

**Salt Stores – Progress and update**

1. Three salt stores have been completed at High Post, Marlborough and Royal Wootton Bassett. The remaining two (not included on the main depot sites) are required in Mere and Warminster.
2. Original brief for the salt stores in 2010 was to simply over roof the supply in order to alleviate around 25% of losses from runaway. The cost of over roofing was anticipated to be in the region of £375k per site.
3. During the winter of 2010/11 an environmental incident occurred at Warminster depot that led to extra drainage requirements being stipulated by the Environment Agency (EA) in order to avoid pollution and associated fines. In addition, a detailed specification and feasibility study for each site in May 11 concluded
  - a. that the access arrangements on the sites should be reassessed to improve safety and productivity and to allow for increased (salt) stock holding targets
  - b. very poor health and safety standards in the office/welfare buildings should be addressed – some space was uninhabitable (current maintenance backlog is over £840k)
  - c. Historic problems with fuel storage leaks should be addressed as part of the project
4. Based on the revised specification the gross capital cost of completing the salt barns phase of the depot strategy will be in the region of £2.2m.

**Main Depots - Progress and update**

5. A site search exercise has been carried out in both the North and South of the County which included an appraisal of existing council sites and a public 'call for sites' via local newspapers and estates media.
6. This resulted in a reasonable response where two sites in each area appear favourable. An appraisal of these sites and proposed schemes are being explored and the proposals will be presented at a later date.
7. In the centre of the County the proposed redevelopment of the existing depot site in **Melksham** has been the subject of some considerable changes in scope since the initial definition of needs were established:
  - a. Restructuring of services within highways and streetscene; the Waste improvement and investment programme (including additional vehicles); an increase in the specification for the salt store area required by the EA, the

inclusion of street lighting and bridge maintenance team needs have increased the overall space needs.

- b. Other Wiltshire services such as the Wiltshire and Swindon Learning Resources and the Library Stock Unit have long required relocation from their Trowbridge site and these have been incorporated into the proposal. The core strategy also sets out the requirement for an Archaeology store which has been included in the initial feasibility work.
  - c. The proposed development of the site is a catalyst for the wider economic development potential of the area through the release of a significant tranche of development land. Constraints affecting this development (e.g. relocation of the Household Recycling Centre (HRC) within the new depot area and the planning of a longer narrower site than envisaged) have also increased the scope and cost.
  - d. New requirements for space have also emerged for partners such as the Police Authority and the Probation service. Whilst these have been considered no costs have been discussed and no formal agreements to pursue the options have been entered into.
8. Indications are that the capital costs associated with the increases in scope will significantly affect the business case and it therefore requires review.

## **Conclusions**

9. Completion of the majority of the salt store programme represents a significant milestone in aligning services since LGR. Work continues to complete the separate salt store programme at an estimated cost of £2.2m. A budget will be also be allocated to fund any enabling works required to ensure the developments in Melksham can go ahead as planned.
10. The completion of the three new depots will make the current business case unviable.
11. However, both the highways and the waste contracts are due for renewal within the next two to three years and these services are in the middle of systems reviews and transformational change. As yet, the effect of this activity has not fully impacted the original depot strategy (2010) or the specification of need.
12. The Transformation Team is working closely with the Service Directors concerned and will be revisiting the original business case for depots to ensure, for example, that a 4 depot network is still valid in the light of recent and future service changes.
13. A revised business case will be presented to the Capital Assets Committee towards the end of the year which will reflect any operational redesign requirements within a long term depot strategy.