

Wiltshire Council

Annual Council

17 May 2011

**Wiltshire Community Plan 2011-2026
(Sustainable Community Strategy)**

Summary

Under the requirements of Local Government reorganisation, Wiltshire Council is required to develop, in partnership, a revised sustainable community strategy for Wiltshire by 1 April 2011.

The new strategy, the Wiltshire Community Plan 2011-2026, has been developed through close joint working with around 100 organisations through the Wiltshire Assembly. This has resulted in an up-to-date and relevant shared vision for Wiltshire.

The plan includes:

- One vision – to build strong, resilient communities in Wiltshire
- Three priorities
 1. Creating an economy that is fit for the future
 2. Reducing disadvantage and inequalities
 3. Tackling the causes and effects of climate change
- Seventeen broad objectives linked to the priorities.

The Wiltshire Community Plan has been agreed by the Public Service Board, Wiltshire Assembly, Wiltshire Infrastructure Consortium and the Wiltshire Compact Board following a comprehensive process.

The Wiltshire Assembly now recommends that Wiltshire Council formally adopts the plan given that it is the responsible authority.

Proposal

The Wiltshire Assembly recommends that People, Places and Promises: The Wiltshire Community Plan 2011-2026 be formally adopted by Wiltshire Council as the new sustainable community strategy for Wiltshire.

Sue Redmond
Corporate Director, Community Services

**Wiltshire Community Plan 2011-2026
(Sustainable Community Strategy)**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report is presented to Council on behalf of the Wiltshire Assembly. It provides an overview of the processes undertaken to develop the Wiltshire Community Plan 2011-2026 and requests that councillors agree formal adoption of the document by Wiltshire Council.

2 Background

- 2.1 The former county council produced its first sustainable community strategy (SCS) in 2002, entitled "creating a county fit for our children". This was revised over the period 2006-7 and led to the production of the county council's second SCS, entitled "working together to create stronger and more sustainable communities" in September 2007. This is the current county-level SCS.
- 2.2 Under the requirements of local government reorganisation, Wiltshire Council is required to develop a revised SCS by 1 April 2011.
- 2.3 The new SCS has been developed through close working with organisations and individuals represented on the Wiltshire Assembly. The process has been co-ordinated by officers in the Communities, Libraries, Heritage and Arts section of the Department of Community Services. Feedback from town and parish councils, community area partnerships, councillors and members of the public was also received during a twelve-week formal consultation process between June and September 2010.
- 2.4 At the last conference on 30 October 2010, the Assembly agreed this as its medium-term partnership plan. Members of the Public Service Board and chairs of the key partnerships with VCS representation – Wiltshire Infrastructure Consortium, Wiltshire Assembly and Wiltshire Compact Board – have also given their formal approval and recommend that Wiltshire Council formally adopt it under its statutory role.
- 2.5 The document has now been finalised and is attached at Appendix one.

3. Main Considerations for the Council

3.1 People, Places and Promises: The Wiltshire Community Plan 2011-2026 ('the plan') is the new SCS for Wiltshire. It aims to map out what will need to be done in order to create a more sustainable and resilient future for the county over that period.

3.2 It is in keeping with government guidance¹ that states that the plan should contain a long-term vision based firmly on local needs and key priorities which may realistically be achieved in the medium term. The key elements of the Wiltshire Community Plan include:

One vision:

3.3 The overall direction that sets the tone for what we want Wiltshire to be like in 15 years time - to build strong, resilient communities in Wiltshire.

3.4 This was agreed by Wiltshire County Council and the former partnerships as part of the development of the last SCS.

Three priorities:

1. Creating an economy that is fit for the future
2. Reducing disadvantage and inequalities
3. Tackling the causes and effects of climate change.

3.5 These priorities are revised versions of those agreed by the Wiltshire Assembly in October 2009.

Seventeen objectives:

3.6 Identified as appropriate responses to the three main priorities. These were developed with reference to the Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA) and other documents. Although the objectives are grouped under the main priorities they are intended to be 'cross-cutting'. The table at Appendix two demonstrates how this is the case.

Development process

3.7 The development process of the plan was delivered in three stages:

- First Stage: Initial information gathering and analysis (October 2009-June 2010)

3.7.1 The strong evidence base for the plan included utilising existing and developing documents, such as:

- State of Wiltshire report
- South West report on rural deprivation
- Military civilian integration study

¹ Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities: Statutory Guidance

- Household and Place survey
- People's and Tomorrow's Voice results
- Wiltshire Assembly conference reports
- Area Boards issues database
- Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA)
- Community Area JSNAs
- Local economic assessment
- Community Safety Assessment
- Children and Young People's plan
- Local Development Framework (LDF).

3.7.2 Discussions with the Wiltshire Assembly, thematic partnerships, Wiltshire Coordinating Group, Public Service Board, Wiltshire Council services and others also supported the initial information gathering.

- Second Stage: Consultation (June 2010-September 2010)

3.7.3 The twelve-week formal period of consultation included discussions with thematic partnerships, area boards, local town and parishes, and statutory, voluntary and regional organisations.

3.7.4 The majority of responses from those above and around 600 individuals were received via an online snap survey. Another 100 were received directly by e-mail.

- Third Stage: Finalisation and adoption (November 2010-April 2011)

3.7.5 As a result of the consultation and further discussions, the final document has now been produced and agreed by the Wiltshire Assembly.

3.7.6 The Assembly now requests that Wiltshire Council, as the responsible authority, formally adopt the plan.

How will the plan be used?

3.8 The purpose of an SCS is to inform action planning within organisations and partnerships and provide a shared direction in doing so. In this time of financial constraints, political change and changes to local service delivery, it is more important than ever that it should be used as guidance to inform outcomes and provide direction for future working.

3.9 Actions linked to previous SCSs have been planned through thematic plans, organisational corporate/business plans and local community plans. It is intended that the plan will still be used in this way,

3.10 Decisions will be made over the coming months on changes to the partnership structures and therefore how action planning and delivery will develop. These discussions will take place within the Public Services Board.

4. Environmental and climate change considerations

- 4.1 Environmental sustainability has been strongly emphasised in the plan. This includes details of the current environmental features of Wiltshire, potential risks and opportunities and long term aims.
- 4.2 The third priority of the plan is tackling the causes and effects of climate change. There are also six environmentally specific objectives, which correspond with Wiltshire Council's long-term environmental agenda, in particular:
- The plan seeks to achieve a reduction in energy consumption through such initiatives as improved energy efficiency of buildings, more sustainable food production and more local energy schemes
 - The plan seeks to achieve a reduction in domestic, business and transport CO₂ emissions through encouraging reduction in cars on the road and a reduction in the amount of waste produced.
- 4.3 As a result of careful alignment of all the objectives with each of the priorities, no environmental risk has been identified.

5. Equalities impact of the proposal

- 5.1 Equalities are strongly emphasised in the plan. This is evidenced by the first priority (creating an economy that is fit for the future) and more specifically the second priority (reducing disadvantage and inequalities). There are also five objectives related to each of these priorities.
- 5.2 Supported by the corporate equality and inclusion team and partner organisations, the plan;
- seeks to tackle inequalities and promote cohesive communities through working with specific groups and providing equal life chances to all;
 - does not assume or discriminate
 - promotes equality and good relations between different groups
 - seeks to learn and improve services.

6. Risk Assessment

- 6.1 The risks of adopting the plan are fewer and less consequential than the risks associated with not.
- 6.2 If the plan is adopted, potential risks include:
- An inflexible approach to achieving the objectives, particularly in response to external influences
 - Alterations to partnership structures not coinciding with identified needs

- Organisations and local areas not using the objectives as the basis for their own plans and work practices.

6.3 If the plan is **not** adopted, potential risks include:

- Non-compliance with the statutory duty to develop a plan on behalf of the county
- Non-compliance with recommendations of regional and national organisations for local joint working towards a more sustainable future
- Inconsistencies in partnership planning, in particular with regards to decisions on resource constraints
- Dissatisfaction amongst partner organisations that an agreed partnership plan has been rejected by the lead authority, potentially negatively impacting on future joint working.

7. **Financial Implications**

7.1 The development of the plan has resulted in minimal costs as a result of limiting duplication through joining up its development with other projects such as the Local Development Framework, the Joint Strategic Assessment and thematic partnership plans.

7.2 In line with the wider purpose of organisational strategic planning, the very purpose of the plan is to provide direction to support organisations to achieve goals and improve performance with the most effective use of resources. By aligning the medium-long term goals of Wiltshire Council with our partners, joint working can be more purposeful and efficient.

8. **Legal Implications**

8.1 It is a statutory duty for all local authorities to prepare a SCS. This duty states that it should contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.

8.2 As part of local government reorganisation, government imposed the revision of the SCS to be produced for the new Wiltshire authority by 1 April 2011.

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Background Papers:

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 People, Places and Promises: The Wiltshire Community Plan
2011-2026

Appendix 2 How the objectives support the priorities