

# AGENDA

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Meeting: **Cabinet**  
Place: **North Wiltshire Room - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN**  
Date: **Thursday 21 November 2013**  
Time: **10.30 am**

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## Membership:

Cllr Keith Humphries	Cabinet Member for Public Health, Protection Services, Adult Care and Housing (exc strategic housing)
Cllr Laura Mayes	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philippe	Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Transport
Cllr Jane Scott OBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr Jonathon Seed	Cabinet Member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding
Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property, Waste
Cllr John Thomson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband
Cllr Dick Tonge	Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform
Cllr Stuart Wheeler	Cabinet Member for Hubs, Heritage & Arts, Governance (including information management), Support Services (HR, Legal, ICT, Business Services, Democratic Services)

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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

1 **Apologies**

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 1 - 12*)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 22 October 2013.

3 **Leader's Announcements**

4 **Declarations of interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable 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 Monday 18 November 2013. Anyone wishing to ask a question or make a statement should contact the officer named above.

6 **Minutes - Cabinet Transformation Committee** (*Pages 13 - 18*)

To receive and note the minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Cabinet Transformation Committee held on 22 October 2013.

### Housing

7 **Wiltshire Council's New Housing Allocations Policy** (*Pages 19 - 72*)

🔑 Report by Associate Director, James Cawley

### Financial Services

8 **Parish and Town Council Grant Options** (*Pages 73 - 142*)

🔑 Report by Michael Hudson, Associate Director - Finance, Revenues & Benefits and Pensions

9 **Report on Treasury Management Strategy 2013-14 - Second Quarter ended 30 September 2013** (*Pages 143 - 158*)

Report by Michael Hudson, Associate Director - Finance, Revenues & Benefits and Pensions

## Health

**10 Community Contraception and Sexual Health Services Procurement (Pages 159 - 170)**

Report by Maggie Rae, Corporate Director

This report will be considered by the Health Select Committee on 19 November 2013, the views of which will be reported to Cabinet.

## Waste Services

**11 High Level Specification and Tender Evaluation criteria for Future Waste Management and Collection Services (Pages 171 - 186)**

🔑 Report by Tracy Carter, Associate Director, Environment and Leisure

**12 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*

**13 Exclusion of the Press and Public**

This is to give further notice in accordance with paragraph 5 (4) and 5 (5) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 of the intention to take the following item in private.

To consider passing the following resolution:

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

Reason for taking item in private:

Paragraph 3 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

## **Highways and Transport**

**14 Extension of Contracts operated by the Hatts Group in the Salisbury Area  
(Pages 187 - 204)**

**🔑** Report by Parvis Khansari, Associate Director - Highways and Transport

*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'*

## CABINET


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MINUTES of a MEETING held in ALAMEIN SUITE - CITY HALL, MALTHOUSE LANE, SALISBURY, SP2 7TU on Tuesday, 22 October 2013.

Cllr Keith Humphries	Cabinet Member for Public Health, Protection Services, Adult Care and Housing (exc strategic housing)
Cllr Laura Mayes	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philippe	Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Transport
Cllr Jane Scott OBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr Jonathon Seed	Cabinet Member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding
Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property, Waste
Cllr John Thomson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband
Cllr Dick Tonge	Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform
Cllr Stuart Wheeler	Cabinet Member for Hubs, Heritage & Arts, Governance (including information management), Support Services (HR, Legal, ICT, Business Services, Democratic Services)

Also in Attendance: Cllr Richard Britton, Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Tony Deane  
Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr David Jenkins  
Cllr Julian Johnson, Cllr Simon Killane, Cllr Jerry Kunkler  
Cllr Magnus Macdonald, Cllr Alan MacRae, Cllr Dr Helena McKeown, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr Horace Prickett, Cllr John Walsh  
Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cllr Fred Westmoreland, Cllr Roy While and Cllr Philip Whitehead

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

### 87 Apologies

All Cabinet members present.

### 88 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 24 September 2013 were presented.

**Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.**

89 **Leader's announcements**

The Leader made the following announcements:

**Withdrawal of agenda Item**

The Leader explained that item 12 on the agenda – 'Local Government Association Adult Social Care Peer Challenge' was withdrawn from the agenda. This was due to notification from the Local Government Association that it would not be able to provide a review team to carry out the Peer Review. This was now expected to be considered in the Spring of 2014 when the matter would be brought back to Cabinet.

**Officers leaving due to Voluntary Redundancy**

The Leader acknowledged that several officers had either recently left or would be leaving the Council's employ shortly following their successful applications for voluntary redundancy. The Leader wished to place on record her thanks for their hard work and contribution to the services they helped provide to the people of Wiltshire.

In particular, the Leader thanked 3 officers who had provided direct support to the Cabinet and members, namely John Quinton – Head of Democratic Services, Marie Todd – Area Board and Member Support Manager and Wendy Packer – Senior Member Support Officer. She referred to the excellent work carried out by these officers.

John Quinton had been heavily involved in the transition to unitary status in 2009, successfully led the boundary review project and instrumental in establishing the Police and Crime Panel and the Health and Wellbeing Board. Marie had successfully led and developed the democratic support function to the Council's Area Boards and been a key player in the Council's induction programmes and member development and enabled the Council to secure Charter status for member development. Wendy had consistently provided friendly and efficient support to elected members and the democratic process.

**Framed Picture from Leer, Germany**

Cllr Horace Prickett explained that he had recently attended a twinning conference in Leer, Germany which was twinned with Trowbridge. Cllr Prickett gave a brief presentation on the work of Wiltshire Council and as a friendly gesture between the two authorities presented them with a Wiltshire Flag and explained its origins.

The Burgomeister of Leer Council presented Cllr Prickett with a framed picture of the Leer Council house, their administrative building and the harbour side in Leer. Cllr Prickett in turn presented the picture to the Leader to receive on behalf of the Council. The Leader thanked the people of Leer for their generosity, commenting that it was a beautiful picture and thanked Cllr Prickett for bringing it to the Council. She explained that she would arrange for the picture to be displayed in a suitable location at County Hall.

**90 Declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest were made.

**91 Public participation**

The Leader explained that as usual at meetings of Cabinet she would be more than happy to hear from any members of the public present on any of the items on this agenda. She acknowledged receipt of statements and questions received as circulated at the meeting.

Cllr Margaret Willmot, Salisbury City Councillor – Transport Planning in Salisbury

Cllr Willmot addressed Cabinet on this issue to which Cllr John Thomson responded. A copy of the statement and questions submitted and response from Cllr Thomson are included with the online agenda for this meeting.

Mr Kenneth Spencer, Atworth Traffic Action Group – Traffic and Road Safety

Mr Spencer addressed Cabinet on this issue to which Cllr John Thomson responded. Cllr Thomson added that he would be happy to bring the issues raised by Mr Spencer to the Road Safety Partnership and that the Area Board could take up the matter through the Community Area Transport Group. A copy of the correspondence from Mr Spencer and response from Cllr Thomson are included with the online agenda for this meeting.

**92 Minutes - Cabinet Capital Assets Committee**

The minutes of the Cabinet Capital Assets Committee dated 24 September 2013 were presented.

**Resolved:**

**That the minutes of the Cabinet Capital Assets Committee dated 24 September 2013 be received and noted.**

## 93 Local Sustainable Transport Fund - Trans Wilts Rail Service

🔑 Cllr John Thomson reminded Cabinet that the Council had submitted a bid to the Department for Transport's (DfT) Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) in February 2012. The bid project had three main elements:

- Support for improved rail services on the Westbury to Swindon line (the Trans Wilts service)
- Interchange improvements at Wiltshire's railway stations
- Supporting smarter choices measures.

The Council was awarded a £4.25 million grant by the DfT on 27 June 2012. At its meeting on 10 September 2012, Cabinet approved the commencement and delivery of the package of complementary sustainable transport measures but given the uncertainties and risks associated with the implementation of the train service at the time, requested that officers liaise with the DfT, the Great Western franchise bidders and other relevant parties regarding the improved Westbury to Swindon train service, and submit a further report to a future Cabinet meeting.

Accordingly, Cllr Thomson presented a report which updated Cabinet on the latest developments and included proposals to approve the procurement of the improved Trans Wilts rail service from First Great Western Limited. The various options open to the Council and the risks involved were detailed in the report. Cllr Thomson read out a statement in support of the proposals from Mrs Jenny Ragget, Director of Travelwatch, South West. She congratulated the Council on its efforts to achieve a vastly improved Trans Wilts rail service.

Cabinet noted that procurement of an improved Trans Wilts rail service would provide local areas with a number of economic, community and environmental benefits. It would also offer the opportunity of the service being considered by the DfT for full inclusion in the franchise after three years of successful operation. The Leader and Cllr Thomson added that the future viability of the service would be largely dependent on how well it was used and should therefore be encouraged by local members.

In the debate which ensued, a number of members welcomed the proposals. Some members hoped that the Council would be able in due course to look to support services and the reopening of stations in their divisional areas. Cllr Jon Hubbard highlighted that the service would open up Melksham railway station to other rail networks and as such, he hoped that a ticket machine in particular would be provided to enable the purchase of tickets in advance. He also requested that officers explore opportunities for funding capacity improvements to the Melksham single track line through the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan.



**Resolved:**

**That Cabinet:**

- a) **approves the procurement of the improved Trans Wilts rail service from First Great Western Limited and delegates the finalisation and signing of the contract agreement to the Service Director for Highways and Transport in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband and**
- b) **delegates detailed operational matters relating to the improved Trans Wilts rail service to the Associate Director for Highways and Transport in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband.**

Reason for decisions

To enable the improved Trans Wilts service to commence and be locally supported for the Department for Transport's minimum three year period prior to being considered for inclusion in the franchise.

94 **Investing in Highways**

Cllr John Thomson presented a report which sought Cabinet approval of a programme of road maintenance to improve the condition of the highway network in Wiltshire. This was very much in keeping with one of the twelve actions in the Council's Business Plan to 'invest additional money between 2014-17 to reduce historic backlog in highways and maintenance.'

Expenditure on highways maintenance had varied enormously over the years. During the 1990s funding for road maintenance reduced nationally, and consequently a backlog of maintenance developed on the nation's highway network. Investment since 2000/01 had improved overall road conditions, but this had still not been sufficient to keep all of the roads and footways in good condition.

The Council acknowledged that the County's roads was important to the public as demonstrated by the results of the Council's People's Voice and the National Highways and Transportation (NHT) surveys.

Cllr Thomson guided members through the report, a comparison of the various options which ranged from maintaining existing conditions and increasing investment to £17 million and £21 million for six years and the financial implications of each option.

The recommended option to increase investment to £21 million for six years would provide a significant improvement to the condition of the network, including improving the condition of the unclassified roads. It would also

improve safety on the classified roads by improving 664 kilometres of road. There would be the opportunity to involve the Area Boards to help identify local priorities for treatment.

**Resolved:**

**That Cabinet approve the following:**

- a) **To achieve the objective set out in the Council's Business Plan a project for improving Wiltshire's roads should be undertaken by increasing annual expenditure on road maintenance to £21.000 million for six years from 2014/15.**
- b) **The level of future funding from the Local Transport Plan Maintenance Block Capital Grant is a major risk in the proposed highways road maintenance investment. Not until future year allocations are published will the true financial implications of investments be known. It would be prudent to reassess the financial implications once these are known and during the annual budget setting process.**
- c) **The Area Boards should be involved in helping to set local priorities for roads to be treated, with the details of the process to be agreed by the appropriate Associate Director in consultation with Cllr Thomson, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband.**

#### Reason for decisions

The county's roads are important to the public, as demonstrated by the results of the Council's People's Voice and the National Highways and Transportation (NHT) surveys, which indicate low levels of public satisfaction with road conditions. In the Council's consultations on budget setting, expenditure on road maintenance is a service where the public consistently wish to see more spent.

The experience of other Authorities who have made substantial investments in highways maintenance recently is that improvements in the condition of the network are apparent, and public satisfaction is increased.

The proposed additional investment in the county's roads would improve those roads in worst condition, especially the minor roads, and would improve road safety.

The project would provide the opportunity for the involvement of the Area Boards in identifying local priorities, which has not been possible previously because of the need to focus expenditure to treat identified safety issues.

A programme of publicity and branding of the project would make it clear to the travelling public, businesses and residents that Wiltshire is improving the condition of its roads.

## 95 **School Funding Reform: Arrangements for 2014/15**

Cllr Laura Mayes presented a report which updated Cabinet on the outcome of consultation with Wiltshire Schools on proposed changes to the Wiltshire local funding formula for schools and to agree the changes to the formula as recommended by Schools Forum.

The report also outlined why proposals from the Department for Education (DfE) to allow the inclusion of formula factors for mobility and sparsity are not recommended for inclusion in the Wiltshire formula.

As a result, the main elements of the funding formula are left unchanged however there are 3 changes that local authorities could now incorporate within their local funding formula for 2014-15. These were:

1. **Lump sum** – it was now possible to set differential lump sums for primary and secondary schools, with a maximum allowable lump sum of £175,000
2. **Pupil mobility** – a threshold had now been introduced to enable funding to be more targeted
3. **Sparsity** – a new factor could now be used to target funding at necessary small rural schools

The new proposals from DfE for 2014-15 were aimed at supporting schools in rural authorities. Wiltshire Schools Forum had considered the implications of the new proposals to establish whether they should be incorporated in to the Wiltshire local funding formula. Following consideration of the potential financial impact of the proposals the recommendation from Schools Forum was that differential lump sums should be implemented for primary and secondary schools but that the formula should not be amended to include Mobility or Sparsity factors. Schools were consulted on the proposed changes to the lump sum during September and the outcomes of that consultation were considered by Schools Forum on 3 October 2013.

The current Wiltshire funding formula is compliant with DfE requirements however the proposed changes would enable the formula to better reflect the differing requirements of primary and secondary schools.

### **Resolved:**

**That Cabinet approve the recommendations of the Schools Forum from its meeting on 3 October 2013 as follows:**

- 1. That the lump sum for Primary schools be set at £85,000**
- 2. That the lump sum for Secondary schools be set at £175,000**

Having consulted Maintained schools on the delegation or de-delegation of budgets for central services,

**That budgets for central services continue be held centrally with the exception of the elements of the budgets for the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and the Traveller Education Service which have been delegated to secondary schools in 2013-14.**

#### Reason for decisions

The changes to the lump sum element of the schools funding formula introduced by DfE in 2013-14 had the single biggest impact on school budgets in Wiltshire. The ability to set differential lump sums and therefore recognise the different fixed costs in primary and secondary school will mean that the funding formula can more appropriately reflect the costs of running schools.

The reasons why Schools Forum has not proposed the implementation of a mobility factor or a sparsity factor are detailed within the report.

## 96 **Business Improvement Districts**

Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philippe presented a report which invited Cabinet to consider the development of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in Wiltshire.

The report also informed Cabinet on the development of BIDs in Wiltshire, and updated Cabinet on the development of the Salisbury BID as the postal ballot was now in progress and the ballot count due to be held on 13 November 2013. The Salisbury BID Business Plan was presented for Cabinet's information.

A BID was a clearly defined commercial area within which extra improvement and management is funded by contributions made by the businesses and public bodies operating within it.

A BID is proposed in consultation with stakeholders within the district, and ultimately voted for by businesses within the defined area for a specific term, which was usually five years. At the end of the term, the BID may either disband, or propose a ballot for a new, subsequent BID. Nationally, the majority of BIDs that have reached re-ballot have continued to a further term.

The BID mechanism provided a way for both public bodies and the business community to invest together in their town centres following an agreed business plan. BIDs can deliver a better environment for Wiltshire's town centres and can boost their economies by supporting and providing additional services to their business communities.

**Resolved:**

**That Cabinet:**


- a) **notes and approves Wiltshire Council's participation in the establishment of BIDs in Wiltshire;**
- b) **delegates authority to the Service Director for Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Transport, to cast any votes to which Wiltshire Council is entitled in the event of a BID ballot and**
- c) **that the cost to the Council be capped at £80,000 per annum as gap funding.**

Reason for decisions

BIDs provide a recognised mechanism via which both public sector bodies and the business community can invest in their town centres following agreement of a business plan which must be approved by postal ballot of all eligible businesses and public sector bodies operating within the proposed district boundary. If the ballot results in a 'yes' vote then these organisations must pay a small additional levy on their business rates. The funding that is raised is then ring fenced and used to deliver additional projects and services to those currently provided by Wiltshire Council and other public bodies, directly benefiting the business community within the BID area and boosting the economy of the town centre.

It is now timely to inform Cabinet about BIDs in view of the development and forthcoming ballot of a BID in Salisbury. The Salisbury BID has been in development and its postal ballot commenced on 13 October and the count is scheduled to take place on 13 November 2013.

**97 Enabling the South Wiltshire University Technical College**

 Cllr Toby Sturgis presented a report which sought Cabinet's commitment to enabling the delivery of a University Technical College (UTC) based within Salisbury.

Cabinet was therefore asked to specifically consider the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between this Council, Wiltshire Police, the Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and the UTC, details of which were presented. This outlined the framework that the aforementioned parties would work within to enable the UTC to be developed on part of the existing Wilton Road Police Station site.

Cabinet was asked to confirm that, in order to enable the delivery of the UTC on this site (and thus drawing down a £7.5million investment by the Education Funding Agency), it wishes officers of Wiltshire Council to undertake all required

work to develop the most cost effective financial package to enable the purchase of the required element of the Wilton Road Police Station site by Wiltshire Council. An independent valuation of this element of the site, jointly commissioned by Wiltshire Council and the PCC, confirmed a suitable purchase price would be in the region of £2 million.

Cabinet was also asked to note that Wiltshire Council officers were working with officers of both the PCC and Wiltshire Police to identify, secure and provide a modern and sustainable Custody Suite to serve Salisbury and the south of the County. Officers would also support Wiltshire Police in the development and delivery of a long term estate plan for the County.

Members were very positive about proposals to provide such a facility in the County.

Cllr John Walsh, local member expressed his delight at the project although did have some concerns on which he needed clarification. The Leader undertook to request the PCC to consider and reflect the views of local members and provide opportunities for local involvement throughout the project to allay any concerns.

**Resolved:**

**That Cabinet:**

- a) **approve the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the South Wiltshire University Technical College Limited;**
- b) **request officers to develop the most cost effective funding package to enable the delivery of the University Technical College on the Wilton Road Police Station site, delegating this to Corporate Dr Carlton Brand, in consultation with the Solicitor to the Council, the Section 151 Officer and the Cabinet member for Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property, Waste and the Cabinet member for Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform and**
- c) **note and support the work being undertaken by officers to support the development and delivery of the Police and Crime Commissioner's and Wiltshire Police's long term estates strategy.**

Reason for decisions

To approve the proposed MoU, confirm the council's position in relation to the proposed purchase of an element of the Wilton Road Police Station site and note the work regarding the police estate that is being undertaken by Wiltshire Council officers. This work and proposal will enable the delivery of the UTC in Salisbury with new educational places for 600 young people, working with the

Army and local business, securing a September 2015 opening and secure an investment of the £7.5million by the Education Funding Agency to deliver this.

**98 Local Government Association Adult Social Care Peer Challenge**

As explained at the start of the meeting under Leader's announcements (minute no. 89 refers), this item was withdrawn.

**99 Urgent Items**

There was no urgent business.

**Appendix to online minutes**

Statement and questions from Cllr Margaret Willmot, Salisbury City Council and response from Cllr Thomson, Cabinet member for Highways and Transport

Correspondence from Mr Kenneth Spencer, Atworth Traffic Action Group and response from Cllr Thomson

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.45 pm)

These decisions were published on the 25 October 2013 and will come into force on 4 November 2013.
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The Officer who has produced these minutes is Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718024 or e-mail [yamina.rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:yamina.rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
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## CABINET TRANSFORMATION COMMITTEE

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DRAFT MINUTES of a MEETING held in ALAMEIN SUITE - CITY HALL,  
MALTHOUSE LANE, SALISBURY, SP2 7TU on Tuesday, 22 October 2013.

Cllr Jane Scott OBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr Jonathon Seed	Cabinet Member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding
Cllr John Thomson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Highways and Streetscene and Broadband
Cllr Dick Tonge	Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform
Cllr Stuart Wheeler	Cabinet Member for Hubs, Heritage & Arts, Governance (including information management), Support Services (HR, Legal, ICT, Business Services, Democratic Services)
Angus Macpherson	Police and Crime Commissioner
Patrick Geenty	Chief Constable, Wiltshire Police
Deborah Fielding	Chief Officer, Wiltshire CCG
Dr Stephen Rowlands	Chair of Wiltshire CCG

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

### 1 **Apologies and Membership**

There were no apologies received.

### 2 **Leader's Announcements**

Mrs Scott welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of the Committee, explaining it was a move forward progressing the transformation programme with the involvement of key partners

As a committee of Cabinet its purpose was to discharge the executive's responsibility with regard to the transformation programme. Membership may be opened up in the future to include other partner organisations.

As Cabinet Capital Assets Committee retained responsibility for the use of the council's assets, any decision made by the Committee involving assets would be taken by Capital Assets Committee.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **4 Membership and terms of Reference**

Cllr Scott, Leader of the Council, presented the Committee's terms of reference for the Committee's information.

**Resolved:**

**That the terms of reference of the Transformation Committee be noted.**

### **5 Principles of the Transformation Programme**

Cllr Seed, Cabinet member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding, introduced a report which detailed the principles, governance structure and outlined the current position of the transformation programme, details of the number of projects managed by the programme office and how they would be managed

Cllr Wheeler, Cabinet member for Hubs, Heritage & Arts, Governance (including information management) and Support Services (HR, Legal, ICT, Business Services and Democratic Services) explained the programme was the base where projects started and noted the use of the Officer Transformation Board as the gateway for new programmes and projects.

**Resolved:**

**That the report be noted.**

### **6 COB progress and timetable**

Cllr Seed, Cabinet member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding introduced a report which detailed the progress to date against the timetable previously set by Cabinet in respect of the campus programme.

The campus programme was community-led, and it was noted that partners found the information useful when considering their contribution to the common aim. As campus proposals developed the next stage would be to bring them to Cabinet.

The Leader commented that it would be mutually beneficial to involve the CCG in early discussions concerning integration of health care facilities within campuses

Deborah Fielding from the CCG explained that the CCG worked closely with both NHS England and the Communities Services estate and offered their help in facilitating discussions at a strategic level and ensuring local engagement. She agreed that the aim would be to provide integrated services in an integrated way.

The Chief Constable, Pat Geenty drew attention to the need to formalise where key services would be located prior to integration, noting that each campus model would be different having regard to the needs of the local communities

It was agreed that a meeting be arranged with the CCG, a NHS England representative, Cllr Wheeler and officers to look at each community area.

**Resolved:**

**That the Committee:**

- 1. Noted the current position of the campus programme**
- 2. Receives future programme updates on a quarterly basis**
- 3. Agreed for monthly programme updates to be sent to the CCG**

## **7 Update on the 3 Hub strategy**

Cllr Wheeler, Cabinet member for Hubs, Heritage & Arts, Governance (including information management) and Support Services (HR, Legal, ICT, Business Services and Democratic Services) introduced a report which set out progress to deliver the three hub strategy. He explained that the current refurbishment of County Hall would be completed soon. The reconfiguration from 98 buildings to 3 buildings would embrace the approach to new ways of working and working towards being paperless.

He thanked Julie Anderson-Hill and her small team for the efficient manner in which the moves are being completed, noting that 3000 staff would be relocated shortly.

A decision on car parking had not yet been made but a travel survey had been sent to all staff and this information would be used to model options that would go before the Transformation Board.

Carolyn Godfrey gave an update on the new Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub which was almost complete, with phase 1 was due to go live in January as planned. The Home Office had commented on the facility being a model of what

they would like to see in other areas. Chief Constable Patrick Geenty commented that the facilities were first class and would undoubtedly deliver a first class service.

**Resolved:**

**That the report be noted.**

## **8 Update on Wiltshire Council's systems thinking programme**

John Rogers, Head of Systems Thinking and Customer Access introduced a report which detailed the development of the systems thinking forward work programme. He noted the scale and complexity of the programme with the aim of delivering more value for less.

The programme report provides a snapshot of reviews currently in progress; previous reviews across the council means that the programme has already worked with services for our most vulnerable people and with services for all Wiltshire's residents and visitors. The amber status shown on four current reviews were due to local issues.

Systems thinking courses were available to all those wishing to take part. participated. They had been extremely well received with very positive feedback on those who had attended. To date 569 members of staff had undertaken the 3 day course which included 88 Police Staff and 3 senior managers from Swindon Borough Council. The Chief Constable complimented the systems thinking work for the changes he was seeing in Wiltshire Police.

In answer to a query on audits to measure the effectiveness of reviews, it was explained that the evidence of success could be seen in the movement towards more efficient ways of working and benefitting the end customer.

**Resolved:**

**That the report be noted.**

## **9 Standard Programme Template**

Iain Baker introduced the report which provided an example for a standard programme template which if agreed would be used as the format to provide a consistent reporting process..

**Resolved:**

**The Committee agreed to use the standard programme template as presented for reporting programme progress.**

## 10 Forward work plan

The Committee discussed themes which would influence the development of the forward work programme.

### **Resolved:**

1. For the following to be standing agenda items:
  - Security
  - Communications
  - Performance of systems thinking reviews
2. For the following items to be reported on a quarterly basis:
  - Campus programme update;
  - 3 hub strategy update; and the
  - Multi-agency safeguarding hub update
3. For the following items to come to the next formal meeting of the Committee scheduled for 17 December 2013:
  - Programme overview for partners
  - Use of hub space for partners
4. To add the joint estate strategy with the police to the forward work plan

## 11 Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 3.05 pm)

These decisions were published on the 28 October 2013 and will come into force on 5 November 2013
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**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**21 November 2013**

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**Subject: Wiltshire Council's New Allocation Policy**

**Cabinet member: Councillor Keith Humphries - Housing**

**Key Decision: Yes**

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## **Executive Summary**

To report to Cabinet on the outcome of our consultations and recommend they adopt a new allocation policy for Wiltshire which confirms how we will allocate affordable housing from April 2014.

## **Proposal**

**That Cabinet:**

**Approve the new Allocation Policy to be implemented from April 2014 and delegate to the Associate Director for Adult Care Commissioning, Safeguarding and Housing any necessary final minor amendments in consultation with the Cabinet member for Public Health, Protection Services, Adult Care and Housing.**

## **Reason for Proposal**

The Housing Act 1996 Part VI (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) and Localism Act 2012 requires the Council to have a scheme which determines how allocations and nominations will be made. In Wiltshire we operate a Choice Based Lettings policy called Homes4Wiltshire which was adopted shortly before unitary.

The purpose of the Council's Choice Based Lettings Policy is to set out clear guidelines to ensure that affordable housing is allocated fairly and according to an applicants' need for housing while at the same time taking into account effective management of the affordable housing stock across Wiltshire. Following the introduction of the Localism Act we had the opportunity to review our allocations policy to consider some of the new freedoms that the act introduced. Following extensive consultation we have proposed some fundamental changes to our policy and have taken full advantage of our new freedoms to ensure we make best use of our limited affordable housing stock and give priority to local people.

**James Cawley, Associate Director Adult Care and Housing**

**21 November 2013**

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**Subject: Wiltshire Council's New Allocation Policy**

**Cabinet member: Councillor Keith Humphries - Housing**

**Key Decision: Yes**

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## **1 Purpose of Report**

1.0 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet to approve a new allocation policy for Wiltshire

## **2 Relevance to the business plan**

2.0 The proposed new allocation policy should help to deliver on the council's vision to create stronger and more resilient communities by focusing on local homes for local people. This will also help bring communities together to enable and support them to do more for themselves which is a key priority within the plan

## **3 Background**

3.0 The Council holds a Housing Register of those wanting to be considered for affordable housing from which nominations are made. There were 18,995 applicants on the Housing Register at 25<sup>th</sup> October 2013 of which 8,378 had no identified housing need and would be considered as households who have a desire to move, but are currently suitably housed. We also have 5,408 who were identified as having a low need for re-housing, with only 238 households in our highest band. The Housing Register allows households to be considered for properties owned by over 32 housing providers. We would always encourage all housing providers to include all their properties in the Choice Based Lettings scheme whether they are subject to nomination rights or not.

3.1 The Council receives around 2,200 nominations a year. The majority of applicants on the Housing Register therefore will not be nominated or referred for a vacancy. It is important therefore that our policy is able to clearly identify those in the greatest housing need and minimises the level of time taken to assess applicants that are not going to receive active consideration for vacancies. This will free up time for the Council to offer a more comprehensive housing advice and options service to help applicants find housing.

3.2 Following the introduction of the Localism Act we had the opportunity to review our allocations policy to consider some of the new freedoms that the act introduced, but also take into consideration the DCLG proposed guidance for



allocations produced in October 2013. Our policy is framed so as to secure that 'reasonable preference' is given to certain categories of housing need. The reasonable preference categories include:-

- a) People who are homeless (within the meaning of Part 7)
- b) People who are owed a duty under s190(2) (homeless, priority need but intentionally homeless); s193(2) (full homelessness duty); s195(2) (threatened with homelessness and in priority need) or s192(3) (homeless but non priority)
- c) People occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
- d) People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including any grounds relating to a disability)
- e) People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others)

3.3 In adopting any new policy we must ensure that the following principles are applied:-

- Allocations should only be made to those who are eligible
- Every local authority must have an allocation scheme for determining priorities with clear procedures in allocating accommodation
- The scheme must include a choice of housing accommodation or the opportunity for the applicant to express preference about their housing accommodation
- The scheme should be framed so as to secure reasonable preference
- We must have regard to our Homeless Strategy and Strategic Tenancy Policy
- Before adopting a new scheme all housing providers should be consulted, allowing a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposals
- We must not allocate housing accommodation except in accordance with our adopted allocation policy.

#### **4. Main Considerations for the Council**

4.0 Wiltshire's allocation policy will remain a choice based lettings scheme that covers the Wiltshire Council area. The scheme determines priorities and procedures for the allocation of affordable housing across Wiltshire, including:-

- Eligible and exclusion criteria for registration
- Property size criteria
- Banding structure that determines how applicants will be assessed and prioritised
- How homes will be allocated

4.1 Since September 2012 a comprehensive informal and formal review of the allocation policy was conducted to address opportunities under the Localism Act

for greater freedoms for councils to adopt local policies and procedures on eligibility criteria and the allocation of affordable housing.

4.2 The consultation included attendance at all area boards, linked housing meetings to the strategic housing partnership, overview and scrutiny as well as with various external stakeholders including the MOD, HCA, Wiltshire police, supported housing sector, voluntary sector and all Wiltshire's housing providers. As well as writing to all households on the housing register informing them of the review and highlighting some of the potential impacts, such as the removal of the Bronze band.

Engagement with Overview and Scrutiny has taken place at key milestones within the development of the revised Policy. Most recently this was at a rapid scrutiny exercise on 28 October and the outcome of this was endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 5 November – see Appendix 4 attached. The recommendations from overview and scrutiny set out in its report are currently being considered and will be incorporated as far as possible during final arrangements.

4.3 The formal consultation was very well responded too. In total we received 839 responses and various other letters from groups and housing providers. Appendix 1 provides an analysis of the responses received, the highlights are below:-

- Over 60% of the respondents were both residents of Wiltshire and who are currently on the housing register
- 87.8% agreed that we should exclude from the register those who have exhibited unacceptable behaviour
- When considering the households who would be excluded from requiring a local connection to Wiltshire we had 64.6% of respondents did not want to see the transient group as an excluded group.
- 65.9% agreed that we should introduce the bedroom standard when making allocations for social housing
- 55.7% would like to exclude households who have no identified housing need.
- 75% of those who responded at area boards across Wiltshire wanted to see local homes for local people being introduced
- 71.8% agree that a local connection to Wiltshire should be introduced to ensure housing is only allocated to households with a connection to the area. A local connection can be defined as:-

4.4 A lot of concern was raised during the consultation regarding the definition of Local connection. A local connection to live in the Wiltshire Council area is currently defined as:

- A person who is currently resident in the county of Wiltshire and has continuously lived here for the past two years or more
- A person who is in permanent paid employment or has a permanent offer of paid employment in the county, or is self employed and works in the Wiltshire area or

- A person with close family (grand-parents, parents, legal guardian, adult children or brothers and sisters) who have lived in the county for 5 years or longer, or
- A person who has a connection with the county through special circumstances, such as they need to receive specialist medical or support from a close family member or services within the county which cannot be provided elsewhere

4.5 The final stage of the review was to consider the impacts both positive and negative for some of the outcomes identified from the review. Appendix 1 provides an overview of this work. Some of the key considerations are:-

#### **4.6 Impact Assessment – positive and negative**

At the end of the last quarter of 2012 / 2013 we had a total of 18,478 households who were registered on the housing register. Below explains some of the potential impacts on the main outcomes of the review

**4.7 Re-designation and an alternative for the Bronze band.** Of the 18,478 households on the register 8,226 are in the bronze band and have no identified housing need. Focusing the housing register to include households who have an identified housing need and offering alternative to those with no housing need would reduce the amount of households on the register to 10,252, will make the management of the register easier as well as having a much clearer and transparent system that doesn't raise expectations.

4.8 On average we allocate around 2,000 homes a year. In 2011/12, we allocated homes to 82 households from the bronze band and 81 households in 2012/13, all of which had no identified housing need.

4.9 Some of the registered providers are concerned that by focusing the register to those with a housing need some of their hard to let properties would be void for longer as most of these properties were allocated to those in the former bronze band. This may push the providers to consider a change in use for all hard to let properties which will help meet the needs of clients that we have a responsibility to accommodate, although this work has already started. We have also confirmed that those with no housing need will be offered alternative advice and options as well as being able to register an interest in our expression of interest group which we will use to advertise certain types of alternative housing, such as Low Cost Home Ownership and any hard to let properties.

4.10 Other concerns raised include reduced mobility for applicants wanting to move to different areas as well as a potential increase in appeals and reviews due to applicants trying to access the housing register as well as a housing advice service for those that are not eligible to join the register.

#### **4.11 Expression of interest Group**

To reduce some of the concerns raised by providers and others we are introducing an expression of interest group, which will include all applicants who would like to be considered for accommodation outside of the normal nomination process. This would include low cost home ownership, specially adapted properties, supported accommodation, emergency planning and properties that are hard to let.

**4.12 Introducing a Local Connection to Wiltshire.** Of the 18,478 households on the register, 663 households have no identified local connection to Wiltshire, of which, 304 households are in the bronze band so would reduce the register by a further 359, bringing the total to around 9,893.

4.13 If a local connection to Wiltshire was introduced we would still need to identify certain households who would be excluded from requiring a local connection to this area. This was considered as part of the consultation and included:

- A person who is homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and Wiltshire council has accepted a full housing duty to them as well as formally accepted homeless applicants who took a qualifying offer of housing outside of Wiltshire.
- A person who was provided with accommodation in the County of Wiltshire under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, or
- A person who is serving in the Armed Forces,
- A person who has left the Armed Forces within the last 5 years.
- A bereaved spouse or civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving services family accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner.
- Serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- A person who is being accommodated through witness protection
- A person who has been confirmed as fleeing domestic abuse from another area or any other violent assault or threat of violence in accordance with Housing Act 1996 Part 7
- A person from the transient community who has no local connection to any other area
- A person who has been accommodated outside the area by Wiltshire Council in exercising its statutory duty to accommodate
- A person with a local connection to an adjoining parish that is outside of Wiltshire but whose housing need has been used to develop affordable housing within a parish of Wiltshire. These households will only be allowed to bid for properties within the parish identified to meet their housing need.
- Verified rough sleepers, where there is proof of rough sleeping in the Wiltshire Council area

4.14 A high percentage of respondents agreed that all but a person from the transient community should be excluded from requiring a local connection to Wiltshire. 64.6% did not consider that this group should be excluded from needing a connection to Wiltshire. Although some of the above are statutory required, the transient community is outside of our statutory requirements. We still may be required to pick some of these households up through the homeless legislation and they would then be excluded from joining the register.

4.15 It is often the case that the transient group do not have a local connection to a particular area so they will never have the opportunity to get a settled home. Allowing them to be excluded from requiring a local connection will help provide stability, with better health, home life and education.

**4.16 Local Homes for Local People.** We have had very strong feedback from area boards that they would like to see local homes allocated to local people. This will allow us to focus on local people rather than out of county applicants. Affordable homes in the future could potentially be allocated to those with a local connection to the town or parish as the 1<sup>st</sup> selection criteria.

4.17 If this was introduced we would need to introduce a cascade approach to ensure we complied with Wiltshire's core strategy. If we could not find on 1<sup>st</sup> allocation a household with a local connection to the town or parish we would need to offer the property to a household with a local connection to the surrounding town and parishes before opening it out across Wiltshire. Appendix 2 confirms how the cascade approach will work for each parish and town in Wiltshire.

4.18 It is very likely that parish councils and local people would be much more supportive of affordable housing development in their area if they knew that the homes would be allocated to local people first and it will help keep communities and families together creating more sustainable and supportive communities.

4.19 Introducing a requirement to have a local connection to an area could potentially limit the movement around the county. It would also be a system that looks at local connection first rather than housing need.

#### **Exclusion for Unacceptable Behaviour.**

**4.20 Rent Arrears.** Any household with rent arrears could be excluded or suspended from the housing register until they have maintained a repayment plan for 6 consecutive months. This will align the allocation policy with many of our housing providers who already exclude applicants from being nominated properties if they have rent arrears.

4.21 Of the 18,478 on the register, 1,385 confirmed they have rent arrears with a landlord. We have no reporting facility on our current IT system to breakdown this figure any further as some may have agreed re-payment plans and would not be excluded. Based on what we know of the 1,385, 617 households are in rent arrears and in the bronze band, therefore the register would be reduced by a further 768 giving a total of 9,125.

**3.22 Anti Social Behaviour (ASB).** Any household who has been evicted or legal action has been taken as a result of anti social behaviour, could be excluded from the register until a tenancy or licence has been successfully held for a period of 12 months with no reported incidents of any anti social behaviour.

4.23 This would also bring it in line with the other housing provider lettings policies. We are not able to report on how many households would be excluded from the register but only a small handful are excluded from being offered a tenancy for ASB.

#### **4.24 Next Steps and timeline**

Following cabinets recommendations and approval to adopt the new policy we will need to take a further paper to full council for final adoption and approval.

Date	Event
Dec/Jan/Feb 14	work with IT provider to develop new IT package in line with policy
Jan / Feb 14	Write to all applicants and request a new form is completed to enable us to assess on new policy
March 14	Evaluate all applications and input on new system
1 <sup>st</sup> April 14	Go live with the new policy

## **5. Safeguarding Implications**

5.0 There is no identified safeguarding implications from the proposal in this report.

## **6. Public Health Implications**

6.0 There is no identified public health implications from the proposal in this report.

## **7. Environmental and Climate change considerations**

7.0 There is no identified environmental or climate change considerations from the proposal in this report.

## **8. Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

8.0 The policy detailed herein aims to deliver quality services without prejudice and discrimination to meet the needs of all households, 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.

## **9. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken**

9.0 We currently have a lawful allocation policy so we are not required to formally make any major changes, but if this new policy is not adopted we would need to make some minor changes to our existing allocation policy to take into account the most recent guidance that CLG have issued and we would not have taken full advantage of our new freedoms.

## **10. Financial Implications**

10.0 Making any changes to our allocation policy will require amendments to our existing IT system. Following brief discussions with our IT contractor they have estimated that based on some of the suggested recommendations it will cost around £40k to develop a new system. To enable a confirmed costing we would need to write a detailed specification with a technician at a cost of up to £2,100. With the technical specification we will receive an accurate costing for any IT changes needed to take forward any approved recommended changes.

10.1 As well as the amendments to the IT system the housing register will require a full review of applications including a review of all bandings in line with the new policy. All clients will need to be written to and a new housing application form completed. All applications will need to be assessed, banded and registered on the new system. This will incur printing and postage costs as well as extra staff resource to process and input all the new applications in line with the new policy.

## **11. Legal Implications**

11.0 Legal have been fully involved and consulted throughout the process of developing the new policy, including the consultation documentation and all recommendations from legal have been taken on board. Legal can confirm that the policy is lawful and complies with the latest changes to legislation.

## **12. Proposal**

12.0 That the Cabinet:

Approve the new allocation policy which should be implemented from April 2014 and allow for final minor amendments from legal in consultation with the housing portfolio holder.

## **13. Reason for proposal**

13.0 The Housing Act 1996 Part VI (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) and Localism Act 2012 requires the Council to have a scheme which determines how allocations and nominations will be made.

13.1 The purpose of the Council's Choice Based Lettings Policy is to set out clear guidelines to ensure that affordable housing is allocated fairly and according to an applicants' need for housing while at the same time taking into account effective management of the affordable housing stock across Wiltshire. Following the introduction of the Localism Act we had the opportunity to review our allocations policy to consider some of the new freedoms that the act introduced. Following extensive consultation we have proposed some fundamental changes to our policy and have taken full advantage of our new freedoms to ensure we make best use of our limited affordable housing stock and give priority to local people.

**James Cawley**  
**Associate Director Adult Care and Housing**

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Date of report: 25 October 2013

## **Background Papers**

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

- The Housing Act 1996 Part VI (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002)
- Localism Act 2012
- CLG Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local authorities in England 2012
- CLG proposals for providing social housing for local people – strengthening statutory guidance on social housing allocations October 2013

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Consultation Analysis

Appendix 2: Area Cascade for surrounding towns and Villages

Appendix 3: Draft Homes4Wiltshire Policy

Appendix 4: Comments from Scrutiny

Appendix 5: Summary of banding changes

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Local Connection to Wiltshire	
<b>71.8% strongly agree or agree to introduce</b>	
Positive impact	Negative impact
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We would only be re-housing those with a connection to the County</li> <li>2. Good for the economy and will help strengthen the communities</li> <li>3. Keeps multiple generations of families closer together</li> <li>4. Will help increase support for development in rural areas</li> <li>5. Significantly reduce complaints about local homes not going to local people</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Would create a less flexible labour market as applicants would be restricted from joining the register</li> <li>2. Will not encourage cross county movement</li> <li>3. It will limit choice for applicants in need across the country</li> <li>4. Potential increase in hard to let properties as applicants would be restricted from out the area</li> <li>5. Increase in workloads to check local connection</li> </ol>
1 <sup>st</sup> Allocation based on Local Connection to the town or parish	
<b>Local homes for local people – 75% from area board presentations</b>	
Positive impact	Negative impact
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Keeps communities and families together in centre of interest</li> <li>2. Allocations much more focussed on support networks – improves others areas such as social care.</li> <li>3. Less disruption to families / school / employment</li> <li>4. It is what local communities want</li> <li>5. Create strong vibrant communities</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Villages and towns could stagnate and restricts movement</li> <li>2. Some villages / towns have no potential for future development so local people in these areas could be disadvantaged</li> <li>3. Increase administration to confirm local connection</li> <li>4. Reliant upon the sustainability of the parish</li> <li>5. Prioritise connection over need</li> </ol>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Allocation based on Local Connection to the surrounding town or parish to comply with the core strategy	
Positive impact	Negative impact
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complies with core strategy</li> <li>2. As above</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As above</li> </ol>

## Not to include the transient community as an excluded group from the requirement to have a local connection to Wiltshire

64.6% did not want to see the transient group as an excluded group from needing a local connection to Wiltshire

Positive impact	Negative impact
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensures local homes only go to local people</li> <li>2. Unlikely to settle in Wiltshire due to limiting options</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Could lead to more illegal dwelling/encampments</li> <li>2. Doesn't provide equality for all / disproportionately impact on travelling community</li> <li>3. Puts pressure on the limited alternative options</li> <li>4. No stability, poor health, poor education</li> </ol>

## Those with no housing need to be excluded from the register to bid – removal of the current Bronze band

55.7% wanted to see the removal of the bronze band

Positive impact	Negative impact
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Significantly reduce the numbers on the register making it easier to manage</li> <li>2. Easier to manage expectations</li> <li>3. Clients will need to consider alternative options to our limited social housing stock</li> <li>4. All future allocations of social housing would be based on needs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Potentially restricts mobility</li> <li>2. Increase in reviews / appeals and challenges to try and access the register</li> <li>3. Potential increase in hard to let properties and therefore increase in voids</li> <li>4. Potential increase in housing advice for customers not able to join the register</li> </ol>

## To introduce the Bedroom standard to determine the size of a home applicants can bid for

65.9% wanted to see the introduction of the bedroom standard

Positive impact	Negative impact
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prevents clients for bidding for properties that are not affordable and will reduce under occupation</li> <li>2. Reduces impact of rent arrears with providers</li> <li>3. Aligns with the lettings policies of the providers</li> <li>4. Prevents clients false hopes on getting a larger property than they are entitled too</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More complex IT system needed as in some cases providers will want to under occupy to help create sustainable communities.</li> <li>2. Potential discrimination against those that work and can afford a larger home</li> <li>3. Increase size of families in smaller homes, could cause estate issues</li> <li>4. Potential to see smaller properties being built in the future</li> </ol>

5. Makes best use of our stock	5. Legal definition of a bedroom, potential to see increase in appeals / reviews 6. Greater pressure on medical professionals to create supportive evidence of exemptions
<p><b>To introduce exclusions for those who have caused unacceptable behaviour</b></p> <p>87.8% wanted to see the exclusion of any applicant who has caused unacceptable behaviour</p>	
<b>Positive impact</b>	<b>Negative impact</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage applicants to maintain rent arrear repayment plans or discourage rent arrears in the first place</li> <li>2. The policy will not provide false hope to clients as many housing providers exclude for these reasons and will refuse an offer of accommodation if they become top of the list and have rent arrears</li> <li>3. Excluding applicants who refuse properties will encourage applicants to be more selective – reduce refusals and improve void times</li> <li>4. It will align with many of the provider lettings policies and therefore reduce shortlists</li> <li>5. Improvements for landlords and quality of life for neighbours</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Where will they be placed, what will happen to those excluded as Wiltshire Council may still have a duty</li> <li>2. Clients with mental health problems who have caused ASB through no fault of their own</li> <li>3. Increased time and resources needed to investigate and monitor all the exclusions</li> <li>4. Could increase T/A if clients are suspended from bidding</li> </ol>

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# Wiltshire's Allocation Policy January 2013 Consultation questionnaire

**839 responses**

**1. Please tick the box or boxes that describes you.**

**I am responding to this questionnaire as:**

- 520 (62.7%) a resident of Wiltshire
- 19 (2.3%) a service provider
- 35 (4.2%) a member of staff at Wiltshire Council
- 136 (16.4%) an existing housing tenant
- 4 (0.5%) a Local Authority councillor
- 9 (1.1%) a town or parish councillor
- 7 (0.8%) a voluntary/charitable organisation
- 552 (66.5%) I am on the housing register
- 14 (1.7%) other,

Please specify

[11 \(100.0%\)](#)

**1.ii If you are responding on the behalf of an organisation or service provider, please give the name of the organisation below:**

22 responses, 5 duplicates = 17 organisations/service providers

Selwood Housing
Crosspoint (Westbury)
Alabare Christian Care & Support
Green Square Group
New Highway
WILTSHIRE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
DHI
Home Group
Wiltshire Rural Housing Association
Shelter
CAB
Richmond Fellowship
Wiltshire Community Land Trust
Sanctuary Housing Association
Switch (Swindon & wiltshire Intergrated Targets for Change)
Guinness Hermitage
Wiltshire Citizens Advice

The current allocation policy is being reviewed to address opportunities under the Localism Act for greater freedoms for councils to adopt local policies and procedures on eligibility criteria and the allocation of social housing. The following questions seek your views on allocation policies in Wiltshire. See appendix 1 on the recommended exclusion criteria to assist with Q2-Q7.

**2. Do you agree that applicants who have exhibited unacceptable behaviour, as outlined in the appendices be restricted from joining the register?**

457 (55.1%) Strongly agree

271 (32.7%) Agree

69 (8.3%) Neither agree nor disagree

21 (2.5%) Disagree

11 (1.3%) Strongly disagree

If you said disagree why is this?

[30 \(100.0%\)](#)

**3. Do you agree that applicants with no local connection to Wiltshire, as outlined in the appendices be restricted from joining the register?**

295 (35.5%) Strongly agree

301 (36.3%) Agree

150 (18.1%) Neither agree nor disagree

55 (6.6%) Disagree

29 (3.5%) Strongly disagree

If you said disagree why is this?

[73 \(100.0%\)](#)

**4. Do you agree with the following criteria that, allows certain households to be included on the register even though they have no local connection?**

	Yes	No
A person who is being accommodated through witness protection	670 (83.3%)	134 (16.7%)
A person who has been confirmed as fleeing domestic violence from another area	691 (84.8%)	124 (15.2%)
A person from the transient community who has no local connection to any other area	274 (35.4%)	500 (64.6%)
Any applicant who has been accommodated outside the area by Wiltshire Council in exercising its statutory duty to accommodate	420 (55.6%)	336 (44.4%)
Other, please specify		
	<a href="#">34 (100.0%)</a>	

**5. Do you agree that applicants who have assets or income above the financial resource limit be restricted from joining the register?**

268 (32.6%) Strongly agree

282 (34.3%) Agree

194 (23.6%) Neither agree nor disagree

49 (6.0%) Disagree

28 (3.4%) Strongly disagree

If you said disagree why is this?

[58 \(100.0%\)](#)

- 6. Do you agree that applicants who have no identified housing need be restricted from joining the register?**  
 206 (25.0%) Strongly agree  
**253 (30.7%) Agree**  
 207 (25.1%) Neither agree nor disagree  
 104 (12.6%) Disagree  
 54 (6.6%) Strongly disagree  
 If you said disagree why is this?  
[131 \(100.0%\)](#)
- 7. Do you agree that applicants who have deliberately worsened their circumstances be restricted from joining the register?**  
**384 (46.3%) Strongly agree**  
 309 (37.2%) Agree  
 100 (12.0%) Neither agree nor disagree  
 29 (3.5%) Disagree  
 8 (1.0%) Strongly disagree  
 If you said disagree why is this?  
[32 \(100.0%\)](#)
- 8. Do you agree that applicants are generally only eligible to apply for properties that meet their assessed bedroom allowance as outlined in the Department of Work and Pensions Housing Allowance Standards? See appendix 2 on the recommended bedroom eligibility to assist.**  
 212 (25.8%) Strongly agree  
**329 (40.1%) Agree**  
 135 (16.4%) Neither agree nor disagree  
 88 (10.7%) Disagree  
 57 (6.9%) Strongly disagree  
 If you said disagree why is this?  
[128 \(100.0%\)](#)
- See appendix 3 on the recommended banding criteria to assist with Questions 9 and onwards.
- 9. Are there any other groups that should be awarded additional preference? Please comment with reasons in the box below.**  
[211 \(100.0%\)](#)
- 10. Do you agree with the local parish and town allocation criteria as set out below?**
- |  | Yes                | No         |
|--|--------------------|------------|
| A person who is resident in the parish or town.<br>The residency will need to be permanent and the person will need to have lived in the area for six months out of the last 12, or three years out of the last five years | <b>743 (91.2%)</b> | 72 (8.8%)  |
| A person who has permanent paid employment or has a permanent job offer within the parish or town  | <b>710 (88.1%)</b> | 96 (11.9%) |

A person with close family (grand-parents, parents, legal guardian, adult children or brothers and sisters) who have lived in the parish or town for five years or more	753 (92.7%)	59 (7.3%)
If a property has major adaptations the local connection criteria would not apply as the need for the adaptations in the property would override any local connection to the area. Where an adapted property cannot be matched to an applicant with specific needs it will be allocated in accordance with the policy	735 (93.6%)	50 (6.4%)
If you have said 'No' to any of the above, please state why:		
<a href="#">120 (100.0%)</a>		

**11. If you have any further comments you would like to make about the revised allocation policy, please use the box below:**

[193 \(100.0%\)](#)



Parish	Adjacent parishes									
Aldbourne	Baydon	Ogbourne St. George	Ramsbury							
Alderbury	Britford	Clarendon Park	Downton	Grimstead	Odstock	Whiteparish				
All Cannings	Avebury	Bishops Cannings	East Kennett	Etchilhampton	Patney	Stanton St. Bernard				
Allington	Amesbury	Idmiston	Newton Tony	Winterslow						
Alton	East Kennett	Huish	Stanton St. Bernard	West Overton	Wilcot	Woodborough				
Alvediston	Ansty	Berwick St. John	Ebbesborne Wake	Swallowcliffe						
Amesbury	Allington	Bulford	Cholderton	Durnford	Durrington	Idmiston	Newton Tony	Wilsford cum Lake	Winterbourne Stoke	
Ansty	Alvediston	Berwick St. John	Donhead St. Andrew	Swallowcliffe	Tisbury					
Ashton Keynes	Leigh	Minety								
Atworth	Box	Broughton Gifford	Corsham	Holt	Melksham Without	South Wraxall				
Avebury	All Cannings	Bishops Cannings	Calne Without	Cherhill	East Kennett	West Overton	Winterbourne Monkton			
Barford St. Martin	Burcombe Without	Compton Chamberlayne	Dinton	Great Wishford	Steeple Langford					
Baydon	Aldbourne	Ramsbury								
Beechingstoke	Marden	North Newton	Patney	Stanton St. Bernard	Wilsford	Woodborough				
Berwick Bassett	Cherhill	Clyffe Pypard	Fyfield	Hilmarton	Preshute	Winterbourne Bassett	Winterbourne Monkton			
Berwick St. James	Shrewton	Stapleford	Steeple Langford	Wilsford cum Lake	Winterbourne Stoke	Woodford	Wylve			
Berwick St. John	Alvediston	Ansty	Donhead St. Andrew	Donhead St. Mary	Ebbesborne Wake	Tollard Royal				
Berwick St. Leonard	Boyton	Chicklade	Fonthill Bishop	Fonthill Gifford	Hindon	Sherrington				
Biddestone	Box	Castle Combe	Chippenham without	Colerne	Corsham	North Wraxall	Yatton Keynell			
Bishops Cannings	All Cannings	Avebury	Calne Without	Etchilhampton	Heddington	Roundway	Stert			
Bishopstone	Broad Chalke	Burcombe Without	Stratford Toney	Wilton						
Bishopstrow	Bratton	Edington	Norton Bavant	Sutton Veny	Warminster					
Bowerchalke	Broad Chalke	Ebbesborne Wake								
Box	Atworth	Biddestone	Colerne	Corsham	Monkton Farleigh	South Wraxall				
Boyton	Berwick St. Leonard	Chicklade	Codford	Heytesbury	Knook	Sherrington	Upton Lovell			
Bradford-on-Avon	Holt	South Wraxall	Trowbridge	Westwood	Wingfield	Winsley				
Bratton	Bishopstrow	Edington	Heywood	Warminster	West Ashton	Westbury	Upton Scudamore			
Braydon	Charlton (Malmesbury)	Minety	Purton							
Bremhill	Calne Without	Chippenham	Christian Malford	Hilmarton	Langley Burrell Without	Lyneham and Bradenstoke	Sutton Benger			
Brinkworth	Charlton (Malmesbury)	Dauntsey	Lea and Cleverton	Little Somerford	Lyneham and Bradenstoke	Lydiard Millicent	Lydiard Tregoze	Purton	Royal Wootton Bassett	Tockenham
Britford	Alderbury	Clarendon Park	Coombe Bissett	Netherhampton	Odstock	Salisbury				
Brixton Deverill	Chicklade	Heytesbury	Kingston Deverill	Longbridge Deverill	Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield	Sutton Veny				
Broad Chalke	Bishopstone	Bowerchalke	Burcombe Without	Compton Chamberlayne	Ebbesborne Wake	Fovant				
Broad Hinton	Broad Town	Clyffe Pypard	Ogbourne St. Andrew	Preshute	Winterbourne Bassett					
Broad Town	Broad Hinton	Clyffe Pypard	Lydiard Tregoze	Royal Wootton Bassett						













<b>Wootton Rivers</b>	Burbage	Easton	Milton Lilbourne	Savernake										
<b>Worton</b>	Bulkington	Cheverell Magna	Cheverell Parva	Market Lavington	Marston	Potterne	Poulshot	West Lavington						
<b>Wylie</b>	Berwick St. James	Chitterne	Codford	Dinton	Shrewton	Steeple Langford	Stockton	Teffont						
<b>Yatton Keynell</b>	Biddestone	Castle Combe	Chippenham Without	Grittleton	Kington St. Michael									
<b>Zeals</b>	Mere	Stourton with Gasper												



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## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 There is huge demand for affordable rented homes in Wiltshire. The purpose of the allocation scheme is to set a framework for Wiltshire Council and its partners for the registration, assessment and allocation of affordable homes. The allocation scheme describes how applicants for affordable housing are assessed ensuring that those in the greatest housing need are prioritised for the allocation of affordable housing in Wiltshire. During the development of this scheme we have had regard to our Tenancy and Homelessness Strategies.

## **2.0 Wiltshire's allocation scheme Aims**

2.1 Wiltshire's allocation scheme aims to:

- Meet the Council's statutory duties in the allocation of council housing and making nominations to other affordable housing providers
- Create and maintain inclusive, balanced, sustainable communities throughout Wiltshire while giving applicants as much choice and control as possible over where they live.
- Ensure the scheme is transparent, fair and accountable
- Operate a customer focused scheme that is easy to understand and is accessible
- Ensure that available housing stock is allocated in a way that is responsive to the needs and demands of the community.

## **3.0 Wiltshire's allocation scheme in Brief**

3.1 Wiltshire's allocation scheme is a choice based lettings scheme that covers the Wiltshire Council area. The scheme determines priorities and procedures for the allocation of affordable housing across Wiltshire, including:

- Eligible and qualification criteria for registration
- Property size criteria
- How applicants will be assessed
- Banding structure that determines how applicants will be prioritised
- How homes will be allocated

3.2 The scheme allows all applicants a choice of accommodation along with the opportunity for them to express a preference about the accommodation to be allocated to them.

3.3 Whilst all applications are assessed in the same way, all housing providers have different criteria to let their homes. Providers will publish their individual policies on their websites. The Council will work with these providers with a view to achieving some consistency in the overall approach for the allocation of properties.

3.4 All housing vacancies, both the councils and other providers will be advertised on a weekly basis. Any household who is registered to bid can 'choose' to apply (known as bidding) for homes that they are eligible for.

3.5 Applicants must meet the criteria for the vacancy and bid for the property during the advertised period. A shortlist will be run at the end of the bidding period and selection of the successful short-listed applicant is based firstly on their ability to meet the stated criteria, then local connection to the area followed by the applicant's band (reflecting their housing need) and finally the length of time they have been in that band.

3.6 Elected Council members cannot take part in the assessment and allocation process but this does not prevent them seeking or providing information on behalf of their constituents or from being involved in future policy development.

#### **4.0 Eligibility and qualification criteria**

4.1 Anyone can approach the council for housing advice and assistance, however, the amount of social housing in Wiltshire is very limited, and the Council will not maintain an open housing register.

4.2 The eligibility criteria complies with sections 160ZA(2) and (4) of the Housing Act 1996. Those people subject to immigration control, and certain other people from abroad excluded by law or regulation, are not eligible for an allocation of accommodation

For more information on this please see Appendix 1.

4.3 In some instances a person may be eligible despite being subject to immigration control. The Council will disregard as members of the household those who are 'restricted, such as those who are:

- Not eligible
- Those who are subject to immigration control
- Those with no leave to enter or remain in the UK
- Those with leave but subject to a condition of no recourse to public funds.

4.4 For households eligible to be re-housed only because of the housing need of the restricted person, the Council has a duty to arrange as far as practicable, an assured shorthold tenancy with a private landlord.

4.5 If the main applicant is eligible and not subject to immigration control, non eligible dependant children and other dependant family members will be taken into account. Non dependant adult children, non relatives, carers, lodgers and live in help will not be taken into account.

#### **Classes of person that do not qualify**

4.6 There are some applicants who will not qualify to join the register. They include:

1.	<a href="#">Unacceptable Behaviour</a>	Applicants who have caused	Section 4a
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		unacceptable behaviour serious enough to make them unsuitable as a prospective tenant	
2.	Local Connection	Applicants who do not meet the criteria or connection to live in the County of Wiltshire	Section 4b
3.	Financial resource limit	Applicants who have assets or income above the financial resource limit	Section 4c
4.	No identified housing need	Applicants who have no identified housing need	Section 4d
5.	Housed within the last 12 months	Applicants who have been housed within the last 12 months	Section 4e
6.	Those who have deliberately worsened their circumstances	Applicants who have deliberately worsened their circumstances	Section 4f

4.7 Applicants under 16 will not be able to join the register and those aged 16 and 17 will be required to have a responsible adult to hold the tenancy in trust until they reach the age of 18. Some registered providers will also require the young person to have a guarantor and/or be able to demonstrate they have the relevant skills to look after a property and maintain a tenancy. The guarantor will be liable for the tenancy, such as rent payments in the event of a tenant defaulting.

#### **4a Unacceptable Behaviour**

##### **Anti Social Behaviour**

4.8 If an applicant or a member of his/her household has been guilty of anti-social behaviour within the previous 12 months which makes them unsuitable to be a tenant they will be excluded from qualification for the register. Eviction or legal action taken or pending by a professional agency or landlord as a result of anti-social behaviour will be taken to constitute evidence of anti-social behaviour. Legal action includes, but is not limited to, the service of notice on the ground of anti-social behaviour.

4.8.1 Anti-social behaviour includes, but is not limited to, behaviour which has caused a nuisance or annoyance by the applicant or a member of his or her household which has affected neighbours or a community, illegal or immoral behaviour, incidents of domestic abuse, harassment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religion, transgender or sexual orientation or any threats and/or actual violence

##### **Rent Arrears**

4.9 If an applicant or a member of his/her household has any housing related debt, including any tenancy recharge or rent arrears, they will be excluded or suspended

from the housing register until they have maintained a repayment plan for 6 consecutive months and/or made a reasonable attempt to clear the majority of the debt. If the applicant owes multiple debts to different landlords it is expected that they maintain repayment plans for them all.

4.9.1 If an applicant who had been maintaining a repayment plan stops paying in accordance with that repayment plan before the arrears are clear, they will be excluded from the register until they have maintained payments for a further 6 consecutive months. If the applicant is in the platinum band, they will be excluded from the register until they have maintained payments for a further 3 consecutive months rather than 6 consecutive months – this to reflect their acute housing need.

4.9.2 Any existing social housing tenant who is in rent arrears primarily as a consequence of the spare room subsidy (bedroom tax) will not be excluded or suspended from qualification for the register for having rent arrears.

4.9.3 If it can be confirmed that the rent arrears have occurred through no fault of the applicant they will not be excluded or suspended from the register, but housing providers may not offer them accommodation while the arrears are outstanding.

### ***Prison***

4.10 Any applicant who is currently serving a prison sentence will be suspended until a confirmed discharge date has been provided and is with 28 days of discharge

### ***Fraud***

4.11 Following the outcome of any investigation if evidence is obtained that identifies that fraud or attempted fraud, (related to the completion of a housing or homeless application form, housing benefit form, illegal subletting or any fraud leading to an eviction which has taken place) the applicant will be excluded from the register for a period of 12 months from the date it was identified

### **Refusal of a notification of nomination**

4.12 Any applicant who has unreasonably refused two properties following a notification of nomination by the registered provider (either by phone, email or letter) that is deemed suitable for the household will be suspended from the register for a period of 12 months from the date of the second notification, unless the reason(s) for refusal are based upon a matter related to their mental capacity.

4.12.1 Any applicant where an auto-bid has been used would not be excluded for Refusals made. Autobids are automatic bids placed on vacant properties that meet the needs of an applicant who is not able to place bids themselves.

4.12.2 The period of exclusion will be reduced to one refusal for any applicant within Band 1 who are owed the main statutory homelessness duty under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. These applicants will require a formal Part 6 Housing Act 1996 offer letter as part of the notification of nomination to be sent by the appropriate housing provider.

#### **4b Agreed connection to live in the Wiltshire Council area**

4.13 If an applicant does not meet the connection criteria to live in the Wiltshire Council area they will not qualify to register.

4.13.1 An applicant's individual circumstances will be considered when deciding if they meet the connection requirement to live in Wiltshire, and will comply with any appropriate statutory guidance. This includes the statutory guidance regarding members of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces.

4.13.2 A connection to live in the Wiltshire Council area is defined as:

- Who is currently resident in the Wiltshire Council area and has continuously lived in the Wiltshire Council area for the past two years; or
- Who is in permanent paid employment or has a fixed term contract for a minimum of one year in the Wiltshire Council area; or
- Who has an offer of permanent paid employment in the Wiltshire Council area; or
- Who is self-employed and works predominately in the Wiltshire Council area; or
- With close family (grand-parents, parents, legal guardian, adult children or brothers and sisters) who have continuously lived in the county for 5 years or longer; or
- Who has a connection with the Wiltshire Council area through special circumstances, such as they need to receive specialist medical services, support from a close family member or services within the county which cannot be provided elsewhere.

#### ***Local connection exclusion criteria group***

4.13.3 If an applicant meets any of the definitions below, a local connection to Wiltshire will not be required to qualify for the register and they will be considered as households in the 'local connection exclusion group':

- A person who is homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 and Wiltshire council has accepted a full housing duty to them as well as formally accepted homeless applicants who took a qualifying offer of housing outside of Wiltshire.
- A person who was provided with accommodation in the County of Wiltshire under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, or
- A person who is serving in the Armed Forces,
- A person who has left the Armed Forces within the last 5 years.
- A bereaved spouse or civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving services family accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner.
- Serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- A person who is being accommodated through witness protection
- A person who has been confirmed as fleeing domestic abuse from another area or any other violent assault or threat of violence in accordance with HA96 Part VII

- A person from the transient<sup>1</sup> community who has no local connection to any other area
- A person who has been accommodated outside the area by Wiltshire Council in exercising its statutory duty to accommodate
- A person with a local connection to an adjoining parish that is outside of Wiltshire but whose housing need has been used to develop affordable housing within a parish of Wiltshire. These households will only be allowed to bid for properties within the parish identified to meet their housing need.
- Verified rough sleepers, where there is proof of rough sleeping in the Wiltshire Council area

#### **4c Financial resource limit**

This section is waived for those applicants in receipt of an income based benefit or households who have been accepted as statutory homeless under Part 7.

4.14 Applicants with sufficient financial resources available to meet their housing needs will not qualify to join the register. We will take into account any income, savings and investments when calculating the financial resources available. Capital money raised as a result of a previous disposal of assets such as property will be considered when calculating the financial resources available.

4.14.1 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 is updated every quarter taking into consideration the average house price within the chosen area to ascertain whether the applicant is financially capable.

4.14.2 Applicants who own a property will not qualify to join the register. A person in financial difficulty, such as their home is being repossessed or they are in significant and long standing mortgage arrears may qualify, subject to the financial resource limit. People who need supported housing, because of their age, disability or medical condition will also qualify; for people in this situation the financial resource limit does not apply.

#### **4d People who have no housing need**

4.15 Any applicant who has no identified housing need will not qualify to join the register. This would be any applicant who does not meet any of the banding criteria as specified within the scheme as this will enable us to ensure that affordable housing is accessible to those in most need of housing. Those that do not qualify for registration have the option to express an interest in other forms of housing – see section 10.0.

#### **4e Deliberately Worsening Circumstances**

4.16 Where there is evidence that an applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances in order to be able to join the housing register or qualify for higher

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<sup>1</sup> Definition to be confirmed

banding, the application will be suspended from the register for a period of 12 months.

4.16.1 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 be able to join the housing register or 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.

4.16.2 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/circumstances.

### **Dependent children**

5.0 A child's main residence is generally considered to be with the person who is in receipt of child benefit in respect of that child. A child may be included in an application if their main residence is with the applicant.

5.1 In the case of divorced or separated parents/guardians, if the child does not reside with the applicant as their main residence, the application cannot include the child on their application.

### **6.0 Sharing a home to provide mutual support**

6.1 Friends, carers and extended family members will not normally be included on the application. In exceptional circumstance, a friend, carer or extended family member could be included on a single person's application, up to a maximum of 4 members, subject to the following conditions:

- The applicant and friend, carer (or extended family member) would provide mutual support to create a sustainable tenancy and;
- The applicant, (or extended family member) have a significant medical need or disability and or;
- The applicant requires overnight care

6.2 This could apply when an applicant has learning difficulties or a mental health problem. We will request evidence that members of the household currently live or intend to live with the applicant. This can include (but is not limited to) a signed statement of fact, adequate evidence of residence or confirmation from social services.



## 7.0 Property Size Criteria

7.1 Applicants must meet the criteria for the size of property they are applying for in line with the guidelines below. This is to ensure full occupancy of properties and to reduce those under occupying properties thereby avoiding any reduction in housing benefit as a result of the spare room subsidy (bedroom tax).

7.2 Our bedroom matrix has been developed in accordance with the Bedroom Allowance under Local Housing Allowance Rates:-

- One bedroom per couple or single person
- One bedroom person aged 16 or over regardless of sex
- One bedroom for two children aged 10 to 15 years of same sex
- One bedroom for each child aged 10 to 15 years of different sex
- One bedroom per two children less than 10 years old regardless of sex
- An extra bedroom for an applicant who requires overnight care
- A foster child will be allocated his / her own bedroom regardless of age
- Any disabled child who for medical reasons requires his / her own bedroom.

The full bedroom matrix can be found in Appendix 2.

## 8.0 Allocation Framework

8.1 The banding structure sets out the preferences in allocating housing accommodation. It will prioritise all advertised properties to those with a local connection, see section 9.2, to the area and in greatest housing need, unless the property is allocated as part of a local lettings plan, sensitive let or rural exception site. There are four bands, Band 1, Band 2, Band 3 and Band 4, with a further expression of interest group that will not form part of the housing register as this will be for households who would like to express an interest into a certain type of product such as low cost shared ownership, Home-buy or older persons accommodation.

8.2 Households who qualify for Band 1 will hold the greatest preference, followed by Band 2, Band 3 then finally Band 4.

8.3 The Housing Act 1996 (as amended) requires local authorities to give 'reasonable preference' in their allocations schemes to people with high levels of assessed housing need who are defined as:

- a) People who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the 1996 Act (including those who are intentionally homeless and those not in priority need)
- b) People who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 192(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 s.192(3)
- c) People occupying in sanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions

- d) People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds, including grounds relating to a disability, 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 others)

8.4 In accordance with the legislation (section 166A(3) of the 1996 Act), additional preference will be awarded to any applicant who falls within the above statutory reasonable preference categories and who also falls within one of the following categories:-

- a) a person serving in the regular forces who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service,
- b) a person formerly serving in the regular forces,
- c) a person who has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following the death of the person's spouse or civil partner who was serving in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service, or
- d) a person serving or formerly serving in the reserve forces who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person's service.

8.5 The additional preference will be given by backdating their application by 6 months

### **BANDING STRUCTURE**

8.6 The bands that are included within the policy and which determine a household's need is as follows:-

<b>Band</b>	<b>Eligible to Bid for all properties</b>
<b>Band 1 (Urgent Need)</b>	Statutory Requirement Move On Urgent Medical or Welfare need
<b>Band 2 (High Need)</b>	Under Occupying and suffering financial hardship – transfers only Social Care
<b>Band 3 (Medium Need)</b>	No Fixed Abode & Insecurity of tenure Temporary Accommodation Supported Accommodation Seriously overcrowded

	Medical and Welfare need Under Occupying in social housing Other Statutory requirements
<b>Band 4 (Low Need)</b>	Lacking or sharing facilities Overcrowded Armed Forces & Reserve Forces Intentionally homeless Sheltered or Extra Care
<b>Expression of interest</b>	<b>Eligible to bid on selected properties</b>
	Low Cost Home Ownership Home Buy Shared Ownership Market rented properties Older people accommodation Specialist accommodation for those with specific needs Gypsy and traveller sites

A more detailed description of bandings can be found at Appendix 3.

## **9.0 Allocation of housing under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996**

### **9.1 Local Connection**

9.1.1 Homes will be given to applicants with a strong local connection with the Town or Parish based on the following criteria:-

- A person who is resident in that area. The residency will need to be permanent and have lived in the area 6 months out of the last 12 or 3 years out of the last 5, or
- A person who is in permanent paid employment or has a fixed term contract for a minimum of one year or permanent offer of paid employment in the area, or is self employed and works predominately in the area or
- A person with close family (grand-parents, parents, legal guardian, adult children or brothers and sisters) who have lived in the parish or town for 5 years or longer.

### **9.2 Property Matching**

9.2.1 The majority of vacant houses will be matched to the person who has a local connection to the town or parish and is in the highest band with the longest effective date. The effective date is the applicants date of application that will change following a suspension of the application or a change in band. No applicant from the local connection exclusion criteria will be over looked for not having a local connection to a particular area as they have no local connection to anywhere in Wiltshire.

9.2.2 If no applicant can be found who has a local connection to the parish or town, the second allocation will be to any household with a connection to any surrounding parish or town. If no local connection can be found to the surrounding area then the property will be awarded to the applicant with the highest band and oldest date of application.

9.2.3 Allocations made to specialist supported accommodation or extra care will be allocated based on meeting the advertised support needs for the property rather than local connection. A shortlist will be provided identifying all applicants who are eligible for the vacancy to a specialist panel to determine the most suitable applicant for the scheme based on the level of support needed and the balance of existing residents.

9.2.4 The property must be both affordable and suitable for the applicant needs before an offer is made. This will be assessed by the landlord of the property. Appendix 4 sets out acceptable reasons for a registered provider to refuse to accept an applicant.

9.2.5 If a property has major adaptations it will be matched to applicants with specific needs for the type of property advertised. Local connection would not apply as the need for the adaptations in the property would override any local connection to the area. Where an adapted property cannot be matched to an applicant with specific needs it will be allocated in accordance with the policy.

9.2.6 Extra care <sup>2</sup>properties will be matched to clients who have a specific care and support need rather than priority to a household with a local connection to the area

### 9.3 Existing planning agreements and former exception sites

9.3.1 In all cases, any vacant property will be advertised as per existing terms held within a planning agreement (section 106 agreement) and/or planning conditions that are already in place

### 9.4 Local Lettings Plans

9.4.1 The Council or our partners may decide to let properties on a slightly different basis from normal in the interests of building strong and sustainable communities or to deal with particular local issues, this would apply for all new build properties on 1<sup>st</sup> let and in exceptional circumstances on all future lets. The decision to apply a local lettings policy will be jointly made by the landlord of the property and the Council. The allocation of housing accommodation will be made in accordance with the local lettings policy.

### 9.5 Sensitive Lets

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<sup>2</sup> Definition to be confirmed

9.5.1 A 'sensitive let' may need to occur where, for social reasons, there is departure from the routine property matching process. For a property to be a sensitive let the housing provider must provide Wiltshire Council with proof that:

- the previous tenant was evicted or an eviction process had started because of, abandoned or caused serious antisocial behaviour;
- the previous tenant was evicted or an eviction process had started because of, abandoned or caused noise nuisance;
- the previous tenant was evicted or an eviction because of, abandoned or caused criminal activity at or in the area (this would include allowing the property to be used for selling or taking drugs);
- the previous tenant was the victim of serious and long-term antisocial behaviour or other criminal acts; or housing officers, police and so on had used all powers within housing, criminal and antisocial behaviour law to sort out any issues.
- The nature and location of the accommodation requires a sensitive let to ensure the scheme meets the ongoing needs of the residents e.g. a general needs property within a scheme for older people

## **10.0 Allocation of housing outside Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996**

Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 does not apply to the allocation of the following properties:

### 10.1 Direct lets made by housing providers

10.1.1 Subject to terms set out in the relevant stock transfer and nomination agreements, only a small number of vacant properties will be directly allocated to an applicant rather than being advertised through the allocation system. This may happen in the following situations:

- If a property is needed to house someone on a temporarily basis
- In the case of a specially adapted properties built for a specific person
- Decants<sup>3</sup>, these are properties that need to be vacated for a specific purpose
- Where a homeless applicant has failed to bid or accept a property and needs to move on from temporary accommodation
- Allocations of Supported Housing (vacancies are not advertised for bidding).
- A property has a layout that would allow adaptations to make the property suitable for a particular disabled person and their family, and would be used for complex and exceptional cases
- Emergency planning i.e. emergency accommodation due to a force of nature such as fire or flood.
- Hard to let properties, these are properties that have been advertised through the system but no offer has been made.

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<sup>3</sup> Decants – To be confirmed

- Other reasons which are detailed in the registered providers own lettings policy

## 10.2 Gypsy and Traveller Site allocations

10.2. Applicants for Gypsy and Traveller sites are not required to register through this allocation scheme. All enquiries for permanent pitches should be directed to the Council's Traveller Liaison Team who will issue an application form which will be assessed in accordance with the gypsy and traveller permanent site allocations scheme.

10.3 On acceptance to the register, applicants are required to notify the Council of any change in circumstances and ensure that up to date contact details are available to officer. The register will be reviewed every 6 months to ensure that applicants wish to remain on the list.

## 10.3 Low Cost Home Ownership / Shared Ownership / Home buy

10.3.1 All Low Cost Home Ownership will be advertised for those who have expressed an interest in purchasing a share in a property. Applicants will be prioritised according to local connection, banding the eligible date. For all cases affordability will be a key consideration.

## 10.4 Transfers

10.4.1 A transfer applicant is a social housing tenant of Wiltshire Council or a housing provider, resident in the Wiltshire Council area, who has requested a move to alternative accommodation within Wiltshire. Some allocations to existing social tenants do not fall within Part 6 of the Housing Act. Some allocations to existing social tenants do not fall within Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 and so do not come under the usual allocation scheme. For Part 6 to apply to an allocation, special conditions must be met. These are:

- The allocation involves a transfer
- The transfer is made at the tenants request and
- The housing authority is satisfied that the tenant has reasonable preference for an allocation

Additionally, transfers initiated by a housing provider for management purposes do not fall within Part 6.

10.4.2 Transfers will be banded according to this allocation scheme. If a transfer applicant does not meet any of the banding criteria they can express an interest for alternative accommodation and will become part of the expression of interest group. They will then only be able to bid for properties allocated for transfers only or any other property advertised for the expression of interest group.

## 11.0 Reviews and Appeals

An applicant has the right to request a review of decisions on the following:

11.1 They consider they have not been awarded the correct banding or on any decision made about the facts of their case which has been, or is likely to be, taken into account in considering whether to make an allocation to them (s.166A(9)(b)).

Any review requests must be in writing 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 bandings, will be undertaken initially by an appropriate officer of the council. If the applicant is still unhappy with the outcome, a further review will be carried out by a more senior officer. Customers who are unable to put their appeal in writing can arrange a meeting where the appeal will be heard and any supporting evidence can be provided.

11.2 Not having their application included on the Homes 4 Wiltshire register due to being ineligible for an allocation of accommodation under s160ZA (2) or (4) or is not a qualifying person under s 160ZA (7).

In these cases a senior officer from the council who has not been involved in the original decision will carry out the review. As in 11.1 any review request will need to be made in writing and within 21 days of receiving notification. 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.

**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.**

## APPENDIX ONE

### **Those not eligible to join the register?**

There are some households who will not be eligible to join the register. They include:

- People from abroad who are subject to immigration control as defined in s.13(2) of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996
- People who are not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area, subject to certain exceptions as defined in section 3.14 of the allocation of accommodation guidance
- People whose only right to reside in the UK is derived from his status as a jobseeker. For this purpose, 'jobseeker' has the same meaning as for the purpose of regulation 6 (1) (a) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulation 2006 (SI 2006/1003) \*
- People whose only right to reside in the UK is an initial right to reside for a period not exceeding three months under regulations 13 of the EEA Regulations
- People whose only right to reside in the Common Travel Area is a right equivalent to one of the rights mentioned above highlighted \* and which is derived from EU Treaty rights.

- People who have rights of residence in the UK as a result of regulation 15A(1) and (4A) of the Immigration (European Economic Area) (Amendment) (No 2) Regulations 2012 (the EEA Amendment Regulations)
- People who have a right derived from Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in a case where rights of residence arise because a British citizen would otherwise be deprived of the genuine enjoyment of the substance of their rights as a European Union citizen

## APPENDIX TWO

### Bedroom eligibility

Below confirms the size of property a household can bid for, however on occasion an opportunity may apply when a household could under occupy, but this will be specified on any advert and would form part of a lettings plan.

Household make-up	Bedroom Size	People
Single person	1	1
Couple	1	2
Two people not in a relationship but being accommodated together	2	2
Parent or Couple with 1 Child	2	3
Parent or Couple with 2 Children (both under 10yrs, regardless of gender)	2	4
Parent or Couple with 2 Children (both under 16yrs and same gender)	2	4
Parent or Couple with 2 Children (one of which over 10yrs but of a different gender)	3	4
Parent or Couple with 3 Children (all under 16yrs)	3	5
Parent or Couple with 3 Children (one of which is over 16yrs and the other 2 are of different gender and over 10yrs)	4	5
Parent or Couple with 4 Children (all under 10yrs)	3	6
Parent or Couple with 4 Children (one of which is over 16yrs and the other 3 are of different gender and over 10yrs)	4	6
Parent or Couple with 5 Children	4	7
Parent or Couple with 6 or more Children	5	8



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An additional bedroom will be allocated to:-

- applicants who receive support from carers who do not reside with them but are required to stay overnight for at least one night a week.
- a disabled member of the household if following an Occupational Therapists report they confirm they require a separate bedroom and based on the 'bedroom matrix' they would not otherwise be allocated their own room.
- to enable children services to meet their s.22G duty any approved prospective foster carer or adopter should be allocated the required bedroom size as recommended by children services to ensure the family are allocated the correct size property to enable the family to foster or adopt a child.

However there may be restrictions on the amount of housing benefit such applicants are eligible for. In these circumstances Homes4Wiltshire will award the additional bedroom/s but individual landlords may apply a test of affordability before making an offer of accommodation.

## APPENDIX THREE

### **Band 1**

Band 1 is for households who need to be housed urgently. This would include households who have a specific statutory requirement or there is a serious risk to health, safety or wellbeing.

#### **Statutory Requirement**

A household who is owed a duty by Wiltshire Council under the Housing Act 1996 Part 7 s 193(2). These are households who have been accepted as statutory homeless. A household who has been assessed as being statutory overcrowded or are lacking more than 3 bedrooms. The bedroom eligibility will be applied to assess overcrowding, or a household that the authority has a statutory duty to accommodate and an allocation will prevent a residential or out of area placement.

#### **Move on from supported accommodation**

This applies to applicants in shared or supported accommodation where there is a move on protocol in place with the council. The applicant must have been assessed as being in priority need and ready to move into independent living accommodation by an appropriate council officer.

#### **Urgent medical or Welfare need**

An applicant's health or social care needs are so severely affected by their accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening, or an applicant's mobility is severely compromised and therefore requires a property which meets their needs as their current property can't be suitably adapted.

An applicant's safety and or wellbeing is seriously affected by their social circumstances and moving home is vital. The only way to resolve the problem; such as a prohibition notice has been served or witness protection, as well as awaiting discharge from a hospital or residential placement in Wiltshire with no suitable accommodation to move into.

## **Band 2**

### **Under-Occupying and suffering financial hardship**

The applicant is a transfer applicant who is a social housing tenant of working age who is under-occupying by two or more bedrooms and who would suffer financial hardship if they remained in their existing home.

### **Social Care**

For an applicant to be able to provide or receive support in suitable accommodation. This would include foster carers, those approved to adopt, or those being assessed for approval to foster or adopt, who need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child or a child who was previously looked after by a local authority. It would also include special guardians, holders of a residence order and family and friends carers who are not foster carers but who have taken on the care of a child because the parents are unable to provide care.

## **Band 3**

### **No fixed accommodation & Insecurity of Tenure**

These are applicants who have been confirmed as being homeless with no fixed accommodation or have been confirmed by housing options as being threatened with homelessness. Applicants assessed as being insecure in their accommodation will generally be under a 2 month or 93 day notice period to vacate their accommodation.

### **Temporary Accommodation**

Those applicants currently residing in temporary accommodation under part 7 of the 1996 Act and who are awaiting a homeless decision

### **Supported Accommodation**

Those households currently residing in supported accommodation who have been assessed as ready to move on but do not meet the move on protocol

### **Seriously Overcrowded**

Applicants living in overcrowded accommodation (in need of at least two additional bedrooms), the bedroom standard will be applied to assess overcrowding

### **Under Occupying in Social Housing**

Applicants who are currently in social housing and under occupying by 1 bedroom and willing to move into a smaller home

### **Medical and Welfare grounds**

Applicants who are suffering from serious harassment, violence, or threat of violence at their current property, providing evidence exists to substantiate

their claim.

Medium risk to physical safety and functional ability. Re-housing is required to prevent deterioration in functional ability or emotional deterioration. Current accommodation has a significant contribution to social isolation (including episode of illness requiring significant intervention of mental health or other professional's during the past six months or evidence that the housing environment is causing the applicant emotional distress. 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.

#### Other Statutory duties

Any applicant who is owed a full housing duty by any housing authority under section 192(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing authority under s.192(3)

#### **Band 4**

Band 4 would include households with a low need for accommodation.

#### Lacking facilities

Any households who is lacking either a bathroom, kitchen or inside WC.

#### Sharing facilities

Applicants who are sharing facilities and who have no security of tenure to live in their current accommodation.

#### Overcrowded

Applicants living in overcrowded accommodation (in need of one additional bedroom).

#### Armed Forces and Reserve Forces

Applicants from armed forces currently or previously stationed in the Wiltshire Council area, due to be discharged within the next 12 months, or have left the armed forces within the last 5 years and in need of affordable housing.

And serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service

#### Intentionally homeless

Any households who has been found intentionally homeless by Wiltshire's housing option team.

#### Sheltered Accommodation or those who require extra care

Those aged over 55 that require sheltered accommodation or have an identified support need that would be best met in supported accommodation

APPENDIX FIVE

Acceptable reasons for a registered provider to refuse to offer a property to an applicant

Registered providers may refuse to accept an applicant nominated by Wiltshire Council. This can occur when even an applicant has been nominated for a property.

The circumstances when this could apply are, but not limited to:

- An applicant has bid for another property and accepted that property
- An application appears to be false or misleading and further investigation is required
- An applicant has support needs and does not have a support plan in place
- An applicant has displayed threatening, violent or otherwise unreasonable behaviour, such as towards a member of staff or neighbouring tenant in the last 12 months
- Where there is evidence that an applicant might endanger the health, safety or well being of a community because of a history of violent or abusive behaviour against particular individuals in the area.
- Where an applicant is unable to provide evidence of access to sufficient funds to enable them to pay the rent and associated living expenses for the property.
- An applicant is unsuitable for the property because of a recent tenancy management issue in the property.
- An applicant has bid for a property that does not meet their immediate needs, e.g an adapted property where the applicant does not need the adaptations provided or their needs that cannot be met without making considerable and unreasonable or inappropriate adaptations to the property.
- Where support or adaptations are provided which are not needed by the applicant or members of their household
- The property is subject to a local authority s106 agreement and the applicant does not meet the required criteria
- The provider is unable to make contact with the applicant either by phone, email or letter over a period of 3 working days
- An applicant has pets which are not permitted in the property, in line with the providers per policies.
- An applicant is under 18 years of age and has failed to provide an appropriate guarantor
- The reference obtained from a previous landlord is not satisfactory
- Where a property has become unavailable since the advertisement was placed.

A registered provider will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and evidence their reason for refusing an applicant for a property

**Housing Allocations Policy – rapid scrutiny exercise**

**Purpose**

1. To report to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee the outcome of the rapid scrutiny exercise held on 28 October 2013 on the proposed revisions to the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

**Background**

2. On 28 February the Committee received a presentation from Nicole Smith, Head of Strategic Housing, about changes in national legislation that required a review of the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. Extensive consultation was undertaken including with Area Boards ending on 26 April and it was agreed that the outcome of the consultation would be reported back to the Committee prior to a final decision by Cabinet on 21 November.
3. As reported at the last meeting, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (and Scrutiny Manager) met with the Cabinet Portfolio-holder and the Head of Strategic Housing for an initial briefing on 7 October. It was agreed to undertake a one-off rapid scrutiny exercise on the matter with an invitation extended to all members of the Management Committee.
4. The following were present:  
  
Cllr Simon Killane (who led the exercise)  
Cllr Roy While  
Cllr Jeff Osborn  
Cllr Jacqui Lay  
Cllr Richard Clewer, Portfolio-holder for Housing  
Nicole Smith, Head of Strategic Housing  
Paul Kelly, Scrutiny Manager
5. The following papers were made available at the meeting:

- Draft Housing Allocation Policy
- Corporate Leadership Team Briefing Paper (September 2013)
- Consultation Questionnaire – responses
- Government Guidance on Providing Social Housing for Local People – October 2013

## **Deliberations**

6. Nicole Smith introduced the revised Policy and highlighted the major changes. These were prompted by the opportunity to review the policy by the Localism Act 2011 and the outcome of an extensive local consultation exercise. Cllr Clewer posed a number of questions to the scrutiny members relating to the more challenging aspects within the draft Policy where the Council had some discretion.

The following issues were discussed:

- The scale of and reliance on the results of the consultation exercise
- Proposed eligibility and exclusion criteria including the definition of a local connection to Wiltshire and forms of unacceptable behaviour
- Property size criteria
- The revised banding structure including removal of the current bronze band
- The implications on the Policy of Central Government strengthening statutory guidance on social housing allocations
- Timetable including Cabinet and potentially Full Council approval
- Publicising and communicating the changes.

## **Conclusions**

7. The Councillors acknowledged the major task that had been undertaken in reviewing this prominent policy and the efforts made to seek the views of all interested parties including existing tenants and those currently on the waiting list, and the engagement of elected members through area boards.
8. The result was a series of important changes driven by Central Government direction and local measures design to deliver a fairer and more realistic housing allocation service.

## **Recommendation**

9. To support the revised Housing Allocations Policy as appended to this report for approval by Cabinet on 21 November subject to the following being taken into account:
- To support the benefit of seeking a common allocations policy among all social housing providers in Wiltshire
  - To change the description of the banding structure to a letter or number classification in order to signify that current arrangements have been extensively revised
  - To provide a graphical presentation of the process in the form of a flowchart
  - To allow local connection to also mean officially recognised neighbourhoods as defined within an adopted neighbourhood plan encompassing more than one parish.
  - To rename the new “expression of interest” category to better reflect that it no longer forms part of the revised Policy
  - To submit a further appendix to Cabinet and Council highlighting where the changes have been made within the banding structure.
  - To utilise the Council’s hubs and new campus provision to improve access to housing services
  - To support an extensive housing newsletter for stakeholders and councillors

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### **Cllr Simon Killane, Lead Member for the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise**

Report author: Paul Kelly, Scrutiny Manager and Designated Scrutiny Officer, 01225 713049, [paul.kelly@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.kelly@wiltshire.gov.uk)

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Housing Allocation Policy

### **Background documents**

Corporate Leadership Team Briefing Paper (September 2013)

Consultation Questionnaire – responses

Government Guidance on Providing Social Housing for Local People – October 2013

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Old Policy – Existing wording	Draft New Policy – New or amended wording
<b>Platinum</b>	<b>Band 1</b>
<p>Exceptional circumstances</p> <p>Such as a medical emergency, applicants under the Witness Protection Programme, extreme harassment, some tenancy successions, ADHAC 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</p>	<p>Urgent medical or Welfare need</p> <p>An applicant's health or social care needs are so severely affected by their accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening, or an applicant's mobility is severely compromised and therefore requires a property which meets their needs as their current property can't be suitably adapted.</p> <p>An applicant's safety and or wellbeing is seriously affected by their social circumstances and moving home is vital. The only way to resolve the problem; such as a prohibition notice has been served or witness protection, as well as awaiting discharge from a hospital or residential placement in Wiltshire with no suitable accommodation to move into.</p>
<b>Gold Plus</b>	<b>Band 2</b>
Applicants meeting 2 or more criteria within gold - Multiple needs are not included within the new policy	
	<p><b>Social Care</b></p> <p>For an applicant to be able to provide or receive support in suitable accommodation. This would include foster carers, those approved to adopt, or those being assessed for approval to foster or adopt, who need to move to a larger home in order to accommodate a looked after child or a child who was previously looked after by a local authority. It would also include special guardians, holders of a residence order and family and friends carers who are not foster carers but who have taken on the care</p>

	of a child because the parents are unable to provide care.
<b>Gold</b>	<b>Band 3</b>
<b>Hazards</b>  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 – This is not included in the new policy	
<b>High medical needs</b>  Applicants assessed as having high medical needs, who are living in unsuitable accommodation and medical condition would be improved by being re-accommodated	<b>Medical and Welfare grounds</b>  Applicants who are suffering from serious harassment, violence, or threat of violence at their current property, providing evidence exists to substantiate their claim.
<b>High welfare or support needs</b>  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.	Medium risk to physical safety and functional ability. Re-housing is required to prevent deterioration in functional ability or emotional deterioration. Current accommodation has a significant contribution to social isolation (including episode of illness requiring significant intervention of mental health or other professional's during the past six months or evidence that the housing environment is causing the applicant emotional distress.
	<b>Other Statutory duties</b>  Any applicant who is owed a full housing duty by any housing authority under section 192(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act or who are occupying accommodation secured by any housing

	authority under s.192(3)
<p>Split Households</p> <p>Applicants whose family have formally 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 – This is not in the new policy</p>	
<b>Silver</b>	<b>Band 4</b>
	<p>Lacking facilities</p> <p>Any households who is lacking either a bathroom, kitchen or inside WC.</p>
<p>Sharing facilities</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Sharing facilities</p> <p>Applicants who are sharing facilities and who have no security of tenure to live in their current accommodation.</p>
<p>Armed Forces</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Armed Forces and Reserve Forces</p> <p>Applicants from armed forces currently or previously stationed in the Wiltshire Council area, due to be discharged within the next 12 months, or have left the armed forces within the last 5 years and in need of affordable housing.</p> <p>And serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who</p>

	<p>need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service</p>
<p><b>Tied Accommodation</b></p> <p>Applicants living in accommodation tied to their employment – this is not in the new policy</p> <p><b>Children in flats</b></p> <p>Applicants with a child / children under 10 and living in a flat above the ground floor. – this is not in the new policy</p> <p><b>Serious Disrepair</b></p> <p>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– this is not in the new policy</p>	

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**21 November 2013**

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**Subject: Parish and Town Council Grant Options**

**Cabinet member: Councillor Dick Tonge, Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform**

**Key Decision: Yes**

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## **Executive Summary**

From April 2013 Council Tax Support (formerly Council Tax Benefit) has taken the form of Council Tax Reductions (CTR) which has had the effect of reducing the Council Tax Base.

As a consequence, Town and Parish Councils have experienced a decrease to their tax base which therefore decreased the amount of precept that they were able to raise through Council Tax. In 2013/14 Wiltshire Council awarded a grant totalling £1.4 million to top up the Town and Parish Council funding levels to compensate for this loss in funding.

Following further changes in Central Government funding to Wiltshire Council, it is necessary to consider the options available in terms of providing support funding to Town and Parish Councils in 2014/15 and onwards.

Four options have been considered and are detailed in the body of this report.

## **Proposal**

**Cabinet are asked to approve option 3 as follows;**

- 1. That the Wiltshire Council grant to Town and Parish Councils be set at 65% of the 2013/14 grant to take into account the £300k shortfall in the 2013/14 DCLG grant made up by Wiltshire Council, and the expected reduced level of Council's Settlement Funding Assessment from DCLG.**
  - 2. That in future years the grant is adjusted in line with changes to the Council's Settlement Funding Assessment from DCLG.**
- and that**
- 3. The comments received as part of the consultation and shown at para G in Appendix C are addressed in a separate briefing to be sent to all Towns and Parishes.**

**Reason for Proposal**

To provide financial support to Town and Parish Councils in the light of changes made to Council Tax Support by the Coalition.

**Michael Hudson**

**Associate Director, Finance**

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Cabinet**

**21 November 2013**

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**Subject: Parish and Town Council Grant Options**

**Cabinet member: Councillor Dick Tonge, Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform**

**Key Decision: Yes**

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### **Purpose of Report**

1. To consider the Council Tax Support grant to Town and Parish Councils for 2014/15 and onwards.

### **Background**

2. From April 2013 Council Tax Support (formerly Council Tax Benefit) has taken the form of Council Tax Reductions (CTR) which has had the effect of reducing the Council Tax Base.
3. An unforeseen consequence of the CTR scheme was that a proportion of those properties deemed to be affected were taken out of the Council Tax base calculation and treated as a separate income stream. The effect on Wiltshire Council was a benefit grant reduction of more than 10%. This required more people to pay Council Tax and some to pay more and thus an increased risk of debt for the Council. The Coalition Government made an additional grant available to the Police and Fire & Rescue to cover most of their deficit.
4. The precept for Town and Parish Council's is the product of multiplying their Council Tax Base by their band D Council Tax charge. As a result this Coalition change has had a significant effect on local council funding.
5. This issue was drawn to attention of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and in late December 2012 they announced as part of the Council's grant there was 5% (£1.1m) provided to cover this. The Council has disputed that this is new money and also contends that there was shortfall in the grant given.
6. The DCLG grant noted that the funding was 'unringfenced' and Councils had to determine how this money was to be used. Across the Country the picture is mixed with some taking the same approach as Wiltshire to protect the Town and Parish Councils in 2013/14 as many had already set their precepts. In Wiltshire's case the full shortfall was £1.4 million and the decision was made to top up the £1.1 million DCLG grant by £0.3 million to the full amount.

## **Main Considerations for the Cabinet**

7. **Situation in 2013/14**
8. A recent funding announcement has noted the further effect of another 1% efficiency saving for DCLG (in other words less money for Wiltshire) with the Council's Settlement Funding Assessment (formerly known as Revenue Support Grant – RSG) reducing from £76.018 million in 2013/14 to a provisional £62.218 million for 2014/15. This is a reduction of 18.2% year on year, with a further reduction planned to £45 million in 2015/16. This decline is expected to continue in future years. In consequence any funds that are not ringfenced will continue to decline in value.
9. An additional complication is that from 2014/15 the Government is considering the introducing of a cap on increases to Town and Parish precepts. In the context of the declining value of the grant, capping would inevitably mean that Towns and Parishes would have to cut costs as they would be getting less grant and would not be able to raise their precepts to compensate without the uncertainty of a referendum.

### **Lobbying**

10. The Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group wrote a joint letter to Eric Pickles outlining the case that the changes were financially unreasonable, his reply on the 17th January this year produced no change.
11. Officers have worked with the Wiltshire and National Association for Local Councils, the Local Government Association, the Society of County Treasurers and others to press the case for a change to the scheme and all have received non committal answers.

### **Consultation**

12. The following actions were taken to consult with Towns and Parishes and Members;
  - a. 20 September  
The briefing note and questionnaire (shown at Appendix A) was emailed to the 253 Town and Parish Council Clerks and all Wiltshire Councillors highlighting the changes to Council Tax Support with an invitation to attend a consultation briefing session.
  - b. 26 September  
The briefing note was emailed to the 5 Wiltshire MP's.
  - c. 27 September & 1 October  
Reminders emailed to Town and Parish Council Clerks informing them that spaces were still available for the briefing sessions with booking details.
  - d. 1-3 October  
Briefing sessions held in Trowbridge, Chippenham, Salisbury and Devizes. One session was held specifically for town councils and four



others were available for all to attend, in total over 130 representatives attended.

- e. 15 October  
A summary of the questions raised at the briefing sessions with answers and a worked example (shown at Appendix B) emailed to all Town and Parish Council Clerks and all Wiltshire Councillors. This included the original briefing note with questionnaire, a letter from Wiltshire Council to Eric Pickles, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and his response.
- f. 15 October  
This e-mail forwarded to the 5 Wiltshire MP's.
- g. 21 October  
Article regarding capping precepts from the Daily Telegraph emailed to Town and Parish Council Clerks and all Wiltshire Councillors to draw attention to this issue and potential implications with a reminder to submit questionnaire responses by 4 November.
- h. 23 October  
E-mail forwarded to Town and Parish Council Clerks regarding Council Tax Support funding options 2014/15 (shown at Appendix 4).
- i. 29 October  
Reminder emailed to Town and Parish Council Clerks asking for responses to the questionnaire by 4th November.

### **Results of the consultation**

- 13. A summary of the results of the consultation is shown at Appendix C and the full results on the spreadsheet at Appendix D. The percentages shown below are for the respondees to each individual question not the full 125 Towns and Parishes that responded.
  - a. The majority (62%) supported receiving a combination of no grant or the reduction of the grant by the level of the Settlement Funding Assessment, 17% wanted the grant to continue as in 2013/14 and 20% had other suggestions of how the grant should be calculated but there was no consensus.
  - b. The majority (70%) wanted the grant allocated as in 2013/14 and not on the basis of need.
  - c. The majority (63%) did not want to rely on a grant and wished their Council to be financially independent. The average timescale to achieve this, of those who gave one, was 3.6 years.
  - d. A minority (35%) favoured an early large increase in precept to compensate for the grant, the majority wished to spread it over a number of years.
  - e. A minority (27%) had sufficient reserves to cover the reduction in grant should a precept cap be introduced by the Coalition although most expressed reservations about this.
  - f. The majority (91%) were not planning to reduce their budget over the next four years.
  - g. A number of other issues were raised at para G in Appendix C that are addressed in the recommendations.

14. There has been no separate assessment of the effect of a grant reduction on different sized communities. The responses indicate that the financial pressure on small and large communities is the same.

### **What have other Councils Done?**

15. The Local Government Association has reported recently that Central Bedfordshire has decided not to pass on its share of the Council tax support grant to its Towns and Parishes and speculates that this 'is likely to be repeated nationwide'. The position of other Councils will become clear as they set their 2014/15 budgets. Swindon Borough Council, Wigan and Bromsgrove did not pass on any grant last year.

### **Options Considered**

16. Four options have been considered:
- **Option 1** – Seek new additional funds from Central Government.
  - **Option 2** – Do nothing and continue with the grant at the same level as 2013/14.
  - **Option 3** – Pass the unringfenced grant adjusted by the Settlement Funding Assessment from DCLG without the Wiltshire Council top up to Town and Parish Councils.
  - **Option 4** – Withdraw all grant funding.
17. Taking these in turn;
- **Option 1** – Seek new additional funds from Central Government. It is felt that further lobbying to DCLG to seek additional funds would be unsuccessful and whilst should be pursued, should not be considered as a viable option for this report in the light of previous responses.
  - **Option 2** – Do nothing and continue with the grant at the same levels as 2013/14. With the Council's decreasing Settlement Funding Assessment this is not affordable.
  - **Option 3** – Pass the adjusted unringfenced grant to Towns and Parishes without the Wiltshire Council top up. This will enable Towns and Parishes to adjust their finances over a number of years and address the issue of a decreasing Settlement Funding Assessment given by DCLG to Wiltshire Council.
  - **Option 4** – Withdraw all grant funding. This would put most Towns and Parishes under severe pressure to make savings and/or increase the precept by a large amount in one year. The highest percentage increase attributable to this 'unforeseen consequence'

would be 23%, and the highest cash increase being £30.92 to the band D Council Tax charge. On average most Town and Parish Council's would need to increase their Council Tax charge by 12% in order to maintain the 2013/14 level of funding. This option would provide additional funding and reduce the significant funding gap facing Wiltshire Council.

18. The figures shown in Appendix D are based on the indicative 2013/14 tax base for each Town and Parish Council adjusted for new housing. There may be some minor adjusted before the Council Tax base is set in the 2014/15 budget that will be reported to the next Cabinet in December 2013.

### **Risk Assessment**

19. None have been identified as arising from this report.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

20. None have been identified as arising from this report.

### **Financial Implications**

21. If monies are passed to Town and Parish Councils this unringfenced grant will not be available to Wiltshire Council for other purposes.

### **Legal Implications**

22. None have been identified as arising from this report.

### **Safeguarding Considerations**

23. None have been identified as arising from this report.

### **Public Health Implications**

24. None have been identified as arising from this report.

### **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

25. None have been identified as arising from this report.

### **Conclusions**

It is recommended that Cabinet approves Option 3 as follows;

1. That the Wiltshire Council grant to Town and Parish Councils be set at 65% of the 2013/14 grant to take into account the £300k shortfall in the 2013/14 DCLG grant made up by Wiltshire Council, and the expected reduced level of Council's Settlement Funding Assessment from DCLG.

2. That in future years the grant is adjusted in line with changes to the Council's Settlement Funding Assessment from DCLG.

and that

3. The comments received as part of the consultation and shown at para G in Appendix C are addressed in a separate briefing to be sent to all Towns and Parishes.

Report Author:

Michael Hudson, Associate Director, Finance

1 November

### **Background Papers**

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

None.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A Briefing Note and Questionnaire
- Appendix B Summary of questions raised at the briefings with a worked example.
- Appendix C Summary of the results of the consultation
- Appendix D Responses to consultation
- Appendix E Council Tax Support funding options 2014/15

**BRIEFING NOTE AND QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**Council Tax Support (formally Council Tax Benefit)**  
**Impact on Town and Parish Councils**

## **1 Summary**

- 1.1 From April 2013, as part of the Coalitions changes to Welfare Reform, Council Tax Support (formerly Council Tax Benefit) has taken the form of Council Tax Reductions (CTR) which has had the unintended effect of reducing the Council Tax Base.
- 1.2 As a consequence, from 2013/14 Town and Parish Councils have experienced a decrease to their tax base which therefore reduced the amount of precept that they were able to raise through Council Tax. In 2013/2014 Wiltshire Council awarded a grant totalling £1.4 million to top up the Town and Parish Council funding levels (£1.1m government grant + £0.3m Council top up) to compensate for this loss in funding.
- 1.3 This change strikes at the independence of Town and Parish Councils as part of their funding now relies on the vagaries of Coalition policy. Before this change Town and Parishes had complete financial independence.
- 1.4 Following further changes and reductions by the Coalition to Wiltshire Council's funding going forward, it is necessary to consider the options for funding to Town and Parish Councils in 2014/2015 and onwards.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 In 2012 the Coalition decided that from April 2013 Council Tax Support (formerly Council Tax Benefit) would take the form of Council Tax Reductions (CTR) which had the unintended effect of reducing the Council Tax Base.
- 2.2 The unforeseen consequence of the CTR scheme was that a proportion of those properties deemed to be affected were taken out of the Council Tax base calculation and treated as a separate income stream. The effect on Wiltshire Council was a benefit grant reduction of more than 10% (£3.4M) which the Council had to manage. This required more people to pay Council Tax and others to pay more, with the increased risk of bad debts. The Coalition made an additional grant available to the Police and Fire & Rescue to cover most of their deficit, so they are not subject to the same issue as Town and Parish Councils although the continuance of this grant might be at risk.
- 2.3 The precept for Town and Parish Councils is the product of multiplying their Council Tax Base by their band D Council Tax charge. As a result this Coalition change has had a significant negative effect on local council funding.
- 2.4 This issue was drawn to attention of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) by Wiltshire Council, other Councils and the National Association of Local Councils. As a result, in late December 2012

DCLG announced as part of the Council's grant there was 5% (£1.1m) provided to cover the impact on town and parish councils. The Council has disputed that this is new money and complained that there was shortfall in the figures given. This was raised in a letter sent Eric Pickles; his reply did not address the issue of the £300k shortfall.

- 2.5 The DCLG grant noted that the funding was not ringfenced and councils had to determine how this money was to be used. Across the country the picture is mixed with some taking the same approach as Wiltshire to protect the Town and Parish Councils in 2013/2014 as many had already set their precepts. Others such as Swindon did not do so. In Wiltshire's case the full shortfall was £1.4 million and the decision was made to top up the £1.1 million DCLG grant by £0.3 million to the full amount.

### 3 Situation in 2013/2014 and onwards

- 3.1 Wiltshire Council already faced a significant reduction in its government funding for 2014/2015 (17% reduction previously announced in December 2012) and a recent funding announcement has noted the further effect of the Chancellor's Statement in June 2013 of another 1% efficiency saving.
- 3.2 In mid August Wiltshire Council were notified that this would result in a further reduction in our funding. The Council's Settlement Funding Assessment (formerly known as Revenue Support Grant – RSG) will reduce from £76.018 million in 2013/2014 to a provisional £62.218 million for 2014/2015. This is a reduction of 18.2% year on year, with a further reduction planned to £45 million in 2015/2016. This decline is expected to continue in future years. In consequence any funds that are not ringfenced will continue to decline in value.
- 3.3 Our best estimate at this time is that the Settlement over the coming years will be:

	2013/14 Actual	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Settlement Funding Assessment reduction £	76.018	62.218	45.520	42.334	39.371
Percentage reduction	-	-18.2%	-26.8%	-7.0%	-7.0%
Impact of Town and Parish Grant	1.100	0.900	0.650	0.600	0.550

### 4 Town and Parish precept cap

- 4.1 An additional complication is that from 2014/2015 the Coalition is considering introducing a cap on increases to Town and Parish precepts. In the context of the declining value of the grant, capping would inevitably mean that Towns and Parishes would have to cut costs as they would be getting less grant, and would not be able to raise their precepts to compensate.
- 4.2 One solution could be a referendum to allow a precept greater than the cap, however a view has been expressed that this is unlikely to be

successful as residents would not see a tangible benefit of the increased precept.

## **5 What are we seeking your views on?**

5.1 Wiltshire Council is in the process of drawing up its proposed budget for 2014/15, and as part of that we are assessing the level of grant, if any, we can afford to pass on to Town and Parish Councils. To help inform that process we would appreciate your help by answering the following questions on the attached questionnaire. We will also be holding meetings, as shown in the covering email, to discuss this with you face to face.

- A. What level of grant does your Parish Council think would be reasonable given the shortfall of funding being provided by the Coalition?
- B. Should all councils be supported to the same extent, or should the grant be concentrated on those Councils where the impact is greatest?
- C. Does your Council support Town and Parish Councils being independent and not relying on a grant, if so over how many years would you wish to see this achieved?
- D. If you received no grant or a reduced grant would you favour a large increase in precept in 2014-15 to compensate for this or would you look to spread this over the next four years?
- E. If the Coalition were to introduce a precept cap does your Council have sufficient reserves to compensate for a reduction in grant?
- F. Have you plans to reduce your budget over the next four years?
- G. Are there any other issues you think we should consider?

5.2 We intend to report the findings and our recommendations to Cabinet on 21 November, so we would like to receive your response by 4 November.

### **Note:**

***To find out the level of grant your Council received in 2012-13 please refer to the example of Aldbourne Parish Council attached at Appendix A that was sent to all Town and Parish Councils on 6 December 2012***

**Council Tax Support (formally Council Tax Benefit)  
Impact on Town and Parish Councils**

**Consultation Questionnaire**

Please return to [communications@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:communications@wiltshire.gov.uk) with the subject  
'Council Tax Support' before the 4 November 2013

- A. What level of grant does your Parish Council think would be reasonable given the shortfall of funding being provided by the Coalition?

Options	Comment
a. nil;	
b. Reduce by Settlement Funding Assessment reduction	
c. Other	

- B. Should all councils be supported to the same extent, or should the grant be concentrated on those Councils where the impact is greatest?

YES/NO

Comment

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- C. Does your Council support Town and Parish Councils being independent and not relying on a grant, if so over how many years would you wish to see this achieved?

YES/NO

Comment

- D. If you received no grant or a reduced grant would you favour a large increase in precept in 2014-15 to compensate for this or would you look to spread this over the next four years?

YES/NO

Comment

- E. If the Coalition were to introduce a precept cap does your Council have sufficient reserves to compensate for a reduction in grant?

YES/NO

Comment

F. Have you plans to reduce your budget over the next four years?

YES/NO

Comment

G. Are there any other issues you think we should consider?

**Thank you for completing this questionnaire.**



6 December 2012

Finance  
Wiltshire Council  
County Hall  
Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge  
Wiltshire  
BA14 8JN

*Aldbourne Parish Council*  
[aldbournepc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:aldbournepc@yahoo.co.uk)

Dear Sir/Madam

### **Town/Parish Precepts 2013/2014 – Revised Tax Base**

I write further to my communication of last week when I advised that Central Government had published their response to the consultation on Council Tax Base and funding for Local Precepting Authorities.

**The result of this consultation response is that we have had to revise the Council Tax Base in light of the decisions made following this consultation (further details regarding the changes including a simple example are detailed below this letter and before the return).**

**As your taxbase has changed, a new precept notice is given below. If you have previously returned your precept notice, this will now be invalid (even if NIL) and I must ask you to complete and return the new form below.**

The likelihood is that your Council Tax Base has reduced. Wiltshire Council will provide a grant in 2013/2014 to make up for any shortfall in funding as a result of the reduction in Tax Base based upon your 2012/2013 Band D charge. The amount of grant to be awarded to your Town/Parish is detailed in the table in your precept notice below.

**Important** - The precept amount you set for 2013/2014 (Box B below) should exclude the value of any grant amount (Box A below). Box C (below) should equal the sum of your Precept Requirement (A) and Grant (B). The formula to work out a band D charge will be your precept divided by your taxbase, and this is the figure that will be shown on the Council Tax bills, so this is no change from last year. What will be different is the way you are being funded. The funding will be your precept plus the grant.

Please note we are expecting information on excessive Council Tax increases for Towns/Parishes to be issued as the same time as the Local Government Finance Settlement and could be as late as 19 December 2012. It is anticipated many small Parishes will not be affected by this, however you may wish to wait for any thresholds and limits to be announced before setting your precept.

The precept tool on our website has unfortunately been withdrawn for this year as it does not reflect the changes imposed. A new toolkit will be issued next year for setting the 2014/2015 precept requirement. If you did get a chance to previously have a look at/use the tool, we would greatly appreciate any feedback.

For ease of reference, I have included some of the information in bullet point format from our previous precept notice below:

- In order for Wiltshire Council to calculate the total Council Tax for 2013/2014, you are required to confirm your precept by completing and returning the precept form below by **21 January 2013**. This date is critical to the reports being prepared by Wiltshire Council in order to set the Council Tax, and your co-operation in meeting the deadline is greatly appreciated. **Please contact us ASAP if this date is no longer achievable.**
- The precept should be approved at the appropriate budget setting committee and a record kept of the approval. The precept form should ideally be authorised at that meeting by the council's chair. However, we will also accept the signature of the clerk of the council and also an emailed submission from the contact email address we hold. Should you wish to send it by email, please reply to the email address below, editing the document so that the precept form is returned completed with the amount of precept required, the date of the meeting at which this was approved and the name of the person who is authorising the form. No signature will be required.
- It is up to the town or parish to decide on the level of precept it needs and to justify this to its electors. **Please note when there is no precept required a nil return must be submitted.**
- If your town or parish has a precept greater than £140,000, you are required to provide a breakdown of expenditure and income to the public. If you anticipate precepting over £140,000 for 2013/2014, please contact Caroline Thornycroft at Wiltshire Council on 01225 718560, [caroline.thornycroft@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.thornycroft@wiltshire.gov.uk) to arrange for free publication in the council tax leaflet.
- The table showing the comparison of Town and Parish Council Tax charges will be published on the Council's website.
- Payment of precepts (including any grant) greater than £10,000 will be paid to the Town or Parish in two stages – 50% of the precept will be paid on or before 30 April 2013 and the remaining 50% will be paid on or before 30 September 2013. Towns and Parishes with precepts

(including any grant) under £10,000 will receive the full amount on or before 30 April 2013.

- All payments will be automated and made by BACS. If there have been **any changes** to the bank account details we hold for you, please contact the Business Services Team on telephone 01225 713640, fax number 01225 713989 or email [bsaccountspayable@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:bsaccountspayable@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Please accept my sincere apologies for any confusion/inconvenience that this has caused however please understand that the changes were outside of Wiltshire Council's control.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact members of the Technical Accountancy team:

Tina Winfield 01225 718584  
Stuart Donnelly 01225 718582

Fax 01225 713697  
e-mail [financialplanning@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:financialplanning@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Yours faithfully



Matthew Tiller  
Chief Accountant

# Town / Parish Precept Requirement **2013/2014**

(following revision of new base for 2013/2014)

## **Aldbournne Parish Council**

**For information:**

The equivalent number of Band D properties for

Aldbournne Parish Council

is 753.64 (taxbase)

Additional top up grant from Wiltshire Council	Box A	<b>£1,974.21</b>
<b>Total precept required for 2013/2014</b> (To be shown in Council Tax Resolution)	Box B	<b>£</b>
Total amount to be received from Wiltshire Council (A+B)	Box C	<b>£</b>

**Formula to check what a Band D property charge for the year**

**Precept (Box B) divide by taxbase (753.64) = Band D charge per year**

**Authorised** at a meeting of the ..... Town/Parish Council held on  
the.....day of.....20....

Signed..... Please print in capitals.....(Chairman)

Signed ..... Please print in capitals.....(Clerk)

If email submission please confirm who is authorising this form.

.....  
Please use your nominated e-mail address to return this form.

i.e. [aldbournepc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:aldbournepc@yahoo.co.uk)

## Council Tax Support (formally Council Tax Benefit)

### Impact on Town and Parish Councils

#### Summary of Questions raised at the recent briefings with a worked example.

##### National

Q: We are concerned about is the loss of our independence. This change will make us dependant on a grant from Central Government. Can you comment?

*A: Wiltshire Council agrees that this is unacceptable but regrettably the 'unintended financial consequences' (Letter from Eric Pickles Department of Communities and Local Government dated 17<sup>th</sup> January 2013) of the Government decision has caused this dependence. We are committed to working with you to make this a partnership not a dependency.*

Q: What sort of Councils are being hit the hardest across the Country?

*A: Councils in deprived area will be hardest hit as they have the highest percentage of residents on benefits. This is also true in Wiltshire where some communities a have higher percentage of residents on benefits than others.*

Q: We have a larger number of pensioners in our Parish many of whom are on housing benefit, will this result in out Parish being penalised?

*A: Pensioners will not lose any benefit, but if these pensioners were entitled to council tax benefit, now known as council tax reduction, then this will impact upon your tax base as they are excluded from the base calculation. (Note – this answer differs from the one given at the meeting which was given in error)*

Q: Has Wiltshire Council lobbied Government?

*A: Yes. We wrote to Eric Pickles late last year and worked with the Local Government Association to press the case for a change to the scheme and received a non committal answer on 17th January this year. Both letters can be found as attachments to this email.*

Q: Should we lobby our MP's as I understand this is the result of a Government decision?

*A: Yes. Wiltshire Council has briefed local MP's and copied them on the recent briefing note. They will also be copied on the Cabinet report for 21st November that will put forward recommendations based on your responses to the questionnaire.*

Q: How have others like the Police, Fire and Rescue and the NHS been treated?

*A: The only organisations affected are precepting bodies which levy local taxes. Wiltshire Council collects the precept for Towns and Parishes, the Police and Fire and Rescue Service. The NHS is funded directly from Government so is not affected. The Police and Fire and Rescue Service were fully compensated for the effect of this 'unintended financial consequence' in 2012/13.*

##### Why aren't you covering the funding problem?

Q: The money isn't ringfenced. Why is the loss of funds being passed on to Town and Parish councils?

*A: If the grant from Government had been ringfenced the whole grant would have been passed to Towns and Parishes for as long as the Government paid the grant at the level allocated. It could only be used for that purpose if ringfenced. In that event the £300k shortfall would not have been made up by Wiltshire Council as it was only provided late in 2012 when it was discovered that the grant was insufficient and some precepts had been set.*

*The fact that it is not ringfenced means that its value deteriorates by the reduction in the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) that Wiltshire Council receives. We are told that this will be 18.2% in 2014/15 and 26.8% in 2015/16.*

*Wiltshire Council had to find £2.3m in 2012/13 and onwards to cover its reduced income due to the benefit change. This is over and above the reduced SFA.*

Q: Isn't central government going to say it's Wiltshire Council's fault i.e. 'we gave a grant to councils and they haven't passed it on?'

*A: Probably. However unlike some other authorities we have passed on the Government grant in 2012/13 and topped up the £300k shortfall. In future years it is not possible to keep paying the full Town and Parish deficit due to the expected stark reduction in the SFA of £14m in 2014/15 and an additional £17m in 2015/16.*

Q: Is Wiltshire Council going to raise council tax next year to cover the shortfall?

A: No

### **Capping**

Q: What are the implications of a cap, when do you think this might come in?

*A: The implication is that Town and Parishes might have to run a referendum if they wish to increase their precept by more than a Government set percentage. Wiltshire Council and other County and District Councils are capped at 2%.*

*Given that the funding from Wiltshire Council will have to reduce and if the cap was introduced the only alternative would be a referendum. If that failed costs would have to be reduced in the relevant Town or Parish Council.*

*We do not know if a cap will be introduced, if it is we do not know the percentage, but we do know that there has been public comment and talk about a 'de minimus' level being considered for local councils where Councils with small precepts might be excluded.*

*We can only reflect on what has happened to Wiltshire Council and the messages emanating from Whitehall.*

Q: We are concerned about the prospect of a cap for Town and Parish councils. We want to take on more responsibility; if we can't put the precept up (with these additional responsibilities) we will have a big problem.

A: We understand this concern.

### **Reserves**

Q: You mentioned reserves. We like to operate under the principle never to use these on 'running costs' as they can't cover a year's costs. These are saved to be utilised for a particular project and we are very concerned that we will be forced to use them.

*A: We understand this concern. Running through reserves or borrowing to support revenue only leads to disaster, as we have seen with many National economies over the last few years. It inevitably leads to a longer term reckoning.*



Q: Our council has been frugal and has healthy reserves. Can you assure us that we will not be penalised for having healthy accounts?

*A: Wiltshire Council has no influence over Towns and Parish reserves. However, the Town and Parish Auditors always question why reserves exist and there is a body of opinion in Government that no Council should have reserves, except a modest general reserve. The only exception is when they are allocated to specific projects. It should be noted that the Auditors are appointed by the Audit Commission.*

### **Effect of new housing**

Q: We currently have a large housing development underway. We set the precept at the start of the year, but by the end of that year there may be lots more properties that will have been eligible for council tax.

*A: We regularly speak with developers to estimate the build and sale estimates. We are aware of large developments and look to take them into account where we can. In the following year Council Tax will be collected and the base adjusted for the future year. Any additional monies are offset against any shortfall in bad debt provision*

Q: You talked about houses being built – we have a large development locally that is out of our boundary. It would help to deal with our loss (of grant) if the boundary was moved. Who is responsible for changing boundaries?

*A: Requests for boundary changes can be made to Wiltshire Council.*

### **Technical**

Q: You mentioned sending out the base figures earlier, when will this be?

*A: We hope to have base figures out to you by 21st October. We reiterate these will be provisional but will help you to assess the impact of any changes.*

Q: Who decides on the Council Tax banding?

*A: The valuation band of a property is determined by the Valuation Office (an agency of the Inland Revenue).*

Q: Who carries the bad debt if a Council Tax payer defaults on payments?

*A: Wiltshire Council, the Police and Fire & Rescue.*

Q: Do you know what the reduction in grant will be? If so, we can be more pragmatic about the resolution i.e. increase the precept all in one go.

*A: We will not know until we have the results of the consultation and the decision is made by Cabinet on 21st November. Increasing the precept to cover the future shortfall is an option that Councils may wish to implement as it reduces the future risk particularly if Government introduced capping.*

Q: Will the solution be the same for all Town and Parish councils? What would be the action/decision if some councils said we could do without the grant whilst others needed more?

*A: We will not know until we have the results of the consultation and the decision is made by Cabinet on 21st November*

### **Communication**

Q: Can you help us with communicating this to our Parish?

*A: Yes. Once Cabinet has made the decision on 21st November we get our Communications department to work on this.*

Q: If we did go for a large precept increase all in one year, will there be something in the council tax leaflet to explain these changes?

*A: There will be no Council tax leaflet next year, only the Council Tax demand with a link to the Council website. It may be possible to explain the options that Councils have decided on. It will certainly be possible to help within the text that could be inserted into Parish magazines.*

Q: We hope that Wiltshire Council realises that the Town and Parish councils are the best asset they have. We are concerned about how we explain these changes on our own doorstep – we need a ‘one-liner’ to explain that with these changes we may not have enough money (will have to put precept up) or we will lose services.

*A: We do realise the role and value of Town and Parish Councils, most Wiltshire Councillors are on Town or Parish Councils. We are also working proactively with our local councils on the campus programme, as well as transfer of assets and services. Once Cabinet has made the decision on 21st November we will get our Communications department to work in this.*

### **General**

Q: In a perfect world we would spread grants to respond to the best in need. Do you want us to respond selfishly or jointly to try to reduce the funding deficit?

*A: An interesting question. The decision rests with your Council.*

Q Shouldn't you just pass this problem on to people with big houses?

*A: This is not possible as the valuation band of a property is determined by the Valuation Office (an agency of the Inland Revenue).*

Q: I would like to support what you are saying. This is about empowering us to go back to communities and make decisions. We represent the community. We have the power to raise the precept for a project, complete and then reduce it again. This empowers us to go back, look at what is required and sort out for ourselves.

*A: Thank you for your comment.*

Dick Tonge  
Cabinet Member for Finance

### Worked Example

			2013/14 less 35%	2013/14 less 100%
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15
Council Tax Base**	1000	990	990	990
Precept	£10	£10	£10	£10
Income	£10000	£9900	£9900	£9900
Monies allocated by Wiltshire Council	0	£100	£65	0
Total income	£10000	£10000	£9,965	£9,900

\*\* Council Tax base reduced due to, say, 5 houses subject to full Council Tax Benefit and 10 subject to 50% Council Tax Benefit.

35% shows the effect of the £300k not being allocated by Wiltshire Council and a 18% reduction due to the reduced Government Settlement Funding Assessment to Wiltshire Council in 2014/15.

100% shows the effect of no monies being passed to Town and Parish Councils.

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### Summary of the results of the consultation

The consultation questions are shown in the Briefing Note at Appendix A.

125 Towns and Parishes responded, the detailed responses are shown at Appendix D.

Where Y/N or option has not been filled in but it is clear from the text what the preference is it has been inserted. No changes have been made where the Y/N or option has been filled in.

A summary of the responses and general comments are shown below;

#### A. What level of grant does your Council think would be reasonable given the shortfall of funding being provided by the Coalition?

<b>Nil</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Reduce by Settlement Funding Assessment</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>Other</b>	
<b>Make no change</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>23</b>

Comments made;

- 25%/50% & 75% of current grant
- Any grant reduction needs to be phased in gradually
- Chippenham Town Council would expect to receive the maximum possible grant funding and as close to 100% as possible
- The Town Council recognises the reduction in grant provided by the Coalition but is of the opinion that sufficient money should continue to be given to town and parish councils so as to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by the reduction in the tax base caused by changes in benefit distribution.
- The Town Council thinks that 25% would be reasonable
- A 20% year on year reduction to eventually nil
- Downton Parish Council approved a 20% reduction as per the options circulated
- Ideally, the grant should be passed down to town and parishes. However, in view of the inevitable and continued reduction of public sector funding and the lack of certainty on whether a grant would be passed down from Wiltshire Council in future years then Marlborough Town Council looks to retain its independence and not rely on it.
- It would need to be determined by the requirements of the individual Parish/Town.
- There is a basic “cost of democracy” which all councils’ must bear. We would suggest that a minimum sum is guaranteed to all councils – say £750. Larger councils can more easily make up the shortfall through their precepts and other activities
- We would see if we could make the necessary cuts to compensate for the loss of the grant.
- We would support consultation with central government as we wish to see the current level of precept maintained.

**B. Should all councils be supported to the same extent, or should the grant be concentrated on those Councils where the impact is greatest?**

**Should all councils be supported to the same extent?**

**Yes** **72**

**No** **30**

- Give some extra help where the impact is greatest
- Balanced against impact
- Councils should receive help commensurate with their level of need if they are to deliver the necessary services
- Chippenham Town Council would expect to receive the maximum possible grant funding and as close to 100% as possible
- Concerned that the grant will be directed to more urban communities with a higher population
- Given the reduction in the tax base demanded by the localised council tax support system that has been introduced, the town and parish councils most affected tend to be those experiencing most deprivation

**C. Does your Council support Town and Parish Councils being independent and not relying on a grant, if so over how many years would you wish to see this achieved?**

**Yes** **56**

- The timescale for achieving independence from a grant varied between 2 and 5 years and was an average of 3.6 years. Comments on gradually (3) and tapering were not included in this calculation.

**No** **33**

- Chippenham Town Council considers the reduction in grant support as being a reality and not one of choice. It does not support the view that it should be independent of any grant support.
- If there is money available for councils all councils should receive it.
- Being a small parish we need a grant.
- As a tier of government, paid by and accountable to taxpayers, parish councils should not be independent. To whom would they report?
- Hilperton Parish Council does not support town and parish councils being independent and not relying on a grant.
- In an ideal world we would prefer to be independent. However, under the “new” rules we would opt for a grant rather than a large rise rates
- We need to keep taking the grant for as long as it is available as it has a great impact
- The change to the tax base calculation came without warning and was set by central government without the understanding of the impact on 1st tier councils. This has left many Town and Parishes without the reserves or possible areas to cut expenditure

**D. If you received no grant or a reduced grant would you favour a large increase in precept in 2014-15 to compensate for this or would you look to spread this over the next four years?**

**Yes 31**

- A large increase in 2014 – 2015 as we can lay the blame clearly on central government.
- With the implied threat of a cap the option of spreading over a period may not be possible. We would therefore reluctantly need to consider a larger increase in 2014-15 than would otherwise be the case.
- We would seek a large increase in 2014-15, as spreading it over subsequent years could lead to problems if a cap were introduced in subsequent years to prevent or control increases.
- With a threat of the 'capping' of precepts for town and parish councils to 2% in future years and possibly as soon as 2015/16, it is prudent to ensure that Marlborough Town Council is able to properly plan for expenditure so it can continue to provide existing and take on new services.
- We have no confidence that any four year has credibility when the rules of the game keep changing. We therefore favour an increase in Precept in 2014/15 to compensate immediately.
- With complete uncertainty as to how central government is going to interpret and administer the changes published to date, it would be most imprudent not to start building reserves at the earliest possible moment, especially as the billing authority will not be taking reserves into

**No 58**

**E. If the Coalition were to introduce a precept cap does your Council have sufficient reserves to compensate for a reduction in grant?**

**Yes 23**

- Reserves are being built up for a new Community Centre which will be built after the Tidworth Campus is built
- At present, but that may not be the case on the future.
- But not indefinitely, the action of a cap would have a serious impact on the council's ability to continue to improve and create better services for the community. It would definitely have a detrimental impact in any service devolution talks. We have already started a precept support reserve from underspends in our budget for 2012/2013, so we are trying to forward plan budgets to lessen the impact as far as possible, but it's not easy.
- Only in the short term. A cap on Corsham Town Council's precept is unlikely to be financially sustainable if current service levels are to be maintained.
- Reserves are finite
- Only in the short term

**No 61**

- Our reserves would quickly diminish if a reduction in grant was accompanied by a cap on precept increases. This would cut into our ability to promote 'Localism' projects
- Downton Parish Council has built up reserves to enable it to replace the roof on its Memorial Hall in three years. Once those reserves are spent, there would be insufficient reserves remaining to compensate for a reduction in the grant.
- Reserves are not for routine expenditure – reserves enable specific planned projects. Relying on reserves for annual business would be foolhardy as reserves would eventually disappear, and the work of the parish could not be viably funded.
- Whilst reserves could be called upon, the effect would be to create significant financial pressures that would inevitably lead to a dramatic reduction and realignment of the services and facilities provided.
- Reserves are meant to cover emergencies and unexpected expenditure. It would be imprudent to use them for normal revenue expenditure

#### **F. Have you plans to reduce your budget over the next four years?**

**Yes**

**9**

- We are continually seeking to reduce costs.
- Although it is hard to identify further savings we will try.

**No**

**89**

- We already run the budget as tightly as possible and keep the precept at a minimum.
- We certainly want to maintain our services to the community and take on more from Wiltshire Council. Reductions can only mean cuts, and those cuts would be to services which generate pride in our community, i.e. floral displays, Christmas lights and events. That would be so wrong and have such a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of the town.
- The budget has been reduced as far as possible to keep essential services/facilities in the village going but with no flexibility for unforeseen problems
- We have not formally considered this matter yet but the council is committed to improving the services for the community and therefore cannot operate on a reduced budget.
- Parishes are being asked to take on more roles and will need finance to do it.
- As communities follow the principles of Localism, and as funding from other sources is reduced, the demands falling on parish councils are increasing, as are the financial costs of providing local services. There is little scope for trimming services, at a parish level, which has not previously been explored.
- It is small enough as it is, and we must cover the costs of our Clerk and administration, so to reduce it further would leave us very constrained indeed.

#### **G. Are there any other issues you think we should consider?**

- There is very great concern about capping.
- Amalgamation of smaller Parishes



- Formal working agreements between Parishes to reduce the costs.
- Sharing administration costs between Parishes.
- Need for a Community Governance Review of boundaries.
- Resistance to capping of Town and Parish precepts.
- Relevant financial support when delegation occurs.
- Burden of legislation on smaller Parishes such as pensions
- The precept issue is obliging them to try to solve a technical problem created by government. It is wasting valuable time unnecessarily. Undermining parish councils' income is also a sure-fire way to erode volunteer enthusiasm
- Consideration should be given to amalgamating smaller Parishes on a 'Unitary Parish' basis.
- The Coalition has made much of the importance of developing Localism and yet the unintended consequences of changes such as this undermine this stated aim
- The government has put in place a package to deal sensibly with the precept issue in respect of Police and Fire services, they should do the same with Parish Councils.
- There needs to be a publicity campaign to highlight the problem, its impact and what caused it.

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	Question A	Q B Y/N	Question B Comments	C Y/N	Question C Comments	Q D Y/N	Question D Comments	Q E Y/N	Question E Comments	Q F Y/N	Question F Comments	Question G
Aldbourne Parish Council	C. 75% of last years grant.	Yes	All councils should be supported to the same extent.	No		No	The cost would be spread out.	No	Due to no time being allowed to build up sufficient reserves.	No		
Alderbury Parish Council	C. It should stay at the same level as it is currently.	Yes	All councils should be supported to the same extent.	No		No	Alderbury Parish Council would look to spread it over the next 4 years. The council don't want to put the precept up.	No		No		No
All Cannings Parish Council												
Allington Parish Council	C. 25% Grant	No	Pro-rata support for all Parish Councils would be acceptable	Yes	Parish Councils should be independent over a period of 4 years	No	Spread over 3-4 years					There may well be an impact on Parish Councils if the proposed reduction in Precept increases as each year passes
Alton Parish Council												
Alvediston Parish Meeting												
Amesbury Town Council		No	Concentrate on councils where the impact is greatest – considering the impact and the length of time that the grant is required.	Yes	Councillors support the idea of town and parish councils being independent, achieved over 5 years.	No	Councillors would prefer the compensatory increase in Precept to be spread over the next 4 years, minimum, rather than favouring a large increase in 2014-15.		No, the town council would not have sufficient reserves to compensate for a reduction in grant if a precept cap was introduced.	No	There is no plan to reduce the budget over the next four years, due to the continued development in Amesbury (as per the Wiltshire Core Strategy). There is an anticipated 25-30% increase in population over the next 5 years.	Other issues for consideration: The growth of Amesbury and its infrastructure, Funding to support the work of town and parish councils is based on the principle for good governance through federation, with decisions taken at the lowest level possible, with resources to implement decisions allocated to that level.
Ansty Parish Council												
Ashton Keynes Parish Council												
Atworth Parish Council	C. It should continue to be paid in full.	Yes	Money should be equally available to small parishes	Yes	The Parish Council should not be reliant on Wiltshire Council giving a discretionary grant each year. Money spent for the benefit of the Parish should be raised by the Parish. If the grant had to be phased out, it would be preferred that this be done over four years.	Yes	This would have to be done straightaway in the first year 2014-15. There is no certainty that even more money would not be taken away or a cap put in place in the future. Also as the tax base is lower, the Parish would receive less money from now on so there would be a shortfall year on year unless this was collected in the first year.	No	Auditors have recommended a reduction in reserves and this has been complied with. Also money has been taken out as matched funding for village projects.	No	There are still essential projects needed in the village.	Parish Clerk's salary has to be met and this is highly unlikely to decrease. Inflation continues to increase. There are different pressures on the Parish Council each year as well as dealing with unforeseen circumstances.









Calne Town Council	B. The amount of support would need to be agreed well in advance so that there is some certainty when it comes to budgeting. For example, we are embarking upon a 5 year business plan linked to a projected budget. Without knowing what support there is we would have to work on the basis of no support.	Yes	It should be the same support throughout as impact is relative to each council	Yes	Most definitely Yes, town and parish councils are autonomous bodies and as such have to remain independent and not reliant upon a principal authority via the Government for any part of its funding. Town and Parish Councils raise tax from local tax payers and spend it within the community in which it was raised for the community's benefit. To be frank it might be better just to bite the bullet this year and use the revised tax base, at least there will be certainty. We are putting off the inevitable; the uncertainty quite rightly is making some council's nervous about embarking upon worthwhile projects for their community that is so wrong. The uncertainty does nothing to support the Government's Localism Act. As a suggestion any monies which Wiltshire Council receive to support councils could be shared amongst Area Boards who in turn could support their town and parish councils in capital projects through grant funding.	Yes	However, most town and parish council's would more than likely prefer a spread over four years, however certainty about what support is available would be essential to aid project planning and future budget setting.	Yes	But not indefinitely, the action of a cap would have a serious impact on the council's ability to continue to improve and create better services for the community. It would definitely have a detrimental impact in any service devolution talks. We have already started a precept support reserve from underspends in our budget for 2012/2013, so we are trying to forward plan budgets to lessen the impact as far as possible, but its not easy.	No	We certainly want to maintain our services to the community and take on more from Wiltshire Council. Reductions can only mean cuts, and those cuts would be to services which generate pride in our community, i.e. floral displays, Christmas lights and events. That would be so wrong and have such a detrimental impact on the health and wellbeing of the town.	We are fortunate that Wiltshire Council saw fit to pass on the compensation grant. As said before it might be time to bite the bullet and set the precept against the new tax base without any support. This town council is very pro active within its community, leading the way with a Neighbourhood Plan, supporting economic regeneration, thorough our town centre master plan, setting up the town team. A supporter of the Chamber of Commerce with a place on their Committee. We have budget set aside to refurbish buildings adjacent to the town hall for business start up units (this could be a casualty). Invest heavily, with some support from the business community in floral displays, Christmas Lights, Town Events. Manage and run a state of the art sports facility and community hall. Providing activities in a wide range of sports. We have agreed to invest £250,000 into Calne's campus through a Public Works Loan Board
Calne Without Parish Council												
Castle Combe Parish Council	B - subject to answer to QB	No	Those parishes worst affected should receive greater support.		Parish Councils can only be independent of a grant if they are not concurrently prevented from increasing the level of their precept if circumstances require such action. Impossible therefore to answer this question until the issue of potential capping is resolved either way.	Yes	With the implied threat of a cap the option of spreading over a period may not be possible. We would therefore reluctantly need to consider a larger increase in 2014-15 than would otherwise be the case. Our precept has remained largely unchanged for several years but many of our costs are either fixed or inflation driven (e.g. property insurance). The percentage of discretionary costs is low compared with such items despite voluntary freezing of the clerk's salary and other expenses. We are already using reserves and sporadic ancillary income (of which there may be no recurrence) to compensate for the shortfall in precept income against costs.	Yes for a period - see comment	As indicated in response to question D we are already utilising reserves and sporadic non-guaranteed ancillary income to offset precept shortfalls. A statutory cap on our precept now would punish us for being prudent with precept increases in the past. The level of our reserves needs to include contingencies for unbudgeted expenditure on our ownership of listed buildings which are recognised worldwide. The guidance that reserves should be no greater than three times the annual precept takes no account of potential major capital expenditure.	Yes where possible	As previously indicated the percentage of discretionary costs is low in relation to precept income. Savings on revenue outgoings are likely to be marginal. As a result discretionary capital expenditure (e.g. provision of replacement playing field equipment) is likely to suffer. The assumption appears to be that parish councils increase their precept to cover unnecessarily high levels of cost. This is not our experience.	Parishes are increasingly concerned that their work as volunteers with a real interest in the local community is being eroded by remote Central diktats. If Parish Councillors decide to discontinue such voluntary input, costs would increase substantially and local issues would remain unresolved. The talk of greater local empowerment is meaningless without the tools to do the job.





Chilmark Parish Council	B	Yes	All Councils should be supported to the same extent	No		No	Look to spread this over a number of years.	No		No	We have trimmed to the bone. Small parishes and rural parishes should receive the same funding as urban parishes.	No
Chilton Foliat Parish Council	B		All Councils should be supported to the same extent			No	Spread this over four years			No		
Chippenham Town Council	C Chippenham Town Council would expect to receive the maximum possible grant funding and as close to 100% as possible	No	Chippenham Town Council would expect to receive the maximum possible grant funding and as close to 100% as possible	No	Chippenham Town Council considers the reduction in grant support as being a reality and not one of choice. It does not support the view that it should be independent of any grant support and not rely on a grant. That said when the reduction occurs the Town Council would like the reduction to be phased in over as many years as possible.	No	Chippenham Town Council feels that this question is being asked prematurely as, in order to offer an informed response it would be beneficial to know the level of grant being issued by Wiltshire Council. That said the Town Council is of the view that although we do not favour a large increase in our precept, if we had no grant available to us then we would seek to increase the precept by a level we feel the community could withstand.	No	The Town Council believes that its reserves are held to cover prudent risk management and potential risks in future years and therefore using reserves to compensate for a reduction in grant is very much a short term panacea.	No	As stated in Wiltshire Council's Core strategy, Chippenham is one of five towns in the County designated to have considerable expansion and growth in future years. The Town Council feels therefore that it needs to develop services and facilities that are commensurate with a town of this size and therefore does not have any plans to reduce its budget in the next four years.	Chippenham Town Council is aware of significant development opportunities that are emerging and are on the outskirts of the Town Boundary. Wiltshire Council needs to recognise the effect such developments will have on Chippenham such as the likely effect on traffic, the High Street (retail offer) and other infrastructure considerations. A Boundary Review should be undertaken in light of this. Chippenham Town Council is keen to work in partnership with Wiltshire council on relevant asset transfer opportunities. If Wiltshire Council is to devolve services and assets (facilities) the clearly this will have a bearing on the Town Council's budget
Chippenham Without Parish Council												
Chirton Parish Council	A. Conock & Chirton rely on the current funding, and would not want to see a reduction	No	How is "impact greatest" defined?	No	Being a small community our budgets are small and therefore impact on the size and number of projects achieved. Smaller rural communities have less and less services, increase in precept will impact lower income families further increasing to the loss and decline of local communities.	No	Would look to compensate some over the next four or so years (see comment in C above)	No		No	Any reduction will be at the cost of reducing or stopping of some activities	





Cricklade Town Council	B Yes	Yes	It is proposed that whatever the percentage reduction in the grant is agreed by Wiltshire Council, that this percentage should be applied to all town and parish councils equally	No	If the grant is withdrawn Wiltshire Council need to be aware that it can't continue to request town and parish councils match fund projects that are the responsibility of Wiltshire Council	No	Cricklade Town Council does not support a large increase in precept in order to cover the loss of a grant		Possibly. In respect of the 2014/15 financial year, this council has sufficient in reserves to compensate for a reduction in grant but it would be increasingly difficult in future years if the cap was set at, say, 2%. Over future years the reserves would become depleted.	No	We have not formally considered this matter yet but the council is committed to improving the services for the community and therefore cannot operate on a reduced budget	1. Cricklade Town Council has concerns that more services are being passed down to the lowest tier of local government without the relevant financial support to assist in delivering effective services.2. Wiltshire Council are expecting parish and town councils to match fund services that were once the sole responsibility of the unitary authority.3. There is clearly an expectation that prediction and cost related to demographic changes (elderly, higher rate of unemployed etc), that have previously directed the amount of funding allocated to Parish and Town council, will not have to be addressed by those councils.
Crudwell Parish Council												
Dauntsey Parish Council	B. As a maximum	Yes	Grant needs to be considered on a likely percentage increase factor rather than purely money	Yes	4 years	Yes	Increase needs to compensate for loss just to have a standstill situation and system can be blamed if effect is made public knowledge immediately	No	Government should state their intentions and give a date that would allow reserves to be built up	No	Parishes are being asked to take on more roles and will need finance to do it	Parish and town councils should not be linked with higher authorities in regards to local spending on local priorities
Devizes Town Council	B.	Yes	The Impact of the legislation impacts on all councils and therefore, All Councils should be treated equally.							No	It anticipates that Devizes Town Council will increase its budget in year one to correct for future losses in Grant and to allow the Council keep any increase below 2% in subsequent years.	There is a concern that that Council Tax Grant is front loaded, with the reduction increasing over subsequent years. Should capping for parish council be introduced, it is likely that this will be from 2015/16 onwards. With this cap in place the reduction in grant maybe to force councils to cut services to prevent a cost of a referendum, event though the in no increase in the Council's budget.
Dilton Marsh Parish Council	C. £2525.96 as for FY2013/2014	Yes	Grant should be paid strictly pro-rata to the grant in FY2013/2014.	N/A	The Council does not believe that there is any loss of independence by being in receipt of a grant.	No	The Council is not in favour of a large increase in the Precept for FY2014/2015.	No		No	The Council has no plans in place at the present time.	

Dinton Parish Council	B	Yes	The smaller parishes are affected in the same way and many can't afford the loss of this in one hit.	Yes	Grant to be phased out gradually	No	large increase, spread over minimum of 2 years.	No		No	Costs increase, Clerk's workload increases therefore budgets can't decrease. Many smaller parishes already work to a tight budget, they don't award large grants and therefore cutting the budget is not an option.	
Donhead St Andrew Parish Council	Withheld response											Please note that this parish council will not be responding to the Council Tax Support Grant consultation. Thank you for the opportunity; however, as no grant was received in 2013/14 and will not be received in 2014/15 at whatever level, it would seem most appropriate that those councils directly affected should be the ones that have the 'say' to avoid any distortion of feeling.
Donhead St Mary Parish Council												
Downton Parish Council	C. Downton Parish Council approved a 20 percent reduction as per the options circulated.	No	Downton Parish Council did not wish to the grant be concentrated on those Councils where the impact is greatest.	Yes (in principle)	Downton Parish Council felt it was fine in principle but was concerned by the Daily Telegraph article subsequently circulated which referred to the capping of Town and Parish Councils and the requirement for a referendum if there's a rise of more than 2 percent. The Parish Council would not be independent if it were capped.	Yes		No	Downton Parish Council has built up reserves to enable it to replace the roof on its Memorial Hall in three years. Once those reserves are spent, there would be insufficient reserves remaining to compensate for a reduction in the grant.	No	With additional delegated services such as the emptying of public bins and the maintenance of bus shelters as two examples, all of which create extra work for the Clerk, Downton Parish Council has no plans to reduce its budget at any time in the foreseeable future.	no
Durnford Parish Council	C. Make up to the equivalent of the shortfall.	Yes	Both Parish Councils are in favour of everyone getting the same proportion. Precepts are very small for both Durnford and Woodford Parish Councils and it would be difficult to repair certain items, i.e. notice boards, playground equipment without the amount of precept at present.	No		Yes		No	See previous comments	No		All equipment deteriorates over time and the price of repairing it increases as said above it would become almost impossible to replace certain items. At present Woodford Parish Council is having to repair the children's playground and this will take up a large portion of this years precept.

Durrington Town Council	B.Durrington Town Council think this is the fairest option	Yes	All councils whether large or small should be supported to the same extent to be fair	No	If there is money available for councils all councils should receive it			No	All our reserves are earmarked. A cap would be catastrophic for local councils which are having to take on extra functions which Wiltshire Council no longer provide which of course costs money.	No	As said in the last comment we are having to do more and more of the services that Wiltshire Council did provide and so our budget is bound to go up	Just leave local councils alone to do the thing which they do best which is look after the local community. Every penny of the precept is spent in their town/villages and lots of services are done by local people voluntarily. Do not interfere with the way we manage our affairs. Wiltshire would be in a very poor state if it wasn't for these Councillors who work for their villages for no payment. It is only right that if there is a grant available that they should benefit from it.
East Kennett Parish Meeting												
East Knoyle Parish Council												
Easterton Parish Council	B.£1000	No	Balanced against impact	Yes	3/5 years	No	Any adjustments spread	Yes	But reserves are finite	Yes	Economies have been made, but we are still subject to rising costs	
Easton Grey Parish Meeting												
Easton Royal Parish Council												
Ebbesbourne Wake Parish Council												
Edington Parish Council												When my Council considered the situation it had no strong views other than bemusement at how we got into this sorry mess. The strong view that we did have was that on no account should we be subject to capping especially if increases are entirely due to a reduced Council Tax base. In any event Parish Councils usually cover small communities (compared with district and county councils and unitary authorities) where our identity with our electorate is direct and where in the main we do not have beurocracies that have little or no connection with the people they represent







Ham Parish Council	We do not receive council tax support	No	difficult to answer . If the current spread of Council Tax Support is accurately assessed, then in theory all councils should be supported/reduced pro rata. In practice, however, there made need to be some shading to protect particular services in certain towns/parishes		Ideally the answer should be yes, but there will always be centres of population which provide services – e.g.. Libraries- for the outlying villages and where there are demographic inequalities in Council tax income. In such circumstances it would be equitable to spread the load via Council Tax Support		NOT APPLICABLE as we currently do not receive a grant		AGAIN, not applicable as we receive no grant		We are a very small village with a modest precept of currently £1,500. This is already supplemented by the voluntary generosity of parishioners.	Even parishes with small precepts and little or no Council Tax Support may from time to time face exceptional expenditure, e.g.. Traffic calming measures.. To cover for such eventualities there should be a reserved fund which can be bid for.
Hankerton Parish Council	A. This parish is happy to get no grant. We calculate that our shortfall will only be 94p per Band D household which we are happy to raise as additional precept.	No	the grant should be concentrated where the need is greatest	Yes	and we are happy to get there in one year.	Yes	we would do it in one year, because in our case it would amount to less than £1 extra per year for a Band D household	Yes		No		
Heddington Parish Council												
Heytesbury Imber and Knook Parish Council												
Heywood Parish Council	C Same grant as last year (£268.59)	No	Where the impact is greatest		We remain independent whether or not we receive a grant	No	We do not favour a large increase in the precept in 2014/2015					
Hilmarton Parish Council												
Hilperton Parish Council	C Hilperton Parish Council thinks there should be cover for the full shortfall.	Yes	Hilperton Parish Council thinks that all councils should be supported to the same extent.	No	, Hilperton Parish Council does not support town and parish councils being independent and not relying on a grant.		Hilperton Parish Council cannot pre-judge this and cannot answer this question until its meeting in early January, 2014, when the precept is set.	No			Hilperton Parish Council cannot answer this question until its precept setting meeting in early January, 2014.	
Hindon Parish Council	B	Yes	The smaller parishes are affected in the same way and many can't afford the loss of this in one hit.	Yes	Grant to be phased out gradually	No	large increase, spread over minimum of 2 years	No		No	Costs increase, Clerk's workload increases therefore budgets can't decrease. Many smaller parishes already work to a tight budget, they don't award large grants and therefore cutting the budget is not an option.	
Holt Parish Council	B Reduction of 20%	Yes	Support should be applied consistently across all councils	No	In an ideal world we would prefer to be independent. However, under the "new" rules we would opt for a grant rather that a large rise rates	Yes		No	We are wholly against a cap	No	Holt PC has pared its spend down to a bare minimum – there is little scope for further reductions without causing harm t core services	

Horningsham Parish Council	B Agreed, but ideally would like the grant to be maintained.	Yes		No	Keep the taking the grant for as long as it is available.	No	We would want to spread costs over as long a period as possible and hope that Wiltshire Council look towards reducing the grant over a number of years to reduce the impact and allow Parish Councils to implement a reducing budget plan.	No				Having time to plan for a decreasing budget is especially important to a small parish
Hullavington Parish Council	B	Yes	The grant should not be concentrated on those councils where the impact is greatest	Yes	Over a 3 year period	No	We would look to spread precept increases over the next 4 years.	No	Following comments from our auditors the Parish Council reserves have been kept to a minimum.	No	The budget could only be reduced if essential expenditure was reduced which would be unlikely.	Making a less ambiguous questionnaire!
Idmiston Parish Council												
Keevil Parish Council	B For 2014/15 then taper grant off over next 3 years to end in 2017/18	Yes	There should be equal pain to be fair	Yes	Taper off grant support over next 3 years	No	We would look to spread precept increase over a number of years	No	We do have some reserves that would enable us to cope for several years	Yes	We have reduced our revenue budget already and the scope for further significant reductions is limited	PC's will become more dependent on area board grants to do anything out of the ordinary
Kilminster Parish Council	B. The Parish Council feels it would be reasonable for Wiltshire Council to pass on the grant as reduced by the Settlement Funding Assessment – given Wiltshire Council's estimates, we calculate that for 2014/15 this would be an 18.2% reduction on last year's grant and that for 2015/16 it will be a further 26.8% reduction and for 2016/17 a further 7% reduction and for 2017/18 a further 7% reduction.		The Parish Council feels that all Town & Parish Councils should be supported to the same extent as it ensures that every council, large and small, will receive something, even if it isn't as much as last year.	Yes	In an ideal world Parish & Town Council's should be independent and autonomous with the ability to raise a precept as it sees fit in the knowledge that it is accountable to its electorate. However, with the threat of capping being introduced by the Coalition Government we may no longer have the luxury of being independent. Whilst a grant is still being submitted by the Government, on the understanding (if not legislated) that it should be passed on to fund parish and town councils, then that should be the case. Wiltshire Council should remember that they are expecting Parish & Town Councils to provide or supplement a lot of services that were, prior to the recession and cut backs, not expected of us. Area Board Grants that were previously approved for Parish & Town Councils are now refused on the assumption that they can raise the money through their precept. If we find ourselves in a situation where grant funding is ceased and we are capped, we may not be able to raise money through our precepts		If we receive no grant or a reduced grant we may feel it necessary to increase our precept by a larger percentage than we would like but I think it is unlikely that we would have the luxury of spreading this over the next four year due to the impending threat of capping. Some Parish & Town Councils are advocating large increases for 2014/15 in the probability that capping will be introduced before 2015/16. However, the threat of capping, if not introduced for 2014/15 is likely to be determined by the amount that Parish & Town Council's increase their council tax in 2014/15. In other words, if a large percentage of Parish & Town Councils increase their precepts by large amounts this coming year, then the Coalition Government will almost certainly introduce capping before the 2015/16 tax year.	No	The Council has sufficient reserves to operate, function and carry out its statutory duties. The Parish Councils reserves are realistic and earmarked (set aside for specific purposes and for savings for future protects) as determined by the Audit & Accounting Regulations (see Section 2.26 of Governance & Accountability for Local Councils. A Practitioners Guide 2010 (England). Therefore, capping and a reduction in grant may result in the reduction of services, facilities, grants etc.	No		

Kington Langley Parish Council	B. £1106	Yes	All councils should be supported to the same extent. We have made strenuous efforts to reduce and control our expenditure and as a result have not increased our precept over the past six years. We would expect this approach to be supported.	Yes	We strongly support the principle. However, this requires Government to allow Councils the freedom to set charges and then be accountable to its local electors. Clandestine (as far as the electorate is concerned) manipulation of the tax base to move costs from central government to Councils is contrary to the spirit of localism. (We believe it is disingenuous to call the outcome an unintended consequence). Given the changes the Government has made we may need grant support for the next 4 years.	No	We would not favour a large increase in precept in 2014-15. We would certainly look to see if we could spread the increase over the next four years. Whilst we would aim to use our reserves to avoid increases for the first two years, increases in the precept in the following two years would then be inevitable. Given the inflexibility which is inherent in a relatively small budget such as ours and the level of our reserves it will inevitably impact very adversely on our already limited services if we do not increase the precept in the second two years.		Our reserves are limited but in the very short run (say two years) we could run these down further to compensate. This would result in generally unacceptably low reserves and therefore adverse audit comment.		Not significantly. We have made cuts and considerable savings over the past five years. After allowing for inflation, we have made reductions worth 18% over this period on a relatively small and therefore relatively inflexible budget. In particular, we made cuts in 2013-14 with the objective of increasing our reserves.	
Kington St Michael Parish Council	B	Yes	As a small council, we would find it difficult to absorb any reduction in the grant. We recognise that we are not alone in this situation, and believe that the most equitable way to deal with the shortfall is to reduce the grant by the settlement funding assessment and support all councils to the same extent.	Yes	Being independent would mean that the Parish Council would be subject to fewer restrictions.	No	We would look to spread this over the next four years	No	As a small parish council, we only precept for what is needed to carry out duties and improvements within the parish.	No	As a small parish council we have no way to reduce our costs in any effective manner.	1. If budgets are squeezed too much at parish council level, we may not be able to maintain the services we currently undertake and have to push them back to up to Wiltshire Council. 2. There is a big redevelopment in Town Close, Kington St Michael, which will span several years. How will the council tax base look in the interim?
Lacock Parish Council												
Landford Parish Council	B		Impossible to give a Y/N response!	Yes	Parish Councils should be independent		Question doesn't make sense – too many clauses	Yes		No		This is worst questionnaire we have ever seen! It contains almost every conceivable design flaw – a perfect textbook example of how not to design questionnaires.



Little Somerford Parish Council	A											
Longbridge Deverill Parish Council												
Luckington Parish Council	B REASONABLE AND FAIR, ESTABLISHED SYSTEM	Yes	Equitable, fair and follows existing precedent. To support some, at the cost of others is not only unfair, it fails to recognise that those with the largest budgets have the most flexibility to respond. Those with smaller budgets have less scope to be flexible. A percentage across the board reduction shares the pain and does not introduce a divisive system.	No	We believe that the continuance of the grant system is beneficial to the cooperative relationship between parishes and the county council.	Yes	We would seek a large increase in 2014-15, as spreading it over subsequent years could lead to problems if a cap were introduced in subsequent years to prevent or control increases. For smaller parishes the loss of the grant is a very significant amount of money, if it has to be compensated by an increase in precept, then to recover the lost monetary value could involve a very substantial precept increase (especially if starting from a low initial point). The amount of additional revenue we would need to raise is NOT vast but the percentage is, e.g. an increase of only 50p approx per week would double the precept and record as a 50% increase.	No	For a number of years auditors have been encouraging parishes to reduce the size of the reserves which they hold, consequently, whilst reserves are adequate for normal circumstances, they are NOT adequate to respond to change of this magnitude. Consequently a cap would have a disproportionately adverse effect on smaller rather than larger councils. Please see previous response	No	As communities follow the principles of Localism, and as funding from other sources is reduced, the demands falling on parish councils are increasing, as are the financial costs of providing local services. There is little scope for trimming services, at a parish level, which has not previously been explored. The low fruit has already been picked, and any further reductions in service will directly affect the quality of life in communities, with consequential community dissatisfaction.	The government has put in place a package to deal sensibly with the precept issue in respect of Police and Fire services, they should do the same with Parish Councils, or at least give them sufficient warning to respond. If the latter, the response should not be centrally controlled by artificial mechanisms such as capping precept rises
Ludgershall Town Council	B	No	- Councils with greater needs should receive the greatest support.	Yes	achieved over 3-4 years	Yes	favour a large increase in precept 2014/2015	Yes	but only in the short -term	No	not at present unless circumstances force it upon us	
Lydiard Millicent Parish Council	B. Grant as per last year if possible.		All Councils should be offered some support where needed, and gently weaned off.		We are not sure.	No	Any increase of precept would need to be spread over next four years		Probably		No none.	
Lydiard Tregoze Parish Council	A Nil	No	It should be dependent on the number on the electoral roll.	Yes	This year is the first that we have received a grant, so we will not miss it.	No	See previous answer.	No		No		
Lyneham and Bradenstoke Parish Council												
Maiden Bradley Parish Council	B. Agreed, but ideally would like the grant to be maintained this year with a suggest three year depreciation 65% this year 35% next then none to allow a 3 year budget to be prepared and introduced alongside the Councils business plan	Yes	All councils should be supported to the same extent Smaller Councils do not have many assets or services to be able to cut to save money	No	We need to keep taking the grant for as long as it is available as it has a great impact. We appreciate that at some point we may lose the grant anyway but need take it as we have not had time to plan such a large decrease in the Parish Councils budget having been trying to increase the extremely small reserves over the last few years carefully as advised by the Auditors.	No	We would want to spread costs over as long a period as possible and hope that Wiltshire Council look towards reducing the grant over a number of years to reduce the impact and allow Parish Councils to implement a reducing budget plan.	No		No		No

Malmesbury St Paul Without Parish Council	A	No	Concentrated on those Councils where the impact is greatest provided there is demonstrable evidence of attempts to implement efficiencies in their budget.		In general yes, but run down determined on an individual Council basis	No	We would look to spread this over the four years	No		No	No, because our budget is circa £10K with little room for manoeuvre.	Hopefully this response useful, despite the lack of impact of these changes on us
Malmesbury Town Council	C The Town Council recognises the reduction in grant provided by the Coalition but is of the opinion that sufficient money should continue to be given to town and parish councils so as to ensure that they are not disadvantaged by the reduction in the tax base caused by changes in benefit distribution..	No	Town Councils provide more services and facilities for residents and therefore have a higher cost burden than smaller parish councils. Therefore we recommend that Town Councils, such as Malmesbury Town, receive a greater proportion of grant, as this impact on their budgets is greater.	NO	As more services are being localised there is a greater call upon Town and Parish Councils funds than before. Also, this scenario is likely to increase in the future with the Government's move towards localism. Therefore whilst in principle independence from the grant would be the ideal, it is unlikely that many Councils would be able to sustain this state financially with a reduced funding, unless they receive additional compensation in some other form. Accordingly, we do not support independence from the grant in the short term.	No	We would look to spread this over the four years		As a Town Council with a responsibility to look after many community facilities and with ongoing liabilities and other unknown factors such as inflation, we would not wish to guarantee sufficient reserves to compensate over the period until 2018	No	As a Town Council we are always looking to reduce costs and provide best value, but with a responsibility to look after many community facilities and ongoing liabilities which are also subject to inflation and other factors, it is not anticipated that our budget will be reduced in the foreseeable future	As more services are being localised there is a desire for Parish and Town Councils to take ownership and maintenance of facilities, especially parks which devolving without any accompanying funding to cushion the transition. Whilst many Town Councils such as ourselves would prefer to own and maintain play and green parks, they are an unaffordable cost burden. If Wiltshire Council really wishes to divest itself of parks and other facilities, then it is essential that consideration must be given to providing realistic funding to assist Parish Councils to take them on, even if this is short term.
Manningford Parish Council												
Marden Parish Council	B. Up to 30%	No	These responses are from the perspective of a small village – Marden. Inhabitants of small villages use the facilities provided by the larger parishes, e.g., sports centres and libraries. So we think that the grant should be concentrated on those councils where the impact is the greatest	No	See the comments relating to question D.	No	Any increase over 2% would be spread over, say, 4 years to minimise the impact on individual council tax payers.	No	Marden sets a very small precept and has correspondingly low reserves	No	Not really feasible for Marden.	





<p>Melksham Town Council</p>	<p>A No given that an element of funding is provided to WC via central government funding to mitigate the effects of localised council tax support, this at least should be passported across to town and parish councils. B. Yes, subject to the response to B below</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Given the reduction in the tax base demanded by the localised council tax support system that has been introduced, the town and parish councils most affected tend to be those experiencing most deprivation. Perversely the system as introduced therefore has the potential to compromise yet further the services provided to those most in need of support. it follows that any grant awarded should reflect this economic reality and that any grant awarded should be in proportion to the financial impact suffered by the parish council concerned.</p>	<p>Yes Melksham Town Council would prefer to be independent and would wish to return to the situation that existed prior to this punitive localised council tax support mechanism. In reality, given the system that has been introduced, the dependence on a grant is necessary in order to mitigate the increasing on MTC's already stretched financial resources and capability. Whilst the ideal scenario would be to dispense with reliance on a grant with immediate effect, the reality is that a phase out of 4+ years plus would be required to financially plan through the distress that grant withdrawal would create. However if central government funds are provided in the future to promote the delivery of services at a more local level then these should be made available to town and parish councils as appropriate.</p>	<p>Yes - both The reality is that the size of increase necessary to mitigate the effects of withdrawal of the grant would be overly punitive for the local tax payer and probably untenable. Whilst a large increase in precept is likely to be required this year anyway, the preference would be to phase the financial effect of the withdrawal of a grant over the next 4+ years. However the ability to achieve this will inevitably be compromised by the introduction of any future capping proposals.</p>	<p>No Whilst reserves could be called upon, the effect would be to create significant financial pressures that would inevitably lead to a dramatic reduction and realignment of the services and facilities provided. This would jeopardise our ability to fund ongoing and future projects to take Melksham forward and would, of course, severely compromise our ability to proactively embrace and progress the localism agenda.</p>	<p>The Town Council recognises the economic pressures that it will face over the next four years and, in that light, is critically analysing its expenditure and income streams as part of an ongoing "root and branch" review. However the Town Council is determined to promote its role at the heart of the community and recognises that, despite the efficiencies that may be achieved, a reduced budget may only be possible through a realignment and reduction of service delivery and facilities provided.</p>	<p>Melksham Town Council has exercised rigorous financial restraint in recent years and, through close financial control and critically examining expenditure and identifying and implementing efficiencies, has successfully managed to freeze its precept requirement in three of the last four years. The fact that Melksham Town Council has the lowest Band D precept of any comparable town in Wiltshire is testament to its desire to minimise the financial burden on the local tax payer and deliver services more cheaply. Melksham Town Council is committed to furthering the localism agenda but feels strongly that its financial independence and ability to provide services at the first tier of local democracy is undermined by the localisation of council tax scheme as introduced. Moreover the Town Council feels that if the Government's ambition is to promote initiative from towns</p>
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<p>Melksham Without Parish Council</p>	<p>B. But need to compensate Parish / Town Councils for their loss.</p>	<p>Comment: Councils should be supported to the same extent and this should therefore be in direct relation to their number of electorate; otherwise it all goes to the Towns and rural areas suffer. Last year, it was disproportionately distributed, see examples below. For example: 2013/14 Band D Tax Base after Adjustment for Benefits and Collection Rate for Melksham Town Council was 4,179.74 and for Melksham Without Parish Council was 2,760 and yet, the Town Council received a grant of £56,072.19 and the Parish Council a grant of £2,313.20. This a difference of only 1419.74 tax base but a hugely disproportionate difference in grant of £53,758.99. Looked at another way, for the Town Council £13.41 was given in grant per tax base but the Parish Council only received 84p per tax base. Example: Devizes Town Council had a tax base of 3,738.57 and a grant of £70,212.87 which equates to £18.78 per tax base. Poulshot Parish Council had a tax base of 142.54 and a grant of £454.40 which equates to £3.19 per tax base. Example: Trowbridge Town Council had a tax base of 9,352.50 and a grant of £197,842.68 which equates to £21.15 per tax base. Hilperton Parish Council had a tax base of 1,733.23 and grant of £21,648.04 which equates to £12.49 per tax base. Example: Calne Town Council had a tax base of 5,080.29 and a grant of £157,071.82 which equates to £30.92 per tax base. Calne</p>	<p>Yes The Parish Council supports Town and Parish Councils being independent but not at the expense of losing grant funding. Could a contribution be made to Town and Parish Councils from the Business Rates in their area? Melksham Without Parish Council lost out greatly from the income that used to be funded from this source, as it has a large Industrial Estate at Bowerhill, within its Parish.</p>	<p>Melksham Without Parish Council wish to keep their independence and decide this for themselves. However, as a Council that lost out greatly last year we may look at a large increase this year to make up the loss; likewise if the grant was completely withdrawn.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Parish Council's Reserves are specifically earmarked for projects and not for running costs.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Parish Council has already severely reduced its Budget as a result of the loss last year.</p>	<p>Melksham Without Parish Council request that they are compensated for the loss they sustained last year (£7,451.50). This shortfall had to be cut from the 2013/14 Budget. The Parish Council lost out severely last year, unlike the majority of Town and Parish Councils. They are looking for compensation for the loss of the new houses in the Parish that they did not receive any money for as the grant was based on matching the previous year's Precept that obviously did not take into account the new houses built. From the "Difference between the differences" column in Wiltshire Council' Appendix ii "Wiltshire Council Lobbying on the 2013/14 draft financial settlement - Localisation of Council Tax Support on Parish Councils" document it clearly identifies that some Councils were much worse off than others last year. For our individual Parish Council we lost out completely on any new houses in the Parish that</p>
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Mere Parish Council	B. The Parish Council feels it would be reasonable for Wiltshire Council to pass on the grant as reduced by the Settlement Funding Assessment – given Wiltshire Council's estimates, we calculate that for 2014/15 this would be an 18.2% reduction on last year's grant and that for 2015/16 it will be a further 26.8% reduction and for 2016/17 a further 7% reduction and for 2017/18 a further 7% reduction.	Yes	The Parish Council feels that all Town & Parish Councils should be supported to the same extent as it ensures that every council, large and small, will receive something, even if it isn't as much as last year.	Yes	In an ideal world Parish & Town Council's should be independent and autonomous with the ability to raise a precept as it sees fit in the knowledge that it is accountable to its electorate. However, with the threat of capping being introduced by the Coalition Government we may no longer have the luxury of being independent. Whilst a grant is still being submitted by the Government, on the understanding (if not legislated) that it should be passed on to fund parish and town councils, then that should be the case. Wiltshire Council should remember that they are expecting Parish & Town Councils to provide or supplement a lot of services that were, prior to the recession and cut backs, not expected of us. Here in Mere, we have taken on responsibility for the two car parks in order to stop the introduction of car parking charges. We have taken on responsibility for the public toilets in order to stop them being closed. We have taken on the transfer of two assets (a bowls club and a band hut)	If we receive no grant or a reduced grant we may feel it necessary to increase our precept by a larger percentage than we would like but I think it is unlikely that we would have the luxury of spreading this over the next four year due to the impending threat of capping. Some Parish & Town Councils are advocating large increases for 2014/15 in the probability that capping will be introduced before 2015/16. However, the threat of capping, if not introduced for 2014/15 is likely to be determined by the amount that Parish & Town Council's increase their council tax in 2014/15. In other words, if a large percentage of Parish & Town Councils increase their precepts by large amounts this coming year, then the Coalition Government will almost certainly introduce capping before the 2015/16 tax year.	No	In accordance with Audit Regulations (below), Mere Parish Council's reserves are set aside for specific purposes and for savings for future projects. Therefore, capping and a reduction in grant may result in the reduction of services, facilities, grants etc. (please see answer to 'C' above).	No		
Mildenhall Parish Council											
Milston Parish Meeting									Governance & Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners Guide 2010 (England)		
Milton Lilbourne Parish Council									Section 2.25 – As councils have no legal powers to hold revenue reserves other than those for reasonable working capital needs or for specifically earmarked purposes, whenever a council's year-end general reserve is significantly higher than the annual precept, an explanation should be provided to the auditor.		





Purton Parish Council	C. 100%	Yes	It seems fair to distribute the grant to all Parish and Town Councils equally.	Yes	Over 5 years	Yes	With the threat of Parish and Town Councils being capped then yes we would favour increasing the precept to compensate for this loss always assuming the cap did not come in before we could do this.	No	It would pose a serious challenge	No	We hope to be able to provide the same level of service and always strive to provide more, in order to do this we need to maintain our level of income, we try to keep any increases as low as possible.	We appreciate Wiltshire Council is posed with a difficult situation, one of many where money is concerned and through no fault of its own, but the same applied to P & T Councils. P & T Councils are, in the main, small organisations with little room to manoeuvre in terms of staff reduction, many already work from home, with minimal overheads and a good deal of voluntary work, it is difficult to see how some Councils would survive long term with less income. If for example Parish Council's cannot afford to provide necessary IT equipment in the future this will impact on Wiltshire Council in terms of communication and advancing technology, it will also hinder the devolution of services and may well put in jeopardy some services that have already been devolved.
Quidhampton Parish Council	B	Yes	The smaller parishes are affected in the same way and many can't afford the loss of this in one hit.	Yes	Grant to be phased out gradually	No	large increase, spread over minimum of 2 years.	No		No	Costs increase, Clerk's workload increases therefore budgets can't decrease. Many smaller parishes already work to a tight budget, they don't award large grants and therefore cutting the budget is not an option.	
Ramsbury Parish Council	C. Full grant in 2014/15	Yes	We think all should be supported to the same extent	Yes	Provided that there is no cap on the Precept, we would be prepared to see this happen over 5 years	Yes	We have no confidence that any four year has credibility when the rules of the game keep changing. We therefore favour an increase in Precept in 2014/15 to compensate immediately	No	Our reserves have been built up for specific projects in our community and not to compensate for any reduction in funding	No	We believe that our budget reflects a sensible on-going investment into our community. Our budget has effectively stood still for some years	The Coalition has made much of the importance of developing Localism and yet the unintended consequences of changes such as this undermine this stated aim

Redlynch Parish Council	C.Require 100% of our existing grant	Yes	All councils should be supported to the same extent.	No		No	We need the annual grant.	No	Due to current projects there are ear marked reserves and general reserves in place.	No	How are Parish councils expected to cope with less money when everything is going up? More and more is being delegated to Parish Councils which means expenditure is increasing at the goodwill of our Parishioners.	
Roundway Parish Council		Yes	The question is 'either' / 'or' therefore Yes / No is ambiguous and not appropriate. We feel all council should be supported to the same extent.	No			The question is 'either' / 'or' therefore Yes / No is ambiguous and not appropriate. To answer, in one lump sum in year 1	No		No	As of today, no plans	
Rowde Parish Council												
Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council	Although the Town Council has not yet had an opportunity to consider this matter formally, I believe that the view of most members is to encourage Wiltshire Council to be as generous as possible in making its grant towards Parish and Town Councils.		It would seem to be fairest to treat all Councils in the same manner as last year, ie all councils receiving some grant no matter how small, to do otherwise will appear decisive.	Yes	The Town Council has always supported the concept of being independent and wishes to return to this situation. It also understands however that this might best be achieved over a two or three year period to avoid large scale rises in precept in a single year.		The Council will need to look at its options but is likely to try a resolve the difficulty in the shortest time possible.		The real issue is not about the reserves. Whilst RWB has very healthy reserves, to use these is not sustainable if the revenue spend is continually exceeding the income. In the long run the Council must either increase the level of precept, or reduce its level of services.		No, the Council has maintained its level of precept for the past six years and was hoping to do so for the four years of this administration. This would be challenging enough given the effects of inflation but this additional strain, in our case about 9%, increases that challenge.	
Rushall Parish Council	C. No reduction in Grant as this is an issue between County Council and the Treasury.	Yes	The large Councils where the grant is concentrated have larger reserves and more opportunity to offset any shortfall. Small parishes have no reserves and have small precepts with little, or no opportunity to manage a reduction.	Yes	4 years, i.e.: by 2018/19.	Yes	We would have to increase by at least 18.2% and with the probability of a cap in subsequent years would have to compound the increase to offset the loss in the next 3 years to 2017/18.	No	We are a small Parish with a small percept and no reserves.	No	We have planned projects where the Parish Council has to contribute for shared funding otherwise the projects will not proceed.	

Salisbury City Council	B SCC recognises and greatly appreciates the support that Wiltshire Council has given to Wiltshire parishes to date. We also recognise that other pressures on WC's budget mean that this cannot continue 'as is' indefinitely. A progressive reduction in line with the reduction in the grant made to WC would clearly be the most reasonable outcome, so a phased reduction in grant would be preferred, ideally commencing with 20% in 2014/15.	Yes	Given the number and diversity of parishes within the WC area it would be administratively burdensome and unfair on WC to expect WC to assess the impact on individual parishes and make choices between them. So SCC considers that all parishes should be supported to the same extent.	Independence is a misnomer in this context, as parishes have no control over many aspects of collection of their precept or the determination of liability to pay it. They will never have such control. Whilst it has previously been in the background, parishes have always been dependent on central government funding to pay the precepts of those in receipt of various benefits. SCC would not give up receipt of any grant simply for the sake of independence. If grants are available our duty to our citizens means that we should accept them. However, SCC recognises that grants are unlikely to be available in the long term and will adapt to cope with their loss. A phased reduction over 3 to 5 years, in line with the anticipated reduction in central government funding, would be preferable.		As SCC has no controlling group it is not possible to state now whether SCC would favour a larger one-off increase or a phased adaptation. However the leader of SCC at this stage would prefer a single significant increase in 2014/15 to fully address this and other issues		In cash terms, yes, as a cap would not threaten SCC's solvency, but dealing with the issues combined would require significant changes to the capital programme and/or possible closure of services	No	The council elected in May 2013 has not yet set a budget for 2014/15 or beyond, but indications to date are that it is not expected that it will plan any overall reduction in its spending.	Salisbury City Council has recently written to WC requesting that a Community Governance Review be undertaken for the City. WC are aware that many of the larger settlements in Wiltshire have not had reviews for a considerable number of years and there are now a large number of very obvious anomalies, especially around Salisbury. A possible outcome of a review for Salisbury, if the most obvious anomalies were corrected, would be for the City tax base to increase back to the levels in place prior to the support grant re-assessment and would go a long way to resolving any grant shortfall for SCC (although possibly exacerbating the problem for neighbouring parishes), as well as ensuring that everybody directly connected to a settlement pays the same amount toward the services and facilities provided by that settlement.	
Savernake Parish Council	B. This would not be a problem if on the flip side it was made easier to access commercial revenue streams, bus shelter advertising, web site advertising, affiliation to name but a few		a "means" controlled approach would seem fair and appropriate.	Yes	Where a council can sustain, and demonstrate so, a revenue sufficient to support its activities it should be encouraged to do so. Phasing over 5 years would seem appropriate	Yes	drip feeding would seem more appropriate.	Yes	short term (3 or 4 years) yes, with additional revenue streams we could accommodate any cap long term	Yes	on the basis of taking advantage of other streams	









Trowbridge Town Council	Having considered the three detailed options circulated on 22nd October which identified the impact on parish and town councils of a 20% cut, a 35% cut and a 100% cut, I respond on behalf of Trowbridge Town Council as follows: Trowbridge Town Council would be very happy if Wiltshire Council were able to deliver a level of grant support which reflected a cut compared to the grant paid in 2013/14 of only 20%, but appreciates that this potentially leaves a steeper hill to climb in future years, assuming that the grant will disappear completely in the future. Without some certainty as to what the grant levels would be in subsequent years over say a five year period with annual cash reductions of a similar amount to a 20% cut in the first year, then this would appear to be a less than sustainable option. Trowbridge Town Council		Trowbridge Town Council considers that whilst it may be justifiable to concentrate support on those councils where the impact is greatest, the overall effect of withdrawing grant from those parish and town councils with low levels of Council Tax Benefit claimants in the past would not significantly increase the level of support available to those with high level of past claimants nor would it significantly ease the burden for Wiltshire Council.	See above answer to Q A. Trowbridge Town Council would support a return to the financial independence parish and town councils benefited from for 119 years, but need the gradient of change to be managed over a period of years. Three years would seem appropriate, given the knowledge of future budgets we do and don't possess and the challenges we face during this council term of office up to 2017.	Trowbridge Town Council will be considering a number of options, which will include a larger increase in 2014/15, but no decision has been taken yet and will not be taken until we know the grant which will be paid by Wiltshire Council.	No		No		As Wiltshire Council are already aware, in many parts of the county, particularly surrounding some of our larger towns and cities, the parish boundaries do not reflect community identity and are long overdue a Community Governance Review (CGR). Further certainty regarding the future opportunities and challenges would be offered if Wiltshire Council were to complete a CGR and implement any changes prior to 2017. Say Wiltshire Council were to reduce the grants in 2015/16 by the same cash reduction as a 35% cut in 2014/15 (i.e. a year on year cut of 50%) and then withdrew the grant in 2016/17. This would be a greater cut than the anticipated level of cut in the SFA and would therefore enable Wiltshire Council to consider directing some additional funding to support asset and service transfer and partnerships with Town and Parish Councils in those areas. This would be a
Upavon Parish Council	B Most likely within estimated revisions C. Possible if (b.) cannot deliver -comment relevant for 2014/15 only	Yes	We agree with support to the same extent, so that any subsequent revisions upwards do not then perpetually distort future funding arrangements, however we are unsighted as to the specific effects for individual parish and town areas.	Yes The average parish council is predominantly reliant upon precept support and is unable to endow itself, however at its core is the wish to remain independent.	A large increase now is preferred, followed by incremental adjustments in subsequent years.	No	Our parish does not have sufficient reserves.	No	For several years our parish has kept its precept at a standard rate. It is also active in raising third sector funding for any capital project it proposes. It is our intention to keep our present expenditure at the current levels, irrespective of inflation.	Encouraging the sharing of services between parish councils where possible and/or appropriate.



West Knoyle Parish Council	B. The Parish Council feels it would be reasonable for Wiltshire Council to pass on the grant as reduced by the Settlement Funding Assessment – given Wiltshire Council's estimates, we calculate that for 2014/15 this would be an 18.2% reduction on last year's grant and that for 2015/16 it will be a further 26.8% reduction and for 2016/17 a further 7% reduction and for 2017/18 a further 7% reduction.	Yes	The Parish Council feels that all Town & Parish Councils should be supported to the same extent as it ensures that every council, large and small, will receive something, even if it isn't as much as last year.	Yes	In an ideal world Parish & Town Council's should be independent and autonomous with the ability to raise a precept as it sees fit in the knowledge that it is accountable to its electorate. However, with the threat of capping being introduced by the Coalition Government we may no longer have the luxury of being independent. Whilst a grant is still being submitted by the Government, on the understanding (if not legislated) that it should be passed on to fund parish and town councils, then that should be the case. Wiltshire Council should remember that they are expecting Parish & Town Councils to provide or supplement a lot of services that were, prior to the recession and cut backs, not expected of us. Area Board Grants that were previously approved for Parish & Town Councils are now refused on the assumption that they can raise the money through their precept. If we find ourselves in a situation where grant funding is ceased and we are capped, we may not be able to raise money through our precepts.	No	If we receive no grant or a reduced grant we may feel it necessary to increase our precept by a larger percentage than we would like but I think it is unlikely that we would have the luxury of spreading this over the next four year due to the impending threat of capping. Some Parish & Town Councils are advocating large increases for 2014/15 in the probability that capping will be introduced before 2015/16. However, the threat of capping, if not introduced for 2014/15 is likely to be determined by the amount that Parish & Town Council's increase their council tax in 2014/15. In other words, if a large percentage of Parish & Town Councils increase their precepts by large amounts this coming year, then the Coalition Government will almost certainly introduce capping before the 2015/16 tax year.	No	In accordance with Audit Regulations, West Knoyle Parish Council has reserves set aside for specific purposes and for savings for future projects. Therefore, capping and a reduction in grant may result in the reduction of services, facilities, grants etc.	No		
West Lavington Parish Council	C. a 20% year on year reduction to eventually nil	Yes - all to same extent		Yes	Yes, the Council does not want to be reliant, but the implications of withdrawal need to be managed also. 4/5 years to nil would soften the burden.	No	Spread over as long a period as possible	Yes		Yes		
West Tisbury Parish Council												
Westbury Town Council	C. £49,225 as for 2013/2014	Yes	Grant should be paid strictly pro-rata to the grant in 2013/2014.		The Council does not believe there is any loss of independence if in receipt of a grant.	No	The Council is not in favour of a large increase in Precept for 2014/2015.	No		No	The Council has no plans in place at the present time.	
Westwood Parish Council												
Westwood Parish Council												
Whiteparish Parish Council	B. By 20%	Yes	The same extent	No	If it had to – it should be achieved over 10 years.	No	Not favour a large increase - gradual increase over 4 years would be preferable	Yes	At present, but that may not be the case on the future.	No		

Wilcot and Huish Parish Council	A. Nil would be reasonable for us since the loss is small. For other councils we understand this will not be the case and so would only support a nil grant for those Parish councils where the effect is negligible	No		Yes	Four years, for us it makes little difference but for larger Parishes and Town Councils it will have a significant, detrimental effect on their communities for it to be reduced to quickly, in the long run this also has a negative effect on small rural communities like ours as well.	No	however our loss is very small and so we would not require a large increase in precept to compensate	No		No	It is small enough as it is, and we must cover the costs of our Clerk and administration, so to reduce it further would leave us very constrained indeed	
Wilsford cum Lake Parish Meeting												
Wilton Town Council	C The Town Council thinks that 25% would be reasonable	Yes	A. The Town Council was unanimous in stating that the grant should be spread out, and that all councils should be supported to the same extent.	Yes	A. The Town Council agreed that the Town Council should become independent again, and that this should be achieved over a period of 4 years.	No	No to a large increase in precept for 2014/15, yes to spreading the increase over the next four years	No	A. the Town Council has only the statutory minimum reserves.	No	The Town Council has no plans to increase or decrease its budget.	
Wingfield Parish Council	C. £195.94 as for FY2013/2014	Yes	Grant should be paid strictly pro-rata to the grant in FY2013/2014.	N/A	The Council does not believe that there is any loss of independence by being in receipt of a grant	No	The Council is not in favour of a large increase in the Precept for FY2014/2015.	No		No	The Council has no plans in place at the present time.	No further issues.
Winsley Parish Council												
Winterbourne Parish Council	A											
Winterbourne Stoke Parish Council	A	No	The practical impact on small parishes of small reductions in what are already small grants and precepts is very large, there should be a sliding scale in levels of support. The guiding principle should be equality of facilities and access to facilities for all and not cash equivalence per capita - which will always be skewed towards the larger parishes.	No	The practical impact on small parishes of small reductions in what are already small grants and precepts is very large, there should be a sliding scale in levels of support. The guiding principle should be equality of facilities and access to facilities for all and not cash equivalence per capita - which will always be skewed towards the larger parishes. Those parishes most sensitive to small financial changes in real terms are affected more than the larger parishes. There should be headroom to allow all parishes to apply for additional funding on the basis of extraordinary need.							





Zeals Parish Council	C. There is a basic "cost of democracy" which all councils' must bear. We would suggest that a minimum sum is guaranteed to all councils – say £750. Larger councils can more easily make up the shortfall through their precepts and other activities.	No	There should be a minimum base level of support for all councils with amounts above this dependent on adverse impact of the changes.	We are a small Council and would find it difficult to fund ourselves entirely from the reduced precept.	Yes	A large increase in 2014 – 2015 as we can lay the blame clearly on central government.	Only for a limited period.	Our budget is already extremely low; it would be very hard to reduce it further.	No
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Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

21 November 2013

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**Subject:** Report on Treasury Management Strategy 2013-14 – Second Quarter ended 30 September 2013

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Richard Tonge  
Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform

**Key Decision:** No

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## Executive Summary

The Council has adopted a Treasury Management Strategy and an Annual Investment Strategy (AIS) for 2013-14, which can be found in the Cabinet meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2013 agenda in the reports pack at the following link, <http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=6131&Ver=4>, Item 10, Pages 75 to 96.

In addition to an Annual Report, the policy requires quarterly reports, including this interim report, reviewing the Treasury Management Strategy (TMS), which covers the period from 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013. The first quarterly report to the end of June 2013 was submitted to Cabinet on 24 September 2013.

All treasury management activity during the reporting period conforms to the Treasury Management Strategy.

## Proposals

The Cabinet is asked to note the contents of this report in line with the Treasury Management Strategy.

## Reasons for Proposals

To give Cabinet members an opportunity to consider the performance of the Council in the period to the end of the September 2013 against the parameters set out in the approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2013-14.

This report is a requirement of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy.

**Michael Hudson**  
Service Director, Finance

**21 November 2013**

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**Subject: Report on Treasury Management Strategy 2013-14 – Second Quarter ended 30 September 2013**

**Cabinet member: Councillor Richard Tonge  
Finance, Performance, Risk, Procurement and Welfare Reform**

**Key Decision: No**

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## **1. Background & Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The Council adopted a Treasury Management Strategy for 2013-14 at its meeting on 26 February 2013, incorporating Prudential Indicators (PrIs), Treasury Management Indicators (TrIs) and an Annual Investment Strategy, in accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code). The Strategy report can be found in the Cabinet 12 February 2013 agenda reports pack, Item 10, Pages 75 to 96 at <http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=6131&Ver=4>.
- 1.2 The Council agreed that, in addition to an Annual Treasury Report reviewing the year as a whole, an interim and two other (quarterly) reports would be submitted to Cabinet reviewing the Treasury Management Strategy. This is an interim report covering the period from 1 April 2013 to 30 September 2013.

## **2. Main Considerations for the Cabinet**

- 2.1 This report reviews management actions in relation to:
- a) the PrIs and TrIs originally set for the year and the position at the 30 September 2013;
  - b) other treasury management actions during the period; and
  - c) the approved Annual Investment Strategy.

### **Review of Prudential and Treasury Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy for 2013-14**

- 2.2 The following is a review of the position on the key prudential and treasury indicators for the three months to 30 September 2013.
- 2.3 A full detailed listing of the indicators required by the CIPFA Prudential Code, Treasury Management Code and Treasury Management Guidance Notes are given in Appendix 1.

## Key Prudential Indicators

### Prl 2 – Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

	<b>2012-13 Actual Outturn</b>	<b>2013-14 Original Estimate</b>	<b>2013-14 Revised Estimate</b>
General Fund	6.5%	6.6%	<b>6.3%</b>
Housing Revenue Account	15.9%	18.7%	15.3%

- 2.4 The General Fund revised estimate for 2013-14 (highlighted above) is marginally lower than the original due to a reduction in financing cost estimates and a fall in expected investment income. It is also slightly lower than the figure reported in the last quarterly report, reflecting a change in the anticipated level of investment income and a slight increase in the minimum revenue provision required for capital expenditure.

### Prl 4 – Gross Borrowing compared to Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

	<b>2012-13 Actual Outturn £ million</b>	<b>2013-14 Original Estimate £ million</b>	<b>2013-14 Revised Estimate £ million</b>
CFR – General Fund	341.9	404.4	<b>402.1</b>
CFR – HRA	122.6	122.6	122.6
Gross Borrowing – General Fund	245.2	275.2	245.2
Gross Borrowing – HRA	118.8	118.8	118.8
<b>CFR not funded by gross borrowing – General Fund</b>	<b>96.7</b>	<b>129.2</b>	<b>156.9</b>
<b>CFR not funded by gross borrowing – HRA</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>

- 2.5 Prl 4 measures the so called “Golden Rule” which ensures that over the medium term net borrowing is only for capital purposes.
- 2.6 The 2013-14 revised estimate for CFR – General Fund (as highlighted) is slightly higher than the figure reported in the last quarterly report due to a small change in the expected level of capital expenditure for the year.
- 2.7 The main reasons for the difference in the 2013-14 revised and original estimates are:
- a decrease in the capital financing requirement;
  - a revision of the external borrowing requirement. It is anticipated that no borrowing will be taken in 2013-14, any increase in capital financing requirement being funded (internally) by a reduction in investments. Using ‘internal cash’, where it is available, to fund increases in CFR, through cash flow management, rather than borrowing externally reduces the cost of borrowing (from 4.5%, externally to 0.80%, internally); and
  - the revision of the estimated level of short term investments likely to be held at the end of 2013-14.

## Key Treasury Management Indicators within the Prudential Code

- 2.8 The Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit, as approved by Council in February as part of the Treasury Management Strategy, detailed below, are control limits and do not compare with actual borrowing figures as capital funding requirements are not automatically taken as loans and may be funded from cash balances.

### Trl 1 – Authorised Limit for External Debt

<b>Authorised Limit</b>	<b>2013-14 £ million</b>	<b>2014-15 £ million</b>	<b>2015-16 £ million</b>
Borrowing – General Fund	436.0	450.3	451.9
Borrowing – HRA	123.2	123.2	123.2
Other Long Term Liabilities	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>559.4</b>	<b>573.7</b>	<b>575.3</b>

- 2.9 The External Debt limit includes a margin above the Operational Boundary to allow for any unusual or unpredicted cash movements. The limit has not been exceeded in the reporting period.

### Trl 2 – Operational Boundary for External Debt

<b>Operational Boundary</b>	<b>2013-14 £ million</b>	<b>2014-15 £ million</b>	<b>2015-16 £ million</b>
Borrowing – General Fund	425.3	439.3	440.9
Borrowing – HRA	123.2	123.2	123.2
Other Long Term Liabilities	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>548.7</b>	<b>562.7</b>	<b>564.3</b>

- 2.10 The Operational Boundary is set at a limit that facilitates the funding of the Council's entire financing requirement through loans, if this was the most cost effective approach. The limit was set to anticipate expected expenditure and has not been exceeded during the reporting period (maximum borrowing during the period was £364.0 million).

### Trl 3 – External Debt

	<b>31/03/13 Actual £ million</b>	<b>30/09/13 Actual £ million</b>	<b>31/03/14 Expected £ million</b>
Borrowing – General Fund	245.2	245.2	245.2
Borrowing – HRA	118.8	118.8	118.8
<b>Total Borrowing</b>	<b>364.0</b>	<b>364.0</b>	<b>364.0</b>
Other Long Term Liabilities	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>364.2</b>	<b>364.2</b>	<b>364.2</b>

- 2.11 Trl 3 shows the gross External Debt outstanding, both long-term loans and temporary borrowing. No long term loans were repaid in the first six months of 2013-14. The figure for actual borrowing at 31 March 2013 is stated at the amount that reflects actual outstanding external borrowing at the end of 2012-13 (i.e. excluding accounting adjustments, such as accrued interest and effective interest rate adjustments).

## **Key Treasury Management Indicators within the Treasury Management Code**

### Trl 6 – Principal Sums invested for periods of longer than 364 days

- 2.12 This Trl is now covered by the Annual Investment Strategy for 2013-14, which set a limit of £30 million. During the first six months of 2013-14 no cost effective investments have been identified. The Authority however holds a number of on-call deposit accounts and money market funds, which offer both an attractive interest rate and instant access for flexibility of cash management.

### Trl 7 - Local Prudential Indicator

- 2.13 In addition to the main maturity indicators it was agreed as part of the Treasury Management Strategy, approved by Council in February, that no more than 15% of long term loans should fall due for repayment within any one financial year. The maximum in any one year is currently 8% (£30 million) in 2013-14. However, this almost entirely relates to the treatment of LOBO loans, which are shown as maturing at the date on which the lender has the right to increase the interest rate (the “call date”). Indications are that interest rates will not move upwards until September 2016 and it is, therefore, unlikely that these loans will be “called” in 2013-14. A summary maturity profile is shown in Appendix 2.

## **Other Debt Management Issues**

### Debt Rescheduling

- 2.14 No opportunities to reschedule PWLB debt have been identified during the period, mainly because of the high level of premiums payable for early repayment of debt. This is continually monitored and any opportunities to reschedule cost effectively will be considered, should they arise.

### Cash Surpluses and Deficits

#### *Short Term Surpluses and Deficits*

- 2.15 Any short term cash surpluses or deficits have been managed through temporary deposits or loans, respectively. Temporary deposits outstanding at 30 September 2013 amounted to £114.2 million, including outstanding Icelandic bank deposits, shown at their current estimated recoverable amounts, as detailed in Appendix 3.

#### *Icelandic Banks*

- 2.16 The Council received further repayments from the Administrators of Heritable Bank (the fourteenth) of £1.510 million on 23 August 2013 and Landsbanki Winding-up Board (the fourth) of £0.156 million on 12 September 2013.
- 2.17 The Heritable payment represents a relatively significant repayment, when compared with previous ones (with the exception of the first two interim dividends received in July 2009 and December 2009, which were also, each, in excess of £1 million) and takes the total recovered from Heritable Bank to, nearly, £8.5 million (representing approximately 94% of the £9 million invested in 2008).

- 2.18 According to the latest progress report from the Administrators (September 2013), the amount and timing of any further distributions in respect of Heritable are dependent upon the conclusion of certain legal proceedings and there will be no further distributions until these are completed. However, as indications have been that the Council will eventually recover up to 95% of the original investment, any further distributions are likely to be relatively small (a further distribution of say 1% would result in a recovery of around £90,000).
- 2.19 The Landsbanki payment brings the total recovered to £1.675 million (approx, 54% of the £3 million invested plus interest agreed by the Winding-up Board).
- 2.20 The Landsbanki Winding-up Board have not indicated when they will be making the next distribution. However, latest indications from the Local Government Association/Bevan Brittan suggest that there could be a further distribution later this year.
- 2.21 In summary, the Council has, to date, received about £10.2 million of the original £12 million invested in Icelandic banks.
- 2.22 Indications are that the Council will recover about 95% of its deposits with Heritable (as stated above) and 100% of its deposit in Landsbanki. However, repayments from Landsbanki are likely to be completed over several more years and are subject to fluctuations in foreign exchange rates and the Icelandic capital controls, which currently remain in place.

#### *Longer Term Cash Balances*

- 2.23 Interest rate movements in the period have not provided many opportunities for an increased return by longer term investment of the more permanent cash surpluses, such as reserves and balances. However, the availability of any appropriate longer term investment opportunities is continually monitored, such as those that offer “special tranche rates”.
- 2.24 Rates have remained relatively low and this is, therefore, reflected in rates available, including the “special tranche rate” investments. Details of investments outstanding are shown in Appendix 3.
- 2.25 Despite interest rates remaining low generally, the interest rate on the Council’s 35 day notice call account with Svenska has recently been increased from 0.40% to 0.55%. This compares favourably with other rates currently available (in the market and through the Council’s money market funds, with a maximum rate, currently, of 0.43%).

#### **Review of Investment Strategy**

- 2.26 The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2013-14, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy, was approved by the Council on 12 February 2013. It sets out the Council’s investment priorities as being:
- a) Security of capital;
  - b) Liquidity; and
  - c) Yield.



- 2.27 The Council will also aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity. In the current economic climate it is considered appropriate to keep investments short term to cover cash flow needs but also to seek out value available in higher rates in periods up to 12 months with highly credit rated financial institutions, using Sector's suggested creditworthiness approach, including sovereign credit rating and Credit Default Swap (CDS) overlay information provided by Sector.
- 2.28 All investments have been conducted within the agreed Annual Investment Strategy and made only to authorised lenders within the Council's high credit quality policy.
- 2.29 Credit ratings are incorporated within the approved Investment Strategy as detailed within the Treasury Management Strategy 2013-14 and the current ratings have been shown against the deposits outstanding in Appendix 3.

### **3. Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

- 3.1 None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

### **4. Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

- 4.1 None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

### **5. Risks Assessment and Financial Implications**

- 5.1 All investment, with the exception of those paced in money market funds (within which all underlying investments at fixed interest rates and, based on experience, do not currently fluctuate significantly) has been at fixed rates during the period.
- 5.2 The Council's current average interest rate on long term debt is 3.787%, which, according to the latest available information, remains one of the lowest rates amongst UK local authorities.
- 5.3 The primary treasury management risks to which the Council is exposed are adverse movements in interest rates and the credit risk of counterparties.
- 5.4 Investment counterparty risk is controlled by assessing and monitoring the credit risk of borrowers as authorised by the Annual Investment Strategy.

### **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1 None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

### **7. Public Health Implications**

- 7.1 None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

### **8. Safeguarding Considerations**

- 8.1 None have been identified as arising directly from this report.

## **9. Options Considered**

- 9.1 The recent market improvement leading to a small increases in interest rates, although in its relatively early stages, has enabled the Council to increase potential optimum rates with longer dated deposits (between three months and one year), whilst ensuring and maintaining the security and liquidity of investments.
- 9.2 The availability of any longer term opportunities, such as those offered by “special tranche rates” is continually monitored.
- 9.3 Interest rates are expected to remain low for the short to medium term, with current indications that there will not be a rise in the Bank Rate until September 2016 (Source: Sector Treasury Services Limited – U.K. Interest Rate Forecasts 23 September 2013). Consequently, longer term investments are continually assessed and considered. This has led to the continued placement of funds with Lloyds Banking Group, which at the moment offers one of the most competitive interest rates.
- 9.4 PWLB rates were monitored for opportunities to take out loans in advance of need. However, as there was no immediate necessity to borrow and forward borrowing would incur a ‘cost of carry’, no loans were taken out during this reporting period.

## **10. Conclusion**

- 10.1 Cabinet is asked to note the report.

Michael Hudson  
Service Director, Finance

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### **Background Papers**

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report: NONE

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16  
Appendix 2 Summary of Long Term Borrowing 1 April 2013 – 30 September 2013  
Appendix 3 Summary of Temporary Loans and Deposits 1 April 2013 – 30 September 2013

**Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16**

**Prudential Indicators**

**Prl 1 – Capital Expenditure**

1. The table below shows the revised figures for capital expenditure based on the current capital approved budget.

	<b>2012-13 Actual Outturn</b>	<b>2013-14 Original Estimate</b>	<b>2013-14 Revised Estimate</b>	<b>2013-14 Actual To date 30/09/13</b>
	<b>£ million</b>	<b>£ million</b>	<b>£ million</b>	<b>£ million</b>
General Fund	67.3	132.1	<b>137.0</b>	<b>32.4</b>
HRA	4.5	10.2	<b>11.1</b>	<b>2.1</b>

2. The revised estimate for 2013-14 (as highlighted) is higher than the original estimate predominantly because the budgets for large capital schemes were reprogrammed from 2012-13 to reflect the expenditure profile. The revised estimates have also been amended to reflect the most up to date capital spending expectations.
3. The actual capital spends (as highlighted) have increased from those reported in the June quarterly report because of additional capital expenditure incurred between the end of June 2013 and the end of September 2013.
4. The Capital Programme is monitored closely throughout the year and progress on the programme is reported to the Cabinet Capital Asset Committee (CCAC). The next report due to be taken to members is the Month 7 2013/2014 report, which will be taken to CCAC on 17 December 2013.

**Prl 2 – Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream**

	<b>2012-13 Actual Outturn</b>	<b>2013-14 Original Estimate</b>	<b>2013-14 Revised Estimate</b>
General Fund	6.5%	6.6%	<b>6.3%</b>
Housing Revenue Account	15.9%	18.7%	15.3%

The General Fund revised estimate for 2013-14 (highlighted above) is marginally lower than the original due to a reduction in financing cost estimates and a fall in expected investment income. It is also slightly lower than the figure reported in the last quarterly report, reflecting a change in the anticipated level of investment income and a slight increase in the minimum revenue provision required for capital expenditure. The HRA revised estimate is lower than the original due to lower borrowing costs.

**Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16**

Prl 3 – Estimate of Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions on the Council Tax

5. This indicator is only relevant at budget setting time and for 2013-14 was calculated as being £-8.99.

Prl 4 – Gross Borrowing compared to Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

	<b>2012-13 Actual Outturn £ million</b>	<b>2013-14 Original Estimate £ million</b>	<b>2013-14 Revised Estimate £ million</b>
CFR – General Fund	341.9	404.4	<b>402.1</b>
CFR – HRA	122.6	122.6	122.6
Gross Borrowing – General Fund	245.2	275.2	245.2
Gross Borrowing – HRA	118.8	118.8	118.8
<b>CFR not funded by gross borrowing – General Fund</b>	<b>96.7</b>	<b>129.2</b>	<b>156.9</b>
<b>CFR not funded by gross borrowing – HRA</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>

6. Prl 4 measures the so called “Golden Rule” which ensures that over the medium term net borrowing is only for capital purposes.
7. CFR not funded by gross borrowing represents capital expenditure met by internal borrowing, i.e. funded from the Council’s own funds, such as reserves and balances and working capital (an accounting term for the difference, at a point in time, between what the Council owes and what is owed to it).
8. Internal borrowing is cheaper than external borrowing, however, the ability to borrow internally will depend upon the sufficiency of reserves, balances and working capital. The sufficiency needs to be monitored and projections carried out to indicate where any adverse movements are expected, that could jeopardise the Council’s cash flow position, making it necessary to replace internal with external borrowing.
9. The 2013-14 revised estimate for CFR – General Fund (as highlighted) is slightly higher than the figure reported in the last quarterly report due to a small change in the expected level of capital expenditure for the year.
10. The main reason for the difference in the 2013-14 revised and original estimates are:
- a) a decrease in the capital financing requirement;
  - b) a revision of the external borrowing requirement. It is anticipated that no borrowing will be taken in 2013-14, any increase in capital financing requirement being funded (internally) by a reduction in investments. Using ‘internal cash’, where it is available, to fund increases in CFR,

**Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16**

through cash flow management, rather than borrowing externally reduces the cost of borrowing (from 4.5%, externally to 0.80%, internally); and

- c) the revision of the estimated level of short term investments likely to be held at the end of 2013-14.

**Pr1 5 – Compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services**

- 11. All actions have been compliant with the CIPFA Code of Practice.

**Treasury Management Indicators within the Prudential Code**

- 12. The Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit, as approved by Council in February as part of the Treasury Management Strategy, detailed below are control limits and do not compare with actual borrowing figures as capital funding requirements are not automatically taken as loans and may be funded from cash balances.

**Tr1 1 – Authorised Limit for External Debt**

<b>Authorised Limit</b>	<b>2013-14 £ million</b>	<b>2014-15 £ million</b>	<b>2015-16 £ million</b>
Borrowing – General Fund	436.0	450.3	451.9
Borrowing – HRA	123.2	123.2	123.2
Other Long Term Liabilities	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>559.4</b>	<b>573.7</b>	<b>575.3</b>

- 13. The External Debt limit includes a margin above the Operational Boundary to allow for any unusual or unpredicted cash movements. The limit has not been exceeded in the reporting period.

**Tr1 2 – Operational Boundary for External Debt**

<b>Operational Boundary</b>	<b>2013-14 £ million</b>	<b>2014-15 £ million</b>	<b>2015-16 £ million</b>
Borrowing – General Fund	425.3	439.3	440.9
Borrowing – HRA	123.2	123.2	123.2
Other Long Term Liabilities	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>548.7</b>	<b>562.7</b>	<b>564.3</b>

- 14. The Operational Boundary is set at a limit that facilitates the funding of the Council's entire financing requirement through loans, if this was the most cost effective approach. The limit was set to anticipate expected expenditure and has not been exceeded during the reporting period (maximum borrowing during the period was £364.0 million).

**Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16**

Trl 3 – External Debt

	<b>31/03/13 Actual £ million</b>	<b>30/09/13 Actual £ million</b>	<b>31/03/14 Expected £ million</b>
Borrowing – General Fund	245.2	245.2	245.2
Borrowing – HRA	118.8	118.8	118.8
<b>Total Borrowing</b>	<b>364.0</b>	<b>364.0</b>	<b>364.0</b>
Other Long Term Liabilities	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>364.2</b>	<b>364.2</b>	<b>364.2</b>

15. Trl 3 shows the gross External Debt outstanding, both long-term loans and temporary borrowing. No long term loans were repaid in the first six months of 2013-14. The figure for actual borrowing at 31 March 2013 is stated at the amount that reflects actual outstanding external borrowing at the end of 2012-13 (i.e. excluding accounting adjustments, such as accrued interest and effective interest rate adjustments).

**Treasury Management Indicators within the Treasury Management Code**

Trl 4a – Upper Limit on Fixed Interest Rate Exposures

**The Council's upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure for the period 2013-14 to 2015-16 is 100% of net outstanding principal sums.**

Trl 4b – Upper Limit on Variable Interest Rate Exposures

**The Council's upper limit for variable interest rate exposure is 25% for 2013-14, 35% for 2014-15 and 40% for 2015-16 of net outstanding principal sums.**

16. Options for borrowing during the period were considered, however, (mainly) due to the premium that would be incurred on the early repayment of debt and the desire to maintain the Council's relatively low average borrowing rate, no new borrowing was taken.

Trl 5 – Upper & Lower Limits on the Maturity Structure of Borrowing

<b>Limits on the Maturity Structure of Borrowing</b>	<b>Upper Limit</b>	<b>Lower Limit</b>	<b>Position at 31/09/13</b>
Maturing Period:			
- under 12 months	15%	0%	8%
- 12 months and within 24 months	15%	0%	6%
- 2 years and within 5 years	45%	0%	14%
- 5 years and within 10 years	75%	0%	10%
- 10 years and above	100%	0%	62%

**Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2013-14, 2014-15 & 2015-16**

17. All borrowing is within the upper limits agreed as part of the Treasury Management Strategy.
18. The table above shows that the actual maturity structure is within the agreed limits.
19. No long term borrowing has been taken during the period. If interest rates are favourable and an opportunity and exists to take further borrowing this year we will look to match borrowing with this maturity structure.

Trl 6 – Principal Sums invested for periods of longer than 364 days

20. This Prl is now covered by the Annual Investment Strategy for 2013-14, which set a limit of £30 million, as approved by Council in February as part of the Treasury Management Strategy. During the first six months of 2013-14 no cost effective investments have been identified. The Authority however holds a number of money market funds and an on-call deposit account, which offer competitive interest rates and instant access for flexibility of cash management.

Trl 7 - Local Prudential Indicator

21. In addition to the main maturity indicators it was agreed in the approved Treasury Management Strategy that no more than 15% of long term loans should fall due for repayment within any one financial year. The maximum in any one year is currently 8% (£30 million) in 2013-14. However, the entire £30 million relates to LOBO loans and, with interest rates likely to remain low for some time, the lenders are unlikely to exercise their option to increase the interest rates and, therefore, the Council is unlikely to repay the loans in 2013-14. A summary maturity profile is shown in Appendix 2.

**SUMMARY OF LONG TERM BORROWING 1 APRIL 2013 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**Loans Raised During the Period**

Date Raised	Lender	Amount (£m)	Type	Interest rate (%)	Maturity date	No. of years
No Loans were raised during the period						
<b>Total</b>		0.000				

Average period to maturity (years) 0.00

Average interest rate (%) 0.00

\* Loans taken to restructure \*\* Loans taken for purchases instead of leasing

**Maturity Profile at 30 September 2013**

Year	Amount (£m)					% age		Average rate (%)	
	PWLB	Market Loans (LOBO)		Total		Earliest Repay	Contracted Maturity	Earliest Repay	Contracted Maturity
		Earliest Repay	Contracted Maturity	Earliest Repay	Contracted Maturity				
(A)	(B)	(C)	(A)+(B)	(A)+(C)					
1 to 5 years	46.041	56.000	-	102.041	46.041	28.0	12.6	3.919	3.501
6 to 15 years	84.933	5.000	-	89.933	84.933	24.7	23.3	2.786	2.873
16 to 25 years	93.500	-	-	93.500	93.500	25.7	25.7	3.837	3.836
26 to 50 years	78.500	-	45.000	78.500	123.500	21.6	33.9	4.618	4.418
Over 50 years	-	-	16.000	-	16.000	-	4.4	-	4.298
<b>Totals</b>	302.974	61.000	61.000	363.974	363.974	100.0	100.0	3.787	3.787

Average period to maturity (years)

17.81

CIPFAs Guidance Notes on Treasury Management in the Public Services recommends that the Treasury Management Strategy Reports include LOBO (Lender Option Borrower Option) loans at the earliest date on which the lender can require payment, deemed to be the next 'call date'. At that date the lender may choose to increase the interest rate and the borrower (the Council) may accept the new rate or repay the loan (under the current approved Treasury Management Strategy, the Council would repay the loan). Whether or not the lender chooses to exercise their right to alter the interest rate will depend on market conditions (interest rates). Current market conditions, where interest rates are predicted to remain low for some considerable time, indicate that it is highly unlikely that lenders will call the loans in the immediate future.

The alternative method of determining the maturity profile of LOBO loans, based on contracted maturity dates, was used in the 2012-13 year end outturn.

The table above includes the maturity profiles using both the earliest date on which the lender can require payment and the contracted maturity dates.

The average period to maturity (in years) for loans as highlighted above, has increased very slightly as a result of the maturity of some annuity loans (with short maturity periods) "dropping off" of the loan profile.



**SUMMARY OF TEMPORARY LOANS AND DEPOSITS 1 APRIL 2013 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**Deposits Outstanding at 30 September 2013**

<b>Borrower</b>	<b>Amount £m</b>	<b>Terms</b>	<b>Interest Rate</b>	<b>Sector Credit Rating at 30/09/2013</b>
HSBC Bank Plc - Treasury	4.800	No fixed maturity date	0.20	Orange - 12 Months
National Australia Bank	8.000	Fixed to 15-Jan-14	0.48	Orange - 12 Months
Barclays Bank	8.000	Fixed to 16-Oct-13	0.45	Green - 3 Months
Lloyds TSB Bank	5.000	Fixed to 11-Aug-14	1.01	Blue - 12 Months
Ulster Bank Ltd	8.000	Fixed to 16-Sep-13	0.92	Blue - 12 Months
Nationwide Building Society	8.000	Fixed to 16-Oct-13	0.52	Green - 3 Months
National Bank of Abu Dhabi	8.000	Fixed to 15-Jan-14	0.55	Red - 6 Months
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	8.000	Fixed to 30-Oct-13	0.40	Orange - 12 Months
Development Bank of Singapore (DBS)	8.000	Fixed to 11-Oct-13	0.43	Purple - 24 Months
Australia & New Zealand Bank	8.000	Fixed to 11-Oct-13	0.40	Orange - 12 Months
Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce	8.000	Fixed to 16-Oct-13	0.45	Orange - 12 Months
Overseas Chineses Banking Corporation	8.000	Fixed to 16-Oct-13	0.45	Purple - 24 Months
Bank of Nova Scotia	8.000	Fixed to 15-Nov-13	0.38	Orange - 12 Months
Svenska Handelsbanken AB	7.028	No fixed maturity date	0.55	Orange - 12 Months
BlackRock Money Market Fund	0.001	No fixed maturity date	0.31	AAA
J P Morgan Money Market Fund	0.005	No fixed maturity date	0.28	AAA
Prime Rate Money Market Fund	1.188	No fixed maturity date	0.42	AAA
Ignis Money Market Fund	6.928	No fixed maturity date	0.43	AAA
Heritable Bank	0.002	Est Recoverable Amount	6.00	N/A
Heritable Bank	0.001	Est Recoverable Amount	6.00	N/A
Heritable Bank	0.002	Est Recoverable Amount	6.00	N/A
Heritable Bank	0.001	Est Recoverable Amount	5.42	N/A
Landsbanki	1.201	Est Recoverable Amount	6.10	N/A
Landsbanki	0.021	Est Recoverable Amount	4.17	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>114.178</b>			

Outstanding deposits with Icelandic Banks are shown at the estimated recoverable amount, which takes account of the latest estimated impairments and all repayments received to date. Apart from the final entry, the interest rates are the original rates. The last entry reflects the amount paid out in ISK (Icelandic Krona) which is being held in an interest bearing escrow account in Iceland and, as recommended by CIPFA, accounted for as a 'new' investment.

Investments held at the end of the second quarter of 2013-14 (as highlighted) are £46.840 million higher than they were at 31st March 2013. This is due to the timing of cash flows, particularly in respect of the change in the collection of National Non-domestic (Business) Rates (NNDR) under Business Rates Retention, which came into effect from 1 April 2013. Investments held have also decreased by £23.598 million between the end of June 2013 as reported in the previous quarters report, and the end of September 2013. This is because of changes in cash (out) flows (i.e. increased payments) resulting in the use of maturing funds previously held as investments.

**SUMMARY OF TEMPORARY LOANS AND DEPOSITS 1 APRIL 2013 – 30 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**Transactions During the Period**

Type	Balance 1 Apr 13 £m	Raised		Repaid		Balance 30 Sept 13 £m	Interest Variance * High/Low(%)
		Value £m	No.	Value £m	No.		
<b>Temporary loans</b>							
- General	0.000	0.000	0	0.000	0	0.000	
Total	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.000</b>	
<b>Temporary deposits</b>							
- General	47.242	125.100	17	78.114	11	94.228	1.01/0.38
- HSBC Overnight	0.000	193.150	71	188.350	67	4.800	0.20/0.20
- Call Accounts	0.017	14.911	10	7.900	1	7.028	0.80/0.55
- Money Market Funds	20.079	246.573	57	258.530	65	8.122	0.43/0.28
Total	<b>67.338</b>	<b>579.734</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>532.894</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>114.178</b>	

\* Interest variance is the highest/lowest interest rate for transactions during the period.

\* In terms of general deposits, the high of 1.01% was obtained in August 2013 on a 12 month deposit.

**General deposits include impaired Icelandic investments less any repayments that have been received, to date.**

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**21 November 2013**

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**Subject: Community Contraception and Sexual Health Services Procurement**

**Cabinet member: Cllr Keith Humphries – Public Health and Public Protection**

**Key Decision: No**

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## **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to:

Inform Members of the intention to undertake a tendering process of the community contraceptive and sexual health service currently provided by Sirona Care and Health.

This contract transferred without competitive tender when the PCT split commissioning and provider services in 2011 and is now coming to an end of the transition agreement and therefore needs to be put out for competitive tender.

## **Proposals**

That Cabinet:

- agree in principle to the proposal to undertake a tendering process to provide community contraception and sexual health services for 5 (3+2) year agreement;
- delegate authority of consideration of a procurement options paper to determine the appropriate procurement route and execute the contracts resulting from this tendering activity to Maggie Rae, Corporate Director, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Public Health, Public Protection and Adult Care and Housing, the Solicitor to the Council and the Chief Financial Officer.

**Reason for Proposal**

As part of the Health and Social Care Act reforms, Wiltshire Council has a mandated responsibility to commission Open Access Sexual Health Services, to address the disease burden of sexually transmitted infections and reduce unintended pregnancy through the provision of a full range of contraceptive methods.

**Maggie Rae**  
**Corporate Director**

## Wiltshire Council

### Cabinet

21 November 2013

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**Subject:** Community Contraception and Sexual Health Services Procurement

**Cabinet member:** Cllr Keith Humphries – Public Health and Public Protection

**Key Decision:** No

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### Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to:

1. Update Members on the new mandated responsibility of Wiltshire Council to commission Open Access Sexual Health services.
2. To invite Members to agree to the proposed procurement of the Community Contraception and Sexual Health Services in Wiltshire.

### Background

3. *Liberating the NHS*, July 2010 and the Public Health White paper *Healthy Lives, Healthy People*, November 2010, signalled a significant change in the way in which health services are commissioned and the role that Public Health has to play in the commissioning of public health services in particular.
4. As part of the transfer of public health to the Local Authority, there were a number of services that became the responsibility of the Council, one of which was the mandated responsibility to commission Open Access Sexual Health Services.
5. Within this, the landscape has become somewhat fragmented with responsibilities for specific elements of sexual health commissioning being split between local authorities, Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and NHS England. These new responsibilities are outlined in table 1 overleaf:

**Table1: Sexual Health Commissioning Responsibilities**

<b>Local authorities will commission</b>	<b>Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) will commission</b>	<b>The NHS Commissioning Board will commission</b>
<p>Comprehensive sexual health services, including:</p> <p>Contraception over and above what is already in the GP contract</p> <p>Testing and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (excludes treatment of those with HIV)</p> <p>Sexual health advice, prevention and promotion</p>	<p>Abortion services</p> <p>Sterilisation and vasectomy</p> <p>Gynaecology</p>	<p>Contraception services commissioned through the GP contract</p> <p>HIV treatment and care</p> <p>Sexual Assault Referral Centres</p>

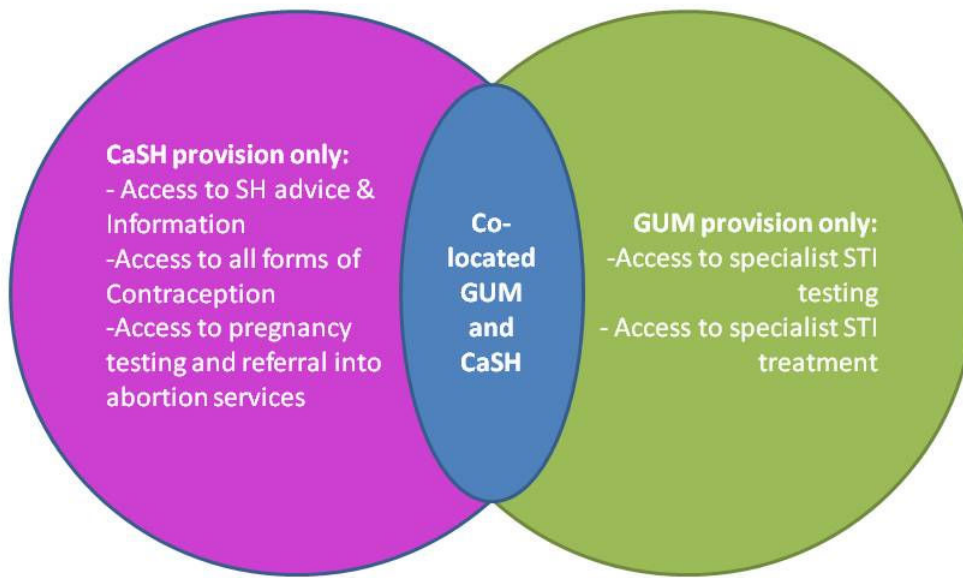
6. The commissioning of specialist sexual health services, including young people's sexual health and teenage pregnancy services, outreach, HIV prevention and sexual health promotion, services in schools, colleges and pharmacies is also included in the range of services that local authority is now mandated to commission.

### **Sexual Health Services in Wiltshire**

7. There are three levels of service provision within sexual health, covering primary care, enhanced primary care and specialist services.
8. **Primary care and enhanced primary care** – In Wiltshire, GP practices provide a range of sexual health services as part of their contract including access to some methods of contraception and access to some STI testing and treatment. Some practices are also commissioned to provide enhanced contraceptive provision, enabling women to get better access to the full range of contraception Wiltshire wide.
9. **Specialist services** – this includes Genitourinary Medicine Clinic (GUM) and Community Contraception and Sexual Health (CaSH) services.
10. GUM services are commissioned through Great Western Hospital (GWH), Salisbury Foundation Trust (SFT) and the Royal United Hospital (RUH). However, individuals are able to access any GUM services in the country and these are cross charged to local authorities based on the person's residence.
11. The Community CaSH services are currently commissioned from Sirona Health. Wiltshire patients can access their Bath based sites and they also

provide five community CaSH clinics in Wiltshire, which are based in; Trowbridge, Melksham, Chippenham, Calne and Devizes. (The provider arm of NHS BaNES transferred to Sirona Health, a social enterprise on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011).

12. The current model in Wiltshire is outlined in the diagram below. We have a mixture of CaSH only provision, GUM only provision and co-located GUM and CaSH provision.

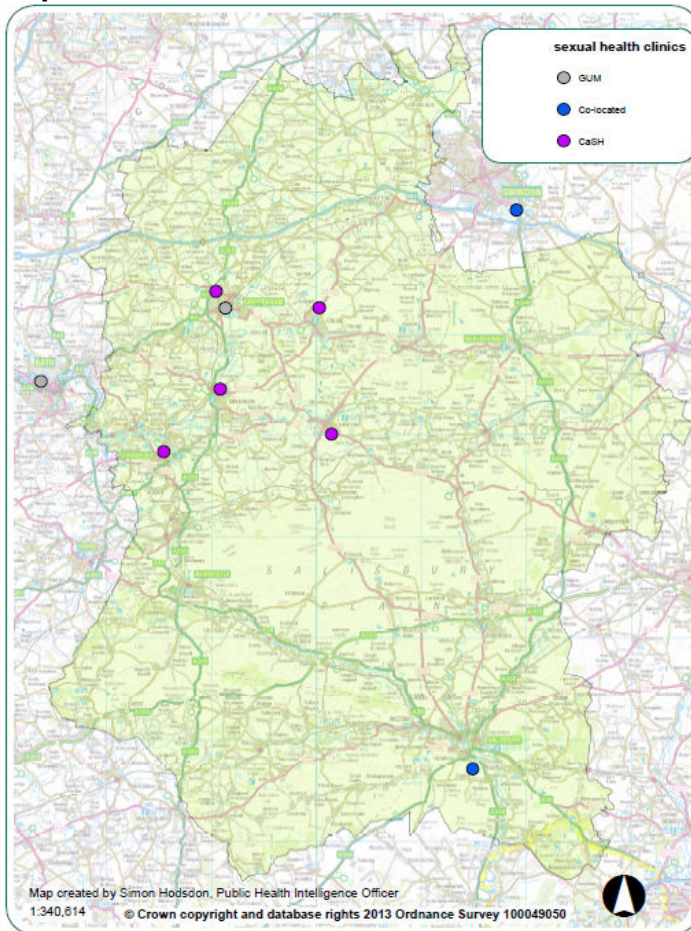


13. This procurement will be for the CaSH element of specialist services only.

### **Key Issues with Current CaSH Service Provision**

14. There is inequity in the distribution of CaSH services across Wiltshire (see map 1 overleaf), with the majority of specialist provision being located in the North.

## Map 1: Current Distribution of sexual Health Services



15. There was no competitive tender process when the CaSH services were transferred to Sirona in 2011.

16. The contract with Sirona ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

### Main Considerations for the Council

17. The procurement of CaSH services in Wiltshire is required to meet our mandatory responsibilities to commission Open Access Sexual Health services.

18. Furthermore, due to the current inequitable distribution of services and the fact that the contract is due to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014, there is greater need to re-commission CaSH services to ensure that the sexual health needs of Wiltshire Residents are met.

19. CaSH services in Wiltshire are well used; during 2012/13 there were 6,301 appointments attended in CaSH clinics. This could be improved further with the provision of more integrated sexual health service provision and a better geographic spread.



20. Wiltshire residents experience better sexual health outcomes compared to South West England and England averages (see Appendix A for further information on sexual health outcomes), but there are key high risk groups; including:

- Women
- Young people
- Men who have sex with men
- People from African communities
- People living with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)
- Sex workers
- Victims of trafficking
- Victims of sexual and domestic violence and abuse
- Prisoners

21. These groups are at greater risk of poor sexual health outcomes, therefore the provision of improved geographic spread and better integration will enable improved access and timely assessment, treatment and advice.

### **Environmental and climate change considerations**

22. The proposal to deliver CaSH services closer to home will reduce the environmental impact of people needing to travel long distances, frequently outside of the County, for often brief appointments.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

23. The current location of services leads to an inequity of access. Better geographic placement will enable easier access to specialist services for more vulnerable people, especially young people who rely more on public transport.

24. The service specification will state that providers will be expected to demonstrate the use of local resources and provision of services which take account of relevant Wiltshire Council policies.

25. An Equality Impact Assessment will be conducted as part of the procurement process and the findings will be shared for consideration by the officer with delegated responsibility to execute the contract. Once the new service is in place a further EIA will be undertaken and registered with Wiltshire Council.

### **Risk Assessment**

26. The establishment of integrated CaSH services will improve service delivery and enable easier access to a full range of sexual and reproductive health services. This is crucial for tackling the burden of poor health outcomes associated with poor sexual health.

27. A more visible service will help with awareness campaigns in targeted at higher risk populations, including young people.

28. This proposal is supported by a sexual health service review, the findings of needs assessments undertaken with targeted populations, the sexual health peer review and the national support team visit.
29. The contract with Sirona will expire on 31 March 2014, a contract extension has been agreed to 30 September 2014 to allow sufficient time to undertake the procurement process.

### **Financial Implications**

30. Funding for sexual health transferred from NHS Wiltshire as part of the Public Health ring-fenced budget to Wiltshire Council along with commissioning responsibilities for sexual health.
31. The payment for sexual health services currently follows two payment streams. Contraception and non complex sexual health (CaSH) is paid under block contract, GUM is paid by payment by result (PBR) i.e. per activity.
32. The block contract funding will be transferred to the new provider; this is a contract value of 285,000 per annum.

### **Legal Implications**

33. Adequate measures will be taken to ensure sufficient procurement capacity and expertise to ensure a robust procurement process is carried out to mitigate against any potential for legal challenge to the process.
34. Because of the service type and its value this procurement will be regulated by the less strict regime of the Public Contracts Regulations ("PCR"). This means that although much of the PCR procedures will not be applicable (such as placing notices in the OJEU) the advertisement of the procurement will have to be sufficiently widespread to alert the likely market of healthcare providers to this service requirement. If this is done and the tendering procedure itself is fair then there is little or no risk of challenge on procurement grounds and as well the Council's "VFM" duty will be satisfied.

### **Public Health Implications**

35. Sexual health is one of the mandatory services that transferred with public health to the council in April 2013. In addition, this addresses the key issues regarding the current system and equity of access to high quality services, which has been highlighted in the JSA for Health and Wellbeing.

### **Safeguarding Considerations**

36. Safeguarding is at the heart of sexual health and as such there are strong processes in place to ensure that service providers identify those at risk

of harm and / or exploitation and that such concerns are reported appropriately. Public Health work closely with the both adult safeguarding teams and children's safeguarding and child protection teams to ensure that any risks, concerns or incidents are escalated in line with council protocols.

### **Options considered**

37. The Wiltshire Sexual Health Partnership considered several options including the development of existing services. However the contract for the Community CaSH services expired on the 31 March 2013 and has been signed off for an additional year until March 31 2014 and the absence of a transparent tendering process may lead to challenge. It is also an opportunity to commission a provider who can help implement all the changes towards service and access improvement.

### **Conclusions**

38. Significant progress has been made in Wiltshire to reduce the burden of ill health associated with sexual ill health and unintended pregnancy and many more initiatives have been put in place to improve sexual health, be positive about sexuality, identify and respond to sexual exploitation.

39. At the core of good sexual health is an exemplary sexual health service, which promotes safer sex and healthy relationships, identifies and treats STIs as early as possible and has in place robust processes for partner notification to reduce further transmission.

40. The procurement of improved CaSH services is crucial to our continued efforts to improve sexual health outcomes and reduce the burden of sexual ill health.

### **Proposal**

41. That Cabinet note the importance of easy access services for reducing the burden of sexual ill health and agree in principle to the proposal to undertake a tendering process to provide an integrated CaSH service.

42. That Cabinet delegate authority of consideration of a procurement options paper to the Cabinet Member and Corporate Director.

43. That Cabinet delegate authority to execute the contracts resulting from this tendering activity to Maggie Rae, Corporate Director, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, Solicitor to the Council and the Chief Financial Officer.

**Name of Director;** Maggie Rae

**Designation:** Corporate Director, Public Health, Adult Care and Housing

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1 July 2013

### Glossary of terms

Co located clinics	Where GUM and CaSH clinics are available at the same venue but operate as separate clinics. Patients will require two appointments if they require a contraceptive service and testing for symptomatic sexually transmitted infections
CaSH	Contraceptive and Sexual Health services
Contraception and Sexual Health (CaSH)	Non symptomatic testing, provision of all forms of contraception
Genitourinary Medicine (GUM)	Sexual health for complex or symptomatic conditions, specialist care for long term infections and HIV
GUM	Genitourinary Medicine
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Disease
LARC	Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives
Open Access Clinics	GUM and CaSH work alongside each other and patients can access the full range of services in one appointment.
PCT	Primary Care Trust
RUH	Royal United Hospital
SFT	Salisbury Foundation Trust
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection

## **Appendix A – Sexual Health in Wiltshire**

### **1. Key Stats:**

#### **STIs:**

- There were 2,344 acute sexually transmitted infections in Wiltshire in 2012 which is 494.2 per 100,000 people and represents a 3% increase since 2010 when there were 2,270 infections.
- Wiltshire's rate is much lower than the England rate (803.7 per 100,000), the South of England rate (666.6 per 100,000) and the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire area rate (661.9 per 100,000).

#### **HIV:**

- In 2010, 69,424 HIV – diagnosed persons (all ages) were seen for HIV care in the UK, representing an increase of 6% on the number seen in 2001.
- Overall in Wiltshire 182 people accessed HIV treatment and care in 2011.
- At the UK level in 2010 51% of persons living with diagnosed HIV were men and women infected via heterosexual sex which compares to 56% in Wiltshire. In the UK overall 44% were men infected through sex between men compared to 39% in Wiltshire.
- It is estimated that, nationally, 25% of people living with HIV are unaware they are infected.
- The percentage in Wiltshire diagnosed with HIV at a late stage, which means they had a CD4 count of 500 or less and were likely to be diagnosed after the point at which treatment should have begun has fallen from 55% in 2008 to 45% in 2010. Although the decrease is positive, the health outcomes for people diagnosed with HIV at a late stage is much worse.

#### **Abortions:**

- In 2011/12 there were 1108 terminations of pregnancy accessed by Wiltshire Women.
- 31% of these procedures were second or subsequent procedures, meaning that 31% of women had undergone at least one previous abortion in her lifetime.
- 52% of teenage conceptions end in abortion. 79.1% of abortions in Wiltshire are completed under 9 weeks of pregnancy, early abortions are viewed as decreasing physical and emotional impact on the woman.

#### **Young people and sexual health:**

- Nationally young people, make up 12% of the population, but are responsible for 60% of new diagnoses STI infection.

#### **Chlamydia Screening:**

- During 2011/2012, 11,108 Chlamydia tests were carried out in the 15-24 years old age range, this is 21.8% of the targeted population.
- 8% of young people taking a Chlamydia test are diagnosed with positive Chlamydia infection

- Chlamydia has few symptoms and therefore opportunistic testing can help identify the infection. Left untreated, the infection can lead to infertility in genders, painful swelling, pelvic inflammatory disease in women and a form of arthritis in men.
- To improve access to testing and to identify possible infections earlier, young people aged 15-24 years that are tested for Chlamydia, are now also screened for Gonorrhoea. This has been in place since November 2012.

#### **Teenage Pregnancy:**

- The current teenage pregnancy rate is 22.4 per 1,000 females aged 15-17 years, (2011/2012) this fell from 24.2 per 1,000 in 2010/11. There has been an overall reduction of 30.2% on the baseline year 1998 when the rate was 32.1 per 1,000 females aged 15-17 years.

#### **Service Use:**

- During 2012/13 there were 10,892 appointments attended by Wiltshire residents in GUM and 6,301 appointments attended in CaSH clinics.
- There is no data available for the number of sexual health appointments in primary care but there were 106,403 sessions in primary care issuing some form of Contraception.

## **2. Cost Efficiencies for Sexual Health Services:**

#### **Contraception:**

- For every £1 spent on contraception we save £11 in costs associated with unintended pregnancy
- If half of women currently using the oral contraceptive pill switched to long-acting reversible contraception, the proportion using long-acting contraception would increase from about 5% to 20%, and estimated savings of over £9 million would be expected in the South West. About half of this gain occurs in women aged 15 to 24.

#### **HIV:**

- A person diagnosed with HIV late will cost 4x more than someone diagnosed early - The typical cost of treatment is £7,000 per year this can be as high as £30,000 per year in patients with late diagnosis.
- The typical cost over a lifetime for HIV treatment is £300,000 – prevention and reduction of onward transmission is therefore crucial.

#### **Chlamydia:**

- £100m a year is spent on tubal factor infertility resulting from undiagnosed Chlamydia
- Increased infection rates alone could place an additional cumulative burden of £314 million on the NHS by 2020 and could see incidences of Chlamydia account for 40% of NHS treatment costs for STIs between 2013-2020.

**Wiltshire Council**

**Cabinet**

**21 November 2013**

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**Subject:** High Level Specification and Tender Evaluation criteria for future Waste Management and Collection Services

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Toby Sturgis – Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property and Waste

**Key Decision:** Yes

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## **Executive Summary**

The report outlines that the specification documents for each of the contract lots will be based upon the current service but highlights some key departures. These reflect the work done by the Waste Management Service and views expressed by the Waste Task Group.

Two options for price/quality ratios are set out in the report, one proposed by the Waste Management Service and the other by the Waste Task Group.

Criteria for the development of the quality element of the tender evaluation models are set out in the report with some examples of more detailed criteria contained in Appendix 1 to the report.

## **Proposals**

**That Cabinet resolves to:**

- (i) Develop service specifications based upon the key principles set out in this report.**
- (ii) Develop tender evaluation models based upon the price/quality ratios set out in paragraph 13 of this report.**
- (iii) Use the criteria contained in the report to develop the quality element of the tender evaluation models.**

**Reason for Proposals**

The decisions to be taken in respect of these proposals are key to informing the detailed development of tender documentation and tender evaluation models prior to issuing invitations to tender.

**Tracy Carter**  
**Associate Director, Environment and Leisure**



## Wiltshire Council

### Cabinet

21 November 2013

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**Subject:** High Level Specification and Tender Evaluation criteria for future Waste Management and Collection Services

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Toby Sturgis – Strategic Planning, Development Management, Strategic Housing, Property and Waste

**Key Decision:** Yes

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### Purpose of Report

1. To seek approval from Cabinet:
  - (i) To develop service specifications based upon the key principles outlined in this report.
  - (ii) To use the criteria contained in this report to develop the quality element of tender evaluation models.
  - (iii) To use the proposed price/quality ratios to develop the tender evaluation models.

### Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. Delivery of sustainable waste management services is key to creating stronger, more resilient communities. This makes a significant contribution to ensuring that everyone in Wiltshire lives in a high quality environment. Procurement of these services will enable us to continue to increase recycling and reduce our carbon footprint.

### Main Considerations for the Council

#### Specification

3. The details of the specification documents, one for each contract lot, are still being developed with the aim of issuing with the contract documentation and invitations to tender in January 2014. However, the key points of departure from the current service, and the reasons behind these, are set out in the following paragraphs.
4. A key change to the specification would be the addition of mixed rigid plastics (tubs e.g. margarine, trays e.g. meat, ready meals and bakery goods, and pots e.g. yogurt) to supplement the current kerbside collection of plastic bottles only. The EU revised Waste Framework Directive and The Waste (England and

Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 include a requirement by 2015 to maintain separate collections of at least the following materials from the household waste stream: paper, metal, plastic and glass. At present Wiltshire Council collects plastic bottles only at the kerbside and other rigid plastics at the household recycling centres. The Council would not be able to provide a collection of a wider range of plastics from 1 January 2015. However, this addition to the specification would enable the Council to demonstrate that this service would be provided from 1 August 2016 when it would be possible to do so due to the commencement of new contracts. This should result in a reduction in landfill tax paid by the Council and an increase in recycling. However, there may be some additional processing cost and it is unclear what the net cost implications would be. Proposals would also be invited for the collection of other additional materials from the kerbside. These would be tetra-packs, batteries, and small household electrical items, for which there is currently only provision at the household recycling centres.

5. There should be greater provision for the Council to derive financial benefit from the sale of recyclable materials collected. This should generate an increased annual financial return to the Council providing the market value of a range of recyclable materials remains positive. An income sharing arrangement would allow for the contractor(s) to also derive added financial benefit providing an appropriate incentive to improve the quality and quantity of recyclable materials at each stage in the chain. This approach was also highlighted by the Waste Task Group.
6. Open-book accounting should be adopted as a general principle in each contract lot. This would ensure that additional costs arising from, for example, annual increases in population and households are only passed onto the Council once contractors have been able to demonstrate they have incurred additional expense, for example, the purchase of a new vehicle and hiring of a new crew. This would provide greater transparency and reduce the risk to the Council of making payments when the contractor has not incurred additional costs. It would also enable the Council to benefit from any unforeseen additional revenue when considered with a contractual mechanism for sharing such income which is again supported by the Waste Task Group. This approach is consistent with general practice within the industry.
7. The Waste Task Group believes that the proximity principle should be referred to wherever relevant. This should enhance sustainability by reducing carbon emissions as a result of fewer vehicle miles travelled in moving waste and recyclable materials to a disposal or processing point. The Task Group also believes that the specification should not just focus on existing sites but that additional sites should be sought. There is no requirement for individual authorities to be self sufficient in terms of waste infrastructure and transporting waste to existing infrastructure to deliver the best environmental solution should not be considered a barrier. Any proposals for new sites would be evaluated on their merits, including the cost of their development.
8. Another key specification issue would be the potential change in kerbside collection system. Cabinet in July determined that tenders should be invited from suppliers for both a kerbside sort (black box) model and a co-mingled (wheeled bin) solution. For the co-mingled collection the specification would include a

requirement for the separate collection of glass. It is proposed that the specification documents contain a high-level description of both approaches and invite contractors to submit detailed method statements to accompany tendered prices. Constraints would also be included, such as a preference for the retention of existing bins and boxes. It is unclear what impact use of the different collection systems would have on costs. Cabinet agreed to seek prices for both models as there was insufficient robust evidence to allow a business case to be constructed to demonstrate which approach provides greater value for money. The Council's approach to seeking tenders for both collection methods is designed to help mitigate the risks of failing to ensure adequate quality recyclables for the reprocessing market, leading to legal challenge. This approach was lent further support by recent correspondence from Lord de Mauley referred to in paragraph 23 below.

9. Currently, different performance standards exist for the time taken to deliver new bins depending on geographical area. It is proposed that the standard be harmonised to the higher performing figure of 10 working days and this standard should be specified as the minimum acceptable performance within the new contract from 2016. Proposals for further improvement in delivery time to residents would then be sought during the life of the new contract. This should improve residents' satisfaction with the service. There is unlikely to be a cost implication as the service has demonstrated this enhanced performance is already possible. The Council would seek to harmonise performance before contract commencement in 2016.
10. Responsibility for vehicle and container procurement is split between the Council and its contractors at present. It is proposed that responsibility would rest wholly with the contractors in future. At worst, this change should be cost-neutral. Given the large quantities of vehicles and containers purchased by many of the larger suppliers in the market, it is possible that this change would result in cost reductions as the Council should benefit from tenders priced to reflect contractors' greater buying power.
11. Responsibility would remain with the Council for communications and for working with residents on reducing the amount of waste they generate and to encourage them to re-use and recycle as much as possible. The Council has a good track record on communications. This approach would ensure consistency which would be particularly important in the case of multiple contractors. It would be difficult to foresee the resource requirements for the communications associated with a service change. As such, it would be difficult for contractors to price at the time of tender.
12. The service is currently working with colleagues from ICT to develop a business case for the systems which would be required to support service delivery and improvement. This would include the use of the My Wiltshire application for residents to report issues such as missed bins using their smartphones.

### Evaluation Model

13. Cabinet is invited to consider the appropriate price/quality ratio for each of the contract lots. Proposals are contained within the table below:

<b>Contract Lot</b>	<b>Suggested Price/Quality ratio</b>
1 (recycling and transfer facilities)	80/20
2 (management of Council owned HRCs)	70/30
3 (garden waste composting)	80/20
4 (landfill/disposal)	80/20
5 (collection)	70/30

An 80/20 ratio means that 80% of the evaluation would be based on the tendered rates and 20% on the quality of the proposals. A higher weighting of 30% for quality has been proposed for lot 2 and lot 5 because of the increased level of contact with residents compared to the other lots.

14. An alternative proposal from the Waste Task Group is set out below:

<b>Contract Lot</b>	<b>Suggested Price/Quality ratio</b>
1 (recycling and transfer facilities)	40/60
2 (management of Council owned HRCs)	40/60
3 (garden waste composting)	50/50
4 (landfill/disposal)	35/65
5 (collection)	30/70

This proposal places a higher emphasis on the quality evaluation of submitted tenders, which reflects the Council's approach to delivering services. However, this should be balanced against the Council's reduction in funding from central government of £22 million over the next four years and the service pressures and inflation costs of all Council services of around £100 million over the same period. In placing a higher weighting on the price evaluation the Council can ensure a high quality service is retained by specifying its requirements. For example, the evaluation should not score contractors for proposing to provide clean and serviceable vehicles if the specification already requires this.

15. The proposed award sub-criteria against which quality would be evaluated are set out in the table below. Any final decisions regarding the use of qualitative sub-criteria will be determined by the service, prior to issuing the invitations to tender. Examples of the detail which would be considered against each of the proposed sub-criteria headings are contained in **Appendix 1**.

<b>MAIN SECTION</b>	<b>SUB-SECTIONS</b>
Management Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mobilisation</li><li>• Partnership Working</li><li>• Staff and Culture</li><li>• Asset Proposals</li></ul>

Systems and Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICT systems</li> <li>• System Interfaces</li> <li>• Processes</li> </ul>
Operations and Service Delivery Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Continuity</li> <li>• General Approach</li> <li>• Detailed Method Statements</li> </ul>
Customer Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints</li> <li>• Local Communities</li> <li>• Customer Care</li> </ul>
Performance, Innovation, and Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficiency Savings</li> <li>• Innovation in Service Delivery</li> <li>• Income and Profit Sharing</li> <li>• Performance and Key Performance Indicators</li> </ul>

## Background

16. On 1 April 2009 Wiltshire Council inherited four different waste collection services from the former district councils. Since 1 April 2012 a harmonised waste collection service has been in operation across the county. This comprises fortnightly collections of:
- (i) Residual waste (in a wheeled bin);
  - (ii) Plastic bottles and cardboard (co-mingled in a wheeled bin);
  - (iii) Paper, glass, cans, foil and textiles (kerbside sort in a black box);
  - (iv) Garden waste (opt-in, non-chargeable service in a wheeled bin).
17. The report to Cabinet on 6 November 2012 on Future Delivery of the Waste Management Service explained that there are no proposals to change the collection service or the materials that residents separate for recycling at present. However, the procurement process provides an opportunity to review these services and the way in which they are delivered. To inform this review the Wiltshire Council Waste Management Strategy 2012 was approved.
18. The Wiltshire Strategy highlights four guiding principles to pursue in order to achieve continuous service improvement. These guiding principles, together with related policies and targets, cover a wide range of sustainable waste management practices with the overall aim of managing more waste towards the top of the waste hierarchy and prioritising waste prevention, re-use, recycling and composting.
19. The key principles identified in the updated strategy are set out below:
- (i) Waste prevention and re-use - To provide advice, education and where possible incentives to encourage waste prevention and re-use by Wiltshire's residents. The Council will pursue a target of reducing waste after recycling and composting from 606 kilograms per household achieved in 2011-12 to 545 kilograms per household by 2015-16.

- (ii) Recycling and composting – To carry out the separate collection of recyclable and compostable waste materials from all accessible households, supported by comprehensive communications campaigns to encourage the use of these services by householders to achieve a recycling rate of 50% of household waste by 2014.
  - (iii) Further diversion from landfill – To recover energy or otherwise divert from landfill sufficient tonnage of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste in addition to that diverted by recycling and composting to achieve:
    - a landfill rate of 25% or less of total Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste by 2014
    - a landfill rate equivalent to less than 35% of the biodegradable municipal waste tonnage landfilled in 1995 by 2019-20.
  - (iv) Waste Treatment Capacity – To monitor available capacity for diversion of Local Authority Collected Municipal Waste from landfill and, subject to the requirements of planning policies and procedures, to support any additional proposals required to meet targets and policies for landfill reduction.
20. In the longer term, the Council will pursue the goal of zero untreated waste to landfill and reduction of the environmental impact of waste treatment, by continuous improvement to waste collection and treatment services.
21. The EU revised Waste Framework Directive and The Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 include a requirement by 2015 to maintain separate collections of at least the following materials from the household waste stream: paper, metal, plastic and glass. This requirement is reflected in the Wiltshire Council Waste Management Strategy. In respect of plastic, at present Wiltshire Council collects plastic bottles only at the kerbside and other rigid plastics at the household recycling centres. There is a requirement for the Council to provide a collection of a wider range of plastics beyond 2015. In recent years there have been significant developments in the technology available for sorting a wide range of plastics. This procurement process provides Wiltshire Council with the opportunity to extend the range of plastics collected at the kerbside, utilising the blue lidded bins, in order to comply with the requirements of the revised Waste Framework Directive.
22. At the meeting held on 23 July 2013 Cabinet resolved to:
- (i) Invite tenders for the delivery of the waste and recycling collection service (including the chargeable waste collection service) for two options:
    - to include provision of a co-mingled collection of dry recyclable material with separate collection of glass;
    - to include provision of a kerbside sort collection of dry recyclable material.

23. On 9 October 2013 Lord de Mauley, Parliamentary Under Secretary, Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs, wrote to various organisations asking that they remind local authorities of the effect of The Waste (England and Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 which transposed the requirements of the revised Waste Framework Directive. Extracts from the letter are set out below. From 1 January 2015 an establishment or undertaking which collects waste paper, metal, plastic or glass must do so by way of separate collection. These requirements apply where separate collection:

- (a) is necessary, in effect, to provide high quality recyclates; and
- (b) is technically, environmentally and economically practicable.

Where waste paper, metal, plastic or glass has been collected separately all reasonable steps must be taken to keep that stream separate from other waste streams wherever this is necessary to provide high quality recyclates.

24. Any local authorities considering new collection or disposal plans should take care to ensure that they are placing themselves in a position to fulfil their legal duties from 2015. This is particularly important for local authorities who may be considering moving away from separate collection, or including glass within a co-mingled stream. Local authorities should consult their own lawyers as necessary, and should keep a clear audit trail given the potential for legal challenge.

25. At the meeting held on 24 September 2013, Cabinet resolved to approve the extension of the contract with FCC Environment for waste and recycling collection in west Wiltshire until 31 July 2016.

26. The services to be delivered from 1 August 2016 largely reflect those provided today. However, to encourage competition within a changing market, services are being specified within five separate contract lots. This should generate from one to five principal suppliers (not including sub-contractors) delivering services from August 2016.

27. The services contained within each of the five lots are set out in **Appendix 2**. The lots are listed below.

Lot 1 management of recycling and transfer services

Lot 2 management of Council owned household recycling centres

Lot 3 garden waste composting services

Lot 4 treatment and disposal of residual waste

Lot 5 waste collection services

28. Cabinet has previously approved proceeding on the basis of four contract lots. Subsequent work identified that separating out the management of the nine household recycling centres owned by the Council would enhance the ability of smaller organisations, including those from the voluntary and community sector (VCS), to tender for this work. Increased opportunities for the VCS improve the Council's adherence to the requirements of the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012. This should enable greater emphasis on re-use of materials at household recycling centres. The management of these wastes would move

further up the hierarchy, which is consistent with the updated Waste Strategy approved by Cabinet in July. Re-use initiatives commonly involve smaller, more local organisations, particularly from the VCS, so this added emphasis should further stimulate this sector. This approach was supported by the Waste Task Group at the meeting held on 18 October 2013.

### **Safeguarding Implications**

29. There are no safeguarding implications arising directly from the proposals set out in this report.

### **Public Health Implications**

30. The Council retaining responsibility for communications and working with residents enables a stronger focus on the public health objectives set out in the Council's Business Plan. One example would be the role of food portion sizes in reducing obesity related health problems and minimising food waste.

### **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

31. There are no environmental and climate change considerations arising directly from this report. Such considerations would form part of the quality evaluation of submitted tenders.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

32. There is no equalities impact arising from the proposal.

### **Risk Assessment**

33. Failure to procure these services would impact on the Council's ability to comply with its statutory duties as a Waste Collection Authority and Waste Disposal Authority.

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

34. If the decision is not taken there would be delays to the procurement process which could impact on service delivery from 1 August 2016.

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

35. There is a risk of challenge to the Council should the decision be taken to change the collection system for recyclable materials. The approach outlined for inviting tenders for two models should minimise the risk.

### **Financial Implications**

36. There are no financial implications arising directly from the proposals. Work is ongoing to identify the true savings to the Council of outsourcing the collection service.



## **Legal Implications**

37. There are no legal implications arising directly from the proposals. In parallel with the development of the draft forms of contract that will be issued with the invitations to tender for each lot, deciding on the principles for service specification and tender evaluation is the next stage of the procurement process.

## **Options Considered**

38. The options for changes to the specification of the current service and for the ratios of price/quality for tender evaluation are set out in the body of the report.

## **Conclusions**

39. The next stage of the procurement process is the detailed development of tender documentation (including the contract documentation) for each lot and the tender evaluation models prior to issuing invitations to tender. The decisions to be taken in respect of these proposals are key to informing this work.

**Tracy Carter**  
**Associate Director, Environment and Leisure**

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1 November 2013

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

None

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Example Evaluation Criteria  
Appendix 2 Details of Contract Lots

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## Example Evaluation Criteria

MAIN SECTION	SUB-SECTIONS	EXAMPLE DETAIL
Management Arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilisation</li> <li>• Partnership Working</li> <li>• Staff and Culture</li> <li>• Asset Proposals</li> </ul>	<p>Detailed project plans incorporating Client requirements and split of responsibilities, TUPE and pension issues, data transfer</p> <p>Sub-contracting proposals, contract management and interface with Client, VCS/Social Value proposals</p> <p>Local management and experience, cultural fit with Behaviours Framework, training and development proposals, health and safety training</p> <p>Use of existing depots, approach to planning applications including contingency planning, vehicle acquisition</p>
Systems and Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICT systems</li> <li>• System Interfaces</li> <li>• Processes</li> <li>• My Wiltshire App</li> </ul>	<p>Asset management and other systems, detailed proposals for meeting capability requirements, transition planning from existing systems.</p> <p>Mobile IT, integration with Council IT platforms</p> <p>Financial/ordering/payment</p> <p>Residents' reporting system</p>

Operations and Service Delivery Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business Continuity</li> <li>• General Approach</li> <li>• Detailed Method Statements</li> </ul>	<p>Weather emergency and general contingency planning, interface with Council, flexible deployment of staff</p> <p>Understanding Council policies and requirements, programming and scheduling of staff and other assets (especially vehicles), environmental management</p> <p>(per lot), co-mingled method proposals, use of existing assets (especially bins), proposals to dispose of/treat residual waste</p>
Customer Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints</li> <li>• Local Communities</li> <li>• Customer Care</li> </ul>	<p>Company processes for dealing with escalated complaints</p> <p>Proposals to add value to local communities that help create distinct identity</p> <p>Systems, processes, and training and development to ensure all contact creates a positive impression and enhances the Council's reputation, service information available, especially by website</p>
Performance, Innovation, and Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efficiency Savings</li> <li>• Innovation in Service Delivery</li> <li>• Income and Profit Sharing</li> <li>• Performance and Key Performance Indicators</li> </ul>	<p>As a percentage or monetary value of annual contract value of lot, specific proposals to deliver without compromising service delivery</p> <p>Proposals for dedicated forum and governance arrangements, Client interface, method of delivery including system thinking reviews</p> <p>Detailed proposals, use of open-book accounting</p> <p>Proposals for meeting stated Client reporting requirements, proposals to provide information at local community level, proposals for addressing underperformance</p>

**Detail of Contract Lots****Lot 1 – management of recycling and transfer services**

- The provision and operation of waste and recycling transfer stations (WTS)
- The provision of MRF capacity (to include capacity for recovery of mixed plastic) with submissions to be invited for both:
  - the sorting of co-mingled dry recyclable material excluding glass (which will be processed as a separate stream)
  - the sorting of co-mingled plastic and the bulking of other dry recyclable materials collected from a kerbside sort operation
- The design, build and operation of two household recycling centres (HRC)
- Operation of mini recycling sites
- Treatment of wood waste
- Sale of recyclable materials (including dry recycling handled under lot 1 and, for the avoidance of doubt, excluding any materials handled under lots 2 – 5 and any garden waste collected under lot 1) including an income share with the Council.

**Lot 2 – management of Council-owned household recycling centres**

- The management and operation of nine Council-owned HRCs
- Ownership and sale of dry recycling materials (i.e. excluding garden waste) from these nine HRCs only including an income share with the Council

**Lot 3 – garden waste composting services**

- The provision and operation of a site or sites for composting of garden waste from kerbside collections of household garden waste and from HRCs (collected under lots 1 and 2)
- Sale of compost including an income share with the Council.

**Lot 4 – treatment and disposal of residual waste**

- Treatment and disposal of non-hazardous and inert residual waste (not suitable for treatment under the Council's contracts for EfW and MBT) from kerbside collections of residual household waste, collections of commercial residual waste, bulky household waste collections and HRC residual waste, including the use of exempt sites for inert materials
- Treatment and disposal of hazardous waste.
- Contractual option: management of closed landfill sites, including gas and water monitoring

**Lot 5 – waste collection services**

- Household (kerbside) recycling collections of glass, paper, cans, foil, textiles, mixed rigid plastic packaging with submissions to be invited for both:
  - a kerbside sort collection system using a kerbside box, except for mixed plastics collected in a wheeled bin requiring further separation
  - a co-mingled collection system (with glass kept separate)
- Household (kerbside) garden waste collections
- Household (kerbside) residual waste collections
- Household clinical waste collection and disposal
- Household bulky waste collections
- Container procurement, delivery, repair and retrieval
- Commercial waste and non-domestic household waste collections, including recycling options
- Sale of recyclable materials collected (including dry recycling handled under lot 5 and, for the avoidance of doubt, excluding any materials handled under lots 1-4 and garden waste collected under lot 5) including an income share with the Council.

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