meeting Wiltshire's housing needs and Core Policy 46: Meeting the needs of Wiltshire's vulnerable and older people replace previous Core Policy 29 (meeting housing needs) and Core Policy 30 (lifetime home standards) to place greater emphasis and clarity on meeting the needs for specialist accommodation;
  - Core Policy 47: Gypsy and Travellers - makes provision for new pitches until 2021 rather than 2016;
  - Core Policy 58: Ensuring conservation of the historic environment now includes reference to distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment;
  - Core Policy 68: Water Resources (previous Core Policy 50) has been strengthened to ensure that development does not place water resources or river habitats at risk;
  - Core Policy 52: Green Infrastructure (GI) merges previous Core Policies 35 and 36 on GI;
  - Core Policy 57: Ensuring high quality design and place shaping - incorporates previous Core Policy 39 (Housing density).
- New policies have been developed as follows:

- Core Policy 44: Rural exception sites (replaces parts of previous Core Policy 28 and includes potential for cross-subsidy with market housing);
  - Core Policy 48: Supporting rural life (replaces parts of previous Core Policy 25 rural diversification and enterprise);
  - Core Policy 53: Wilts and Berks and Thames and Severn Canal;
  - Core Policy 54: Cotswold Water Park;
  - Core Policy 55: Air Quality; and
  - Core Policy 56: Contaminated Land.
- Within the Area Strategies:
    - All Area Strategy Core Policies include a direct link between policy and the list of issues identified in the supporting text;
    - Core Policy 10 confirms the strategic sites for Chippenham and reduces the strategic employment land to 26.5 hectares;
    - Core Policy 14 includes a strategic site for 220 new homes west of Salisbury Road, Marlborough;
    - Core Policy 16 is a new policy to safeguard a route for the Wilts and Berks Canal through Melksham (the Melksham link project);
    - Core Policy 29 reduces the strategic employment land at Trowbridge to 25 hectares;
    - Core Policy 32 includes a strategic site for 300 dwellings on land at Station Road, Westbury (revised former Local Plan allocation);
    - Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Area Strategy - recognises the need to protect the rural character and separate identities of settlements in relation to Swindon.
  - The Settlement Strategy has been reviewed and a consistent methodology applied to the smaller settlements across Wiltshire including those within South Wiltshire (fulfilling the commitment to review the status of the smaller settlements through the Wiltshire Core Strategy) to determine which settlements should be classified as Large or Small Villages, and to indicate those parts of Wiltshire where development should not generally be permitted as they represent the most unsustainable locations. The Large and Small Villages are identified within the Area Strategies in Chapter 5.
  - Development Templates have been produced for each strategic site (Appendix A, Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy). A number of other new Appendices have also been inserted, including one relating to the Local Plan policies that will continue to be saved following adoption of the Core Strategy. The Topic Papers clarify which saved policies are being replaced.
13. The overall level of new employment land (178 hectares) and new homes (37,000 additional dwellings) has remained broadly the same. There was a mix of views expressed through the consultation ranging from developers who considered the number of homes to be too low to some communities who considered the numbers to be too high. No new evidence has been put forward that would justify a change to the overall housing numbers, which are still considered to be sound. The figure is considered to take account of, but is

not pessimistic with regard to, the effects of the recession; it makes a step change in the delivery of housing for Wiltshire; accords with the draft National Planning Policy Framework; and so is considered realistic and justified.

14. In Core Policy 2, the housing requirement is expressed as a minimum (i.e. at least) rather than a target. This is necessary to provide flexibility to allow for Neighbourhood Plans to bring forward additional housing development in areas where it is supported and enable sustainable brownfield developments to continue to come forward within defined settlements if the housing supply has been provided for. In addition, the phasing of the housing requirement has been removed as this was challenged during the consultation. This is not considered necessary as there is the need to allow for developments to come forward and an appropriate supply of land to be maintained in a constrained housing market. This does not remove the need to ensure that in masterplanning for strategic sites, employment land is delivered early on in a site's development.
15. Although the employment land has remained the same (i.e. it is within the narrow range stated in the previous document), the distribution has been amended in light of new up-to-date evidence provided by an updated Employment Land Review and consultation responses.

#### Consultation Arrangements

16. Preparations will be made to publish the Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy and supporting documents for a period of six weeks in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and statutory requirements. The consultation will start on or around 20 February 2012 and finish before the Easter weekend, and will involve:
  - (i) Letter or email to consultees on the Spatial Planning consultation database, providing notification of the consultation.
  - (ii) Publication of an advertisement in local newspapers throughout Wiltshire and the Parish Newsletter.
  - (iii) Chairmans' announcements for Area Boards (with Officers to attend meetings at request) where meetings take place during the consultation period. Briefing notes to raise awareness of the consultation to be distributed through the Area Board networks.
  - (iv) Displays in each Community Area during the consultation period, at the libraries wherever possible.
  - (v) Documents being made available for viewing at Council offices and all libraries in Wiltshire.
  - (vi) Online publication on the Council's consultation portal.
  - (vii) Workshops with rural parishes to explain the approach to identifying Large and Small Villages in the Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy.

## Next Steps

17. Following approval by Full Council and once the consultation has closed all responses will be considered in order to determine whether any substantive changes are required. Provided there are no substantive changes to the document in response to the consultation and evidence it contains, the document will be submitted to Council for approval before it is submitted to the Secretary of State in early July in accordance with the LDS timetable. Once submitted to the Secretary of State, the process of Independent Examination by a Government appointed Planning Inspector will commence.

## **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

18. Spatial Planning has implications for the physical, economic and social environment. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment has been undertaken during the preparation of the Core Strategy. The SA has been undertaken iteratively at all stages of the preparation and has informed the evolution of the Strategy. A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has also been undertaken. Both have helped shape the strategy and will ensure that negative environmental impacts are avoided and sustainable development can be delivered.
19. Climate change is one of the cross cutting objectives of the Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy. In particular, the Strategy seeks to deliver the most sustainable pattern of growth to promote self containment as far as possible and minimise the need to travel, particularly by the private car. The document includes specific policies to encourage the delivery of renewable energy sources and design measures to promote sustainable construction and low carbon buildings. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has also been undertaken as part of the process to ensure that future development is not vulnerable to flooding or increases the risk of flood elsewhere.

## **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

20. The Wiltshire Core Strategy aims to positively manage growth and development in Wiltshire. The consultation processes and community involvement has ensured that everyone has had the opportunity to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy. When the Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy is submitted to the Secretary of State for Examination Regulations require that it is accompanied by an Equalities Impact Assessment.

## **Risk Assessment**

21. Until the full provisions of the Localism Act come into effect through secondary legislation, the Pre-submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy needs to be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West unless new up-to-date evidence indicates otherwise. The document is considered to meet this requirement and has also been prepared in light of existing national, as well as emerging national planning policy.

22. In light of the changes to the planning system it is important that Wiltshire has in place up-to-date planning policy as soon as possible. The Government has made it clear that they expect local authorities to be “pressing ahead without delay in preparing up to date development plans which set out the opportunities for growth in their areas” (Planning and the Budget, Department for Communities and Local Government, March 2011). This message has been reinforced through the draft National Planning Policy Framework and more recent statements made by the Government.
23. The risk of not progressing the Core Strategy would expose Wiltshire to speculative proposals that it will not be well placed to defend or develop in a way that maximises benefits for local communities.

### **Financial Implications**

24. The process of preparing the Wiltshire Core Strategy has been planned financially and the consultation costs can be met by existing budget allocations. The Examination costs will fall into the next financial year and have been addressed in budget planning.
25. Early adoption of the Wiltshire Core Strategy will provide the planning policy framework to facilitate the delivery of new housing and ensure that Wiltshire will not be disadvantaged in relation to the New Homes Bonus. The ability of the Council to become a Charging Authority for Community Infrastructure Levy and secure this form of funding into the area is dependent upon a sound Core Strategy being in place.

### **Legal Implications**

26. In accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Council has a statutory duty to prepare planning policy, which has been reinforced through the draft National Planning Policy Framework and Localism Act. The Council has a duty to engage with the public at this stage of the process, as required by Regulation 27 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended). The consultation has been designed in accordance with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement and these legal requirements.
27. Following Royal Assent of the Localism Act on 15 November 2011, certain provisions came into force with immediate effect. A key change now in place for the purpose of plan examinations is that Section 110(3) amends Section 20(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (PCPA 2004) by requiring the Inspector to consider (alongside legal compliance and soundness) 'whether the local authority complied with any duty imposed on the Authority by Section 33A in relation to its [the plan's] preparation'. Section 33A being the new duty to co-operate inserted into the PCPA 2004 by Section 110(1). In preparing the Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy the Council has consulted with neighbouring authorities.

## Options Considered

28. Further delay at this stage of the process would result in there being no up-to-date development plan for Wiltshire. This would leave a policy vacuum at a time when the Government has stated its intention to ensure that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the absence of an up-to-date plan. Proceeding with the Wiltshire Core Strategy in line with the timetable within the LDS will ensure that there is a clear strategy in place for plan led growth supported by the right infrastructure, thus providing certainty for developers and local communities.

## Conclusions

29. Subject to Full Council approval of the document at the meeting on 7 February 2012, the publication of the Pre-submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy for a final stage of consultation for six weeks starting in February will ensure that the Council meets the recently approved timetable in the LDS and Submission to the Secretary of State could be achieved by early July 2012.
30. At this stage the Council will be publishing what it considers to be a sound document that is firmly based on evidence gathering and consultation.
31. Following the consultation, subject to there being no representations that raise fundamental issues of soundness to the Plan, Full Council can approve the document for Submission to the Secretary of State without the need to refer back to Cabinet. Accordingly, Cabinet should also endorse the Pre-Submission Draft Wiltshire Core Strategy for Submission so that this can take place by early July 2012.

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### **The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:**

None

### **Appendices:**

None