

## Councillors Briefing Note

### No. 130

**Service :** Public Health and Public Protection, Safer Communities

**Further Enquiries to:** Jenny Thomson or Jo McClay , Public Protection Managers

**Date Prepared:** January, 2013  
434291

**Direct Line:** (01225) 716684 or (01722)

#### **Horse and Pig DNA in Meat Products**

**From: Maggie Rae, Corporate Director and Councillor Keith Humphries, Cabinet Member**

There is much media coverage this morning regarding this issue. As yet Wiltshire Council's Public Protection Service has not received any instruction from the Food Standards Agency, London directing us to take action on this issue. The FSA (Ireland) have acted swiftly to identify affected product, retailers and implicated meat processing plants. **They stress there is no health risk associated with these findings.**

The key information to date is as follows:

- The Republic of Ireland's food safety authority (FSAI) has reported survey findings of horse DNA in burgers and meat products which were on sale in Ireland.
- The survey comprised: 27 beef burger products with best-before dates from last June to March 2014, with 10 of the 27 products - 37% - testing positive for horse DNA and 85% testing positive for pig DNA.
- 31 beef meal products such as cottage pie, beef curry pie and lasagne were tested, with 21 found to be positive for pig DNA. All were negative for horsemeat.
- 19 salami products were tested but showed no signs of horse DNA. The FSAI analysis also found traces of horse DNA in batches of raw ingredients, including some imported from the Netherlands and Spain.
- DNA tests found horse in the following products: Tesco Everyday Value Beef Burgers, 29.1%; Tesco Beef Quarter Pounders, 0.1%; Oakhurst Beef Burgers in Aldi, 0.3%; Moordale Quarter Pounders in Lidl, 0.1%; Flamehouse Chargrilled Quarter Pounders in Dunnes Stores, 0.1%; two varieties of Iceland Quarter Pounders, 0.1%.
- The burgers had been on sale in Tesco and Iceland in the UK and Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland they were on sale in Dunnes Stores, Lidl and Aldi. **Both Tesco and Iceland here in the UK immediately withdrew from sale all products from the implicated supplier.**

- The FSAI said the meat came from two processing plants in Ireland, Liffey Meats and Silvercrest Foods, and the Dalepak Hambleton plant in Yorkshire. Silvercrest Foods and Dalepak claim never to have bought or traded in horse product and have launched an investigation into two continental European third party suppliers.
- Irish government vets are carrying out investigations at the implicated meat processing plants.
- The chief executive of the FSAI, Professor Alan Reilly, said "while the findings posed no risk to public health, they did raise some concerns. There may be a plausible explanation for the presence of pig DNA in these products due to the fact that meat from different animals is processed in the same meat plants. There is no clear explanation at this time for the presence of horse DNA in products emanating from meat plants that do not use horsemeat in their production process. For some religious groups or people who abstain from eating pig meat, the presence of traces of pig DNA is unacceptable."
- A further update will be circulated should the FSA London issue an instruction for local authorities here to act.

**Further information:**

**<http://www.fsai.ie/content.aspx?id=11879&terms=horse+meat> or contact Jenny Thomson or Jo McClay , Public Protection Managers on 01225 716684 or 01722 434291**

## Councillors Briefing Note

### No. 131

**Service :** Economy and Enterprise

**Further Enquiries to:** Alistair Cunningham

**Date Prepared:** January, 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 713203

### Wiltshire Core Strategy Next Steps

The next steps for the Wiltshire Core Strategy have now been communicated by the Planning Inspector, Andrew Seaman BA (Hons) MA MRTPI.

#### Pre-hearing meeting

The Inspector has requested a pre-hearing meeting on the 28 February. This meeting will allow the Inspector to formally publish the matters to be debated at the forthcoming hearing sessions. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for procedural and administrative matters to be explained and discussed, together with the form and content of the hearings and the anticipated timetable. Prior to the meeting, the Inspectorate will write to all those who submitted representations on the Core strategy. The Inspector will take into account the representations submitted on the Core Strategy as far as they relate to soundness considerations and it is likely that a number of informal debates will take place on the principal matters identified by the Inspector, these are termed Hearing Sessions.

#### Examination in Public Hearing Sessions

The inspector has also proposed that the Hearing Sessions will commence in early May 2013 – duration and start date to be confirmed following the pre-hearing meeting, but likely to last five weeks with a break for half term.

The purpose of the Examination in Public (EiP) is to **consider if the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) complies with the legal requirements and is 'sound'**. The Inspector assesses the whole document for legal compliance and soundness – this means dealing with the main issues which go to the heart of the DPD, and not getting involved unnecessarily with the details of the plan.

Hearing sessions are based on the Inspector's definition of matters and issues, and are not driven by the representations. The sessions will be inquisitorial, with the Inspector probing the issues as opposed to an adversarial approach. Those who have sought changes to the DPD and signalled a wish to be heard must be invited to the hearings. If essential, additional parties who did not ask to attend, may be invited by the Inspector to contribute specialist expertise and knowledge.

#### Report

The Planning Inspectorate aim to submit a draft report to the Council in a timely manner after the close of the Sessions. Within 3 months seems reasonable estimate based on other cases, which would be end of September/Early October.

#### **Final steps**

If the Inspector recommends **modifications**, these will be subject to a period of consultation prior to the adoption period.

Should the Inspector find the plan sound then the Council can move to **adoption** which requires Full Council agreement. Once adopted, the Council is obliged to take decisions in accordance with the policies of the plan. On the current timetable, adoption is expected for end 2013

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 132

**Department:** Development Services

**Further Enquiries to:**

Brad Fleet- Service Director

**Date Prepared:** January 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 713169

#### **Changes to national planning rules to allow the change of use of some offices to residential**

On 24<sup>th</sup> January the Secretary of State announced that later this Spring the planning rules on 'change of use' would be amended to introduce permitted development rights for certain types of offices to change to residential without the need for planning permission.

#### **What will these permitted development rights actually allow?**

They will permit change of use from B1(a)\* offices to C3\*\* residential.

This is subject to a 'prior approval' process where an authority can object but only on grounds of:

- significant transport and highway impacts
- development in safety hazard zones, areas of high flood risk and land contamination

The permitted development rights will only cover change of use: any associated physical development which currently requires a planning application will continue to need one.

A proposed change from commercial to residential use that does not benefit from the new permitted development rights (e.g. where it cannot satisfy the prior approval requirements) will continue to require a planning application.

*\*A B1(a) office includes any office **other** than: - Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional services (not health or medical services) and betting offices.*

*Essentially, it applies to any office which is not regularly visited by members of the public*

*\*\* A C3 residential use means use as a dwelling house but would exclude any form of institutional/hotel/nursing home type residential use*

#### **Exemptions?**

The new rights will initially be time-limited for a period of three years. Alongside the new permitted development rights it was announced that local authorities would be given an opportunity to seek an exemption for specific parts of their locality. The Government has made it very clear, however, that exemptions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, where local authorities demonstrate clearly that the introduction of these new permitted development rights in a particular area will lead to:

- A. the loss of a nationally significant area of economic activity  
or
- B. substantial adverse economic consequences at the local authority level which are not offset by the positive benefits the new rights would bring

A copy of the written ministerial statement which also outlines a number of other proposals can be viewed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/change-of-use-promoting-regeneration> At the time of writing there is no specific information available on these other proposals.

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 133

**Department:** Public Protection

**Further Enquiries to:**  
Rachel Kent or Gary Tomsett

**Date Prepared:** January 2013

**Direct Line:** 01380 826321

#### **Air Quality – Frequently asked questions for Members**

In response to recent Member and public enquiries this briefing note has been produced to inform Councillors of commonly asked questions surrounding air quality in Wiltshire. Many different officers of the council and Councillors have been attending air quality briefings, community groups and area board meetings. Many similar questions and 'myths' are being asked about air quality, so it was felt necessary to produce a list of our responses which can be included on our website or given out as an information leaflet.

### **Are diffusion tubes an accurate way of measuring air pollution Levels?**

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Diffusion tubes are a convenient means of measuring many air pollutants including nitrogen dioxide; they are small and unobtrusive and, unlike large pollution monitoring stations can be placed virtually anywhere. They are cheap compared with pollution monitoring stations so we are able to distribute them more widely. They are however not as accurate as the pollution sophisticated monitoring stations. The tubes are exposed for a period of a month and the 'raw' results are considered to be +/- 20% accurate- commonly they over estimate nitrogen dioxide levels. Each pollution monitoring station has three diffusion tubes close to the air intake for quality assurance purposes. This means we can ratify our diffusion tube data against the accurate data produced by the monitoring station and produce annual figures that are more meaningful. For this reason we only release annual monitoring data when it has been properly scrutinised and quality assured. All monitoring is undertaken in accordance with DEFRA guidance.

### **Can you monitor air pollution near my house?**

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We will always consider requests for new monitoring sites and will be happy to discuss this with you. Wiltshire Council reviews all of our nitrogen dioxide diffusion tube monitoring locations annually.

## Where is air pollution monitored in Wiltshire?

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We currently have over 90 sites monitoring nitrogen dioxide with passive diffusion tubes. In addition we have 3 automatic nitrogen dioxide monitors and 3 automatic particulate monitors. Locations are reported on in our annual reports to DEFRA  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/communityandliving/publicprotection/pollutionandnoise/airandwaterpollution/airquality/airqualityreportsandsummaries.htm>

## If monitoring equipment shows a high level of nitrogen dioxide does this mean the whole town is equally affected?

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No, not necessarily. For example in 2011 there were 9 diffusion tubes located around Bradford on Avon and only 2 showed exceedances. It should also be borne in mind that we move diffusion tubes around to build a picture of pollutant levels and may cluster diffusion tubes in order to get a idea of the extent of an area affected by exceedances. A large number of tubes with high readings does not mean pollutant levels are increasing, it can mean we are building a better picture of air quality in a particular area.

## Why are there some gaps in the data?

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Gaps in the data (either traffic or air quality) occur usually as a result of a breakdown in the monitoring equipment or planned maintenance of the equipment. We try to keep the equipment in good repair and in operation as much as possible. Any faults are repaired as soon as possible.

## If nitrogen dioxide levels are high at the roadside does it mean they are high at nearby houses?

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Not necessarily. Levels of nitrogen dioxide fall quite rapidly with distance from the roadside. For the mathematically minded there is a formula for calculating this. For example if the level is  $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  at the roadside, at a front door 5m away the level would be  $26.5\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

## Have there been any improvements in air quality in Wiltshire?

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Nitrogen dioxide levels across the county have showed some decrease. In 2003 four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) were declared in Salisbury. In 2005 the Salisbury Transport Plan 1 was adopted as the Air Quality Action Plan for the city. The introduction of park and ride schemes, combined with smart traffic management reduced the amount of traffic entering the city with a subsequent improvement in air quality.

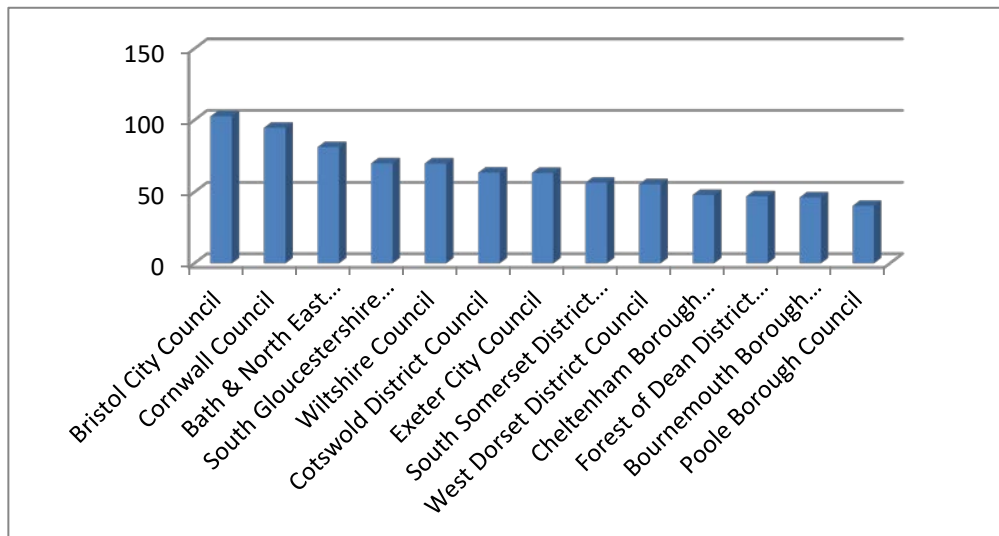
Whilst a small number of locations show some increase in  $\text{NO}_2$  there is an improving trend in  $\text{NO}_2$  levels at most locations.

## Does Bradford On Avon have the worst pollution levels in the country?

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No. The highest levels in Wiltshire have been recorded on a relatively short stretch of Masons Lane in Bradford on Avon. The graph below shows levels in other towns and cities in the south west

## Highest nitrogen dioxide readings from diffusion tubes in 2010 within the South West



## Can Wiltshire Council close roads if pollutant levels become excessive?

No. There have been no exceedances of the hourly nitrogen dioxide limit of  $200\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  within Wiltshire. In addition there are no legal powers contained in the local Air Quality Management Regime to impose road closures. However highway improvement schemes could alter any aspect of road usage as part of an air quality action plan.

## Why is Wiltshire Council not involving local people in working to reduce air quality problems?

There are currently 7 Air Quality Management Areas in Wiltshire and we are in the process of either reviewing the existing plans or developing new action plans. If action planning is to be a success it needs the input and support of the local community from each of the areas involved.

Wiltshire Council's vision is to create stronger and more resilient communities. We want to encourage and support local communities to get involved and work with us to strengthen their ability to deal with local challenges. The community can utilise local knowledge and links with other community groups and projects that are going on within the community.

Air Quality working groups that report to their local Area Board have been set up in each area to address air quality. The composition of the groups varies according to the aspirations of each of the community areas involved. Approaches taken have varied considerably, however they all have the common goal of improving air quality. There is already a lot of work being undertaken by communities. For example, Bradford on Avon have a Lorry watch scheme and have developed Active Travel Maps to encourage alternative means of transport to the private car.

This is very much a living process and each community group is at a different stage in the process. Where projects are identified that require funding we will submit bids to DEFRA or the EU life Fund.



## Does air pollution affect health?

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Yes it can. Air pollution has a range of effects on health. However, air pollution in the UK does not rise to levels at which people need to make major changes to their habits to avoid exposure; nobody need fear going outdoors. It is known that, when levels of air pollutants rise, adults suffering from heart conditions, and adults and children with lung conditions, are at increased risk of becoming ill and needing treatment. Only a minority of those who suffer from these conditions are likely to be affected and it is not possible to predict in advance who will be affected. Some people are aware that air pollution affects their health: adults and children with asthma may notice that they need to increase their use of inhaled reliever medication on days when levels of air pollution are higher than average. Defra publish an Air Pollution Index which provides information on air quality and practical advice for those concerned about potential effects. This can be accessed via the link below. <http://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/daq?view=no2#pollutant>

## Does pollution from nitrogen dioxide cause asthma?

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In 2010, the Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution (COMEAP) reviewed all available evidence and up-dated it's expert advice on the links between asthma and air pollution. The Committee concluded:

- "i. Evidence from studies comparing communities (i.e. at a city or administrative area level) suggests that the induction of asthma does not appear to be associated, at a population level, with levels of air pollutants.*
- ii. Evidence from studies on traffic-related air pollution suggests that it is possible that air pollution plays a part in the induction of asthma in some individuals who live near busy roads, particularly roads carrying high numbers of heavy goods vehicles.*
- iii. Our examination of the mechanistic evidence bearing on the possible interaction between exposure to air pollutants and the induction of asthma leads us to think that a causal explanation for conclusion (ii) above is plausible.*
- iv. The contribution of exposure to air pollutants to the induction of asthma in those in whom it plays a part is likely to be small in comparison with those from other contributory factors. The proportion of the population so affected is also likely to be small.*

These conclusions represent a modest change from the conclusions we reached in 1995. Then we were generally not persuaded that exposure to air pollutants played a part in the induction of asthma. Now we think it might do so but, if so, only amongst those living close to busy roads with a lot of truck traffic."

## Will Wiltshire Council be fined by the EU for failing to meet pollution targets?

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No. Governments are fined not Local Authorities (LA's). In theory fines could be passed onto LA's. Current Guidance from DEFRA indicates that local air quality is considered to be outside the direct control of local councils. Provisions in the Localism Act allow government to pass down fines from the EU to a local level however there are a number of factors that would have to be considered. This includes a need to show that a local authority has not taken steps to improve air quality.

## How does EU legislation on air quality relate to the 'Local Air Quality Management' regime?

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### EU and air quality

Action to manage and improve air quality is largely driven by EU legislation. The 2008 ambient air quality directive (2008/50/EC) sets legally binding limits for concentrations in outdoor air of major air pollutants that impact public health such as particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>). As well as having direct effects, these pollutants can combine in the atmosphere to form ozone, a harmful air pollutant (and potent greenhouse gas) which can be transported great distances by weather systems

EU limit values are EU parameters that must not be exceeded are legally binding on the UK government. They cover the same pollutants as UK objectives, and in many cases are set at the same levels, sometimes with different target dates for achievement. Local authorities have no direct responsibilities for delivering them

The UK is divided into 43 zones and agglomerations for the purposes of assessing compliance with EU air quality limits. The UK meets these limits for most air pollutants. In London and other major urban centres where some of the limits are not currently met in full the government is committed to working towards full compliance as soon as possible. Where compliance is not achieved, the UK is required to produce air quality action plans detailing the measures that will achieve compliance, and submit those plans to the European Commission on an annual basis.

### National Policy

The National Air Quality Strategy establishes the framework for air quality improvements. Measures agreed at the national and international level are the foundations on which the strategy is based. It is recognised, however, that despite these measures, areas of poor air quality will remain, and that these will best be dealt with using local measures implemented through the LAQM regime. The role of the local authority review and assessment process is to identify all those areas where the air quality objectives are being or are likely to be exceeded. Experience has shown that such areas may range from single residential properties to whole town centre's.

### Local Air Quality Management

Local authorities in the UK have statutory duties for managing local air quality under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995

They are required to carry out regular reviews and assessments of air quality in their area against standards and objectives prescribed in regulations for the purpose of local air quality management (LAQM) before undertaking Action Planning if air quality is found to breach the regulations.

The following regulations apply:

**England:** The Air Quality (England) Regulations 2000 (SI 928), The Air Quality (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2002 (SI 3043),

## Are Local Authorities legally required to achieve the prescribed air quality objectives in their areas by the given target dates?

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Local authorities are not legally obliged to achieve the national air quality objectives. They are, however, required to work towards the objectives by drawing up action plans setting out the measures they intend to take in pursuit of them.

Section 84 of the Environment Act 1995 and article 13 (b) of the Environment Order 2002 provides that, once it has designated an air quality management area (AQMA):

"...a local authority ... shall be under a duty ...to prepare a written plan...for the exercise by the authority, in pursuit of the achievement of air quality...objectives in the designated area, of any powers exercisable by the authority."

The explanatory note to the Air Quality Regulations 2000, Air Quality (Amendment) Regulations 2002 state that:

"...an action plan...will have to be prepared setting out how the authority intends to exercise its powers in relation to the designated area in pursuit of the achievement of the prescribed objectives".

The legislation was framed in this way because, in the Government's view, it would be unreasonable to put a legal requirement on local authorities to achieve the objectives, because so many of the sources of emissions are outside their direct control. This is particularly the case where a likely exceedence is due to traffic on a trunk road or motorway, or to emissions from an industrial process regulated by the environment agencies.

## Do weather conditions affect air quality?

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Yes, different meteorological conditions can affect air quality. Wind aids the dispersion of pollutants, rain can wash pollutants out of the atmosphere, temperature inversions (a temperature inversion is a thin layer of the atmosphere where the normal decrease in temperature with height switches to the temperature increasing with height). An inversion acts like a lid so preventing dispersion of pollutants.

Pollutant levels will also vary with the season as light intensity and temperature increase or decrease

Public Protection and Public Health officers are working together to develop a texting/messaging service which will alert those with asthma and other respiratory conditions to changes in the weather which might affect air quality and lead to an

exacerbation of symptoms. Early warning of atmospheric and temperature changes enable people to adapt their activities and prevent acute episodes.

## Does the architecture or geography of a road affect air quality?

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Yes, it can do. Streets with narrow roads and high sided buildings can inhibit dispersal of pollutants and traffic travelling up a steep hill can emit higher levels of pollutants.

## There is a brand of paint & paving slabs that absorb nitrogen dioxide; why not paint buildings and repave the streets in areas where high levels of nitrogen dioxide exit?

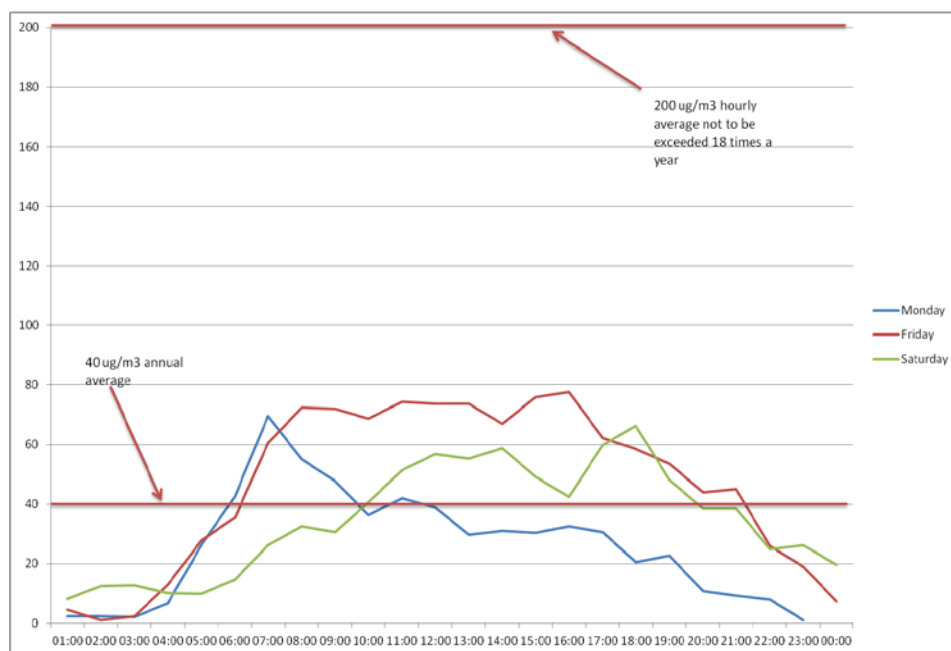
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This is dependent on quantity of surface area given over to the paint or paving, air movement across the surface, the surface must be kept clean, aesthetic acceptability in conservation areas, and only works in daylight etc. It is understood that they have been of limited impact but the merits can be considered further as part of action planning

## Are pollutant levels consistent through the day?

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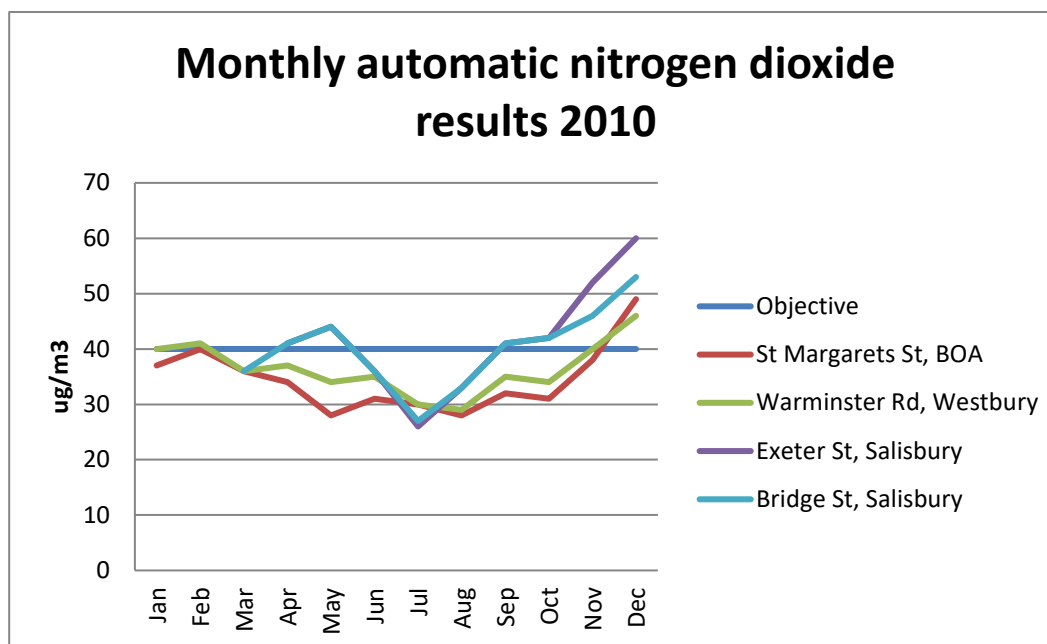
No. The graph below for example shows the variation in nitrogen dioxide over a 24 hour period on different days of the week in Devizes.



## Are pollutant levels the same through the year?

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No, it can be seen below that nitrogen dioxide levels show similar trends across the county, with higher levels being experienced in December and the lowest in July.



## Does the NHS or Public Health collect data which can be used to estimate the effects of air quality on asthma & cardio-pulmonary disease?

No. Asthma and cardio-pulmonary disease are both long term conditions and data are routinely collected at practice and hospital level to ensure that people with these conditions are properly monitored, and supported to live at home with these conditions, minimising hospital in-patient stays wherever possible. Given the very limited relationship between the effects of air pollution and these conditions, the data could not be used for this purpose.

## Does Nitrogen Dioxide pollution come from vehicles?

Nitrogen dioxide is a by product of burning fossil fuels such as coal, oil, petrol and diesel in vehicles, power plants and industrial sources. In Wiltshire traffic has been identified as the primary source of nitrogen dioxide.

## Are there any smoke control areas within Wiltshire?

There are currently no smoke control areas within the Wiltshire Council's area.

## Are there controls on when I can have a bonfire?

There are no specific controls on when you are able to have a bonfire, although it is good practice to think carefully about the wind direction and time of day in order to avoid causing a nuisance to your neighbours.

The Council has powers it can exercise against people causing a statutory nuisance and will investigate all allegations of nuisance made.

Under Section 34 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 it is illegal to dispose of waste that is not from your property - for example from your workplace or from a neighbour. For example, small tradesmen must not burn waste from site at home.

Residents must not burn their own household waste. Wiltshire Council recommends that only garden waste is burnt on domestic bonfires.

Most garden waste can easily be composted at home or by using Wiltshire Councils green waste service. Larger amounts can be taken to one of the household waste recycling centres in the county.

## Further information

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For further information or advice please contact Public Protection Services on 0300 456 0100

Or visit our website:

[www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk) and search "air quality" or:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/communityandliving/publicprotection/pollutionandnoise/airandwaterpollution/airquality.htm>

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 134

**Department:**

**Further Enquiries to:**

Ian Baker- Wiltshire Online Programme Manager

**Date Prepared:** 30 January 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 793349

### Wiltshire Online Programme – update

I am pleased to announce that on 30 January 2013 Wiltshire Council in partnership with South Gloucester Council awarded the contract to provide superfast broadband to British Telecom (BT). Wiltshire Council and South Gloucestershire Councils are working together as Great Western Broadband (GWB).

Over the next three years we are aiming to provide superfast broadband access (24Mbps or greater) to 91% of all premises across Wiltshire and a minimum of 2Mbps to all premises by March 2016.

### Background

At present not all areas within Wiltshire have access to broadband with some areas experiencing slow speeds and poor service. This means that many residents and businesses across the county struggle to take full advantage of the internet and online services.

Poor broadband services are seen as a major obstacle to sustained economic growth and investment. Limited access to broadband also restricts individuals and families in accessing online services such as educational activities, communication, entertainment, shopping and paying bills.

The key aims of the Wiltshire Online procurement for superfast broadband are that by March 2016 :

- A minimum of 85% with an aim that 91% or more of premises are able to access superfast broadband i.e. over 24Mbps
- All premises to have access to a minimum broadband service of 2Mbps

For more information about the technology, speeds and further information please visit our FAQ webpage on Wiltshire Online.

## **The investment**

The total investment for the GWB programme is £35.64 with £4.6 million from Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK<sup>1</sup>), £2 million from South Gloucestershire Council £15.5 million from Wiltshire Council, £12.8 million from BT and £0.74 million from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

This level of investment will ensure that all premises in Wiltshire will be able to access a standard broadband service with an aim that at least 91% of all premises will be able to access superfast broadband.

Connecting up our most rural areas will be one of the challenges we face as upgrading the network in these areas may require new infrastructure.

The network will be designed to provide the greatest coverage for the investment. The most economical approach is to grow the network from a combination of rural and urban locations. This will involve building out from exchanges that have already been upgraded, then onto surrounding areas whilst also connecting the smaller exchanges and cabinets in these areas. Other designs have been considered, for example connecting very rural areas first followed by larger villages and towns. However existing infrastructure requires that the work be completed in a specific sequence of events. Adopting the approach of connecting very rural areas first would result in a time consuming and costly project, reducing the number of premises where we can improve the service.

## **The technology**

The main technology that will be used to provide superfast broadband will be Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC). This is where the copper cable between the local BT telephone exchange and the local “green cabinet” is replaced with a fibre optic cable which greatly improves performance. The connection between the premise and the local “green cabinet” continues to use the existing copper wires.

Other technologies that will be used will be Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) where a fibre cable is used, replacing the entire length of copper. BT will also be providing Satellite and Broadband Enhancing Technologies (BET) for the hardest to reach locations. We expect that only a small number will require these alternative solutions. As the project advances we expect to see improvements in how FTTC and FTTP can be used, which will hopefully reduce the number of premises requiring Satellite or BET technologies.

Watch our animation on the Wiltshire Online website ([www.wiltshireonline.org](http://www.wiltshireonline.org)) which explains how the technologies and the roll out will work.

## **Coverage**

There are approximately 216,000<sup>2</sup> premises across Wiltshire (business and residential). Of these approximately 84,000 premises are highlighted as not being able to access superfast broadband, either now or by 2015. These areas are where we are able to invest. A map showing these areas is available on the Wiltshire Online Website.

The remaining premises have access to superfast broadband now, or will have by the end of 2014, through the ongoing work of BT and Virgin Media under their commercial plans.

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<sup>1</sup> BDUK is part of the Department for Media Culture and Sport which is responsible for delivering the government’s broadband objectives.

<sup>2</sup> Codepoint October 2012



Approximately 11%<sup>3</sup> of premises across Wiltshire cannot access at least a 2Mbps service. By the end of this project **all** premises will have an access line speed of this minimum service of 2Mbps, with most getting speeds well in excess of this.

### **What happens next?**

Following the contract signing, there will be a period of planning and surveying. The 'intervention area' is the where BT Openreach will be surveying and can be viewed on the Wiltshire Online website. Once each survey has been completed the roll out will begin in that area. Surveying is expected to start during autumn 2013 and the first exchanges enabled under the project are expected to go live with fibre in spring 2014.

The Wiltshire Online website should be the first port of call for any member of the public. We will update the website at every stage of the project.

The website contains the following information (from contract award 30 January):

- Map of the intervention area (the area we will be investing in)
- A link to a video we have created to explain how BT Openreach will build the network
- FAQs

### **Area Boards**

Working with the Area Boards will be crucial in communicating the planned broadband roll out. Some communities will see improvements very early on in the three year project whilst others will have more of a wait. We will aim to help manage these expectations and work with communities via their Area Boards as we do not have the officer availability to work with individual parish councils or community groups looking for an update. As explained above we will not have detailed or parish/town level information at this contract award stage but we will work with Area Mangers and the Area Board Chairs to ensure they have the most up to date information and so they fully understand how they will receive their area specific updates in the future as they are made available. As we receive more detailed information we will contact each relevant Community Area Manager and ensure that they have their local roll out information. We can then work with the Community Area Manager to deliver this information as they feel appropriate i.e. via a chair's announcement or officer presentation.

### **General queries**

The Wiltshire Online website ([www.wiltshireonline.org](http://www.wiltshireonline.org)) provides all the available information. We have also put together a list of Frequently Asked Questions that we hope will be of help. The website will continue to be updated at each stage of the project.

### **Regards**

Ian Baker

Wiltshire Online Programme Manager

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<sup>3</sup> <https://maps.ofcom.org.uk/broadband>

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 135

**Service :** Mental Health Commissioning Team, Adult Care

**Further Enquiries to:** Rhian Burgess

**Date Prepared:** 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 712554

#### **Working in partnership to support people with dementia in Wiltshire**

Wiltshire Council is working with partners to increase awareness about dementia and ensure that people with dementia and their carers are supported to live well in Wiltshire. It commissions a range of services from Alzheimer's Support (west and east Wiltshire) and Alzheimer's Society (north and south Wiltshire) that are available to people with dementia and their carers.

Over the last two years, the council has been working closely with these organisations and improvements have been made to local services to make sure that they are equitably distributed across the county so that people have the same access to services, irrespective of whether they live in east, north, south or west Wiltshire. These services include Singing for the Brain, memory cafes, training sessions for carers and specialist dementia support and advice. They are designed to ensure that people with dementia and their carers have access to activities and groups, which are dementia-friendly and offer a place to meet others in similar situations.

In addition to this, a new dementia adviser service is being launched later this year. Funded by Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire, the service will provide people with dementia and their carers with a personalised information and signposting service to ensure that people get the right information at the right time. More details will be released later in the year.

As well as ensuring that services are in place, Wiltshire Council plays a key role in making sure that people are able to recognise the possible signs of dementia and know where to go to seek advice and support. It has developed a set of dementia awareness raising materials called 'There's nothing wrong with my memory!' which provides information about some of the possible symptoms of dementia, what to do if you have concerns and the support available locally. The council will also be working closely with Alzheimer's Support and Alzheimer's Society to celebrate Dementia Awareness Week, 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2013 with information sessions taking place in libraries across the county. More details will be released nearer the time.

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 136

**Service :** Public Protection

**Further Enquiries to:** Mandy Bradley

**Date Prepared:** February 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 718290

#### Dog Microchipping and Dangerous Dogs

Following a period of consultation between April and June 2012 the Government have announced that they propose to pass Regulations under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 which will require all dogs to be microchipped from the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The Regulations will also require owners of dogs to update the details of ownership held on the computer databases should they sell or give away the dog. This change in the law will help local authorities and animal charities to reunite stray, lost or stolen dogs with their owners and promote responsible dog ownership.

At the moment approximately 60% of the 8 million pet dogs in the UK are microchipped. To assist in the process of microchipping the remainder the Dogs Trust, Battersea Cats and Dogs Home and the Blue Cross are likely to offer free microchipping at their centres for the next three years up to 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Wiltshire Council, through their Dog Warden Service, regularly works in partnership with the Dogs Trust and the RSPCA actively promoting microchipping at dog shows and other events. In the next few months such events are planned in Westbury and Salisbury.

After 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016 owners of dogs found by the police or local authorities not to have a microchip will be given a short period to comply with the legislation or face a fine of up to £500.

The Government also announced that it proposes to amend the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 extending the criminal offence of allowing a dog to be dangerously out of control so that it applies to all places, including private property. The present legislation only makes it an offence for the dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place. Many of the recent very serious dog attacks on young children have occurred in a house or garden with the result that the police have been unable to take action under the Act. Also the amendment to the Act will protect postmen, healthcare and professional utility workers visiting a house should they be attacked but not intruders or burglars. The penalties under the Act will also be increased to a new maximum penalty of 18 months imprisonment.

The Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 can be enforced by both the police and the local authority, however, in Wiltshire we have a protocol with the police that they will lead on dog on human attacks and the Council will lead on dog on dog or other animal attacks.

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 137

**Service :** Public Health and Public Protection, Safer Communities

**Further Enquiries to:** Jenny Thomson or Jo McClay , Public Protection Managers

**Date Prepared:** February 2013  
(01722) 434291

**Direct Line:** (01225) 716684 or

### **FSA Instructions to Local Authorities on horsemeat in food investigations**

From: Maggie Rae, Corporate Director and Councillor Keith Humphries, Cabinet Member

We thought it may be helpful to update on the current position for local authorities in the ongoing horsemeat investigations.

We have today received a communication from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) - Enforcement and Local Authority Delivery unit which sets out the current position on this matter and we can confirm that there are no premises in Wiltshire involved in the FSA investigations to date.

### **Local authority sampling – food authenticity – processed meat products – current national survey**

Wiltshire is not one of the 28 local authorities currently involved in a UK-wide survey of food authenticity in processed meat products and we are not currently carrying out any sampling of this nature. The results of the survey will be published in April 2013.

Bids will, however, be invited for the National Co-ordinated Sampling Grants programme for 2013-14 and this will certainly be considered by the Wessex Food Liaison Group. Hampshire Scientific Services, the public analyst that we use, is not able to carry out the required DNA analysis. The FSA has identified laboratories who can assist with this analysis.

### **Food Industry - food authenticity – processed meat products**

The FSA has asked food manufacturers and retailers which have already carried out their own testing of products and have analysis results, to provide this information to the agency by 15 February. The agency has also suggested that the food industry should be carrying out their own testing to check for the presence of horsemeat in comminuted (chopped) beef products, and to provide this information to them as a matter of urgency, as results become available.

It is expected that for major retailers and manufacturers where Primary Authority (PA) partnerships exist that the PA will liaise with the relevant businesses to confirm that suitable testing is being carried out to provide assurance for relevant products. This will not be relevant for any of our current PA partnerships.

However, we are liaising with any food manufacturers operating in Wiltshire who process comminuted beef products to outline the FSA's requirements.

### **Cold Stores and Meat Processing Premises**

The national investigation is keen to identify cold stores and meat processing premises which handle imported meat from the EU and Third Country trade, particularly those with a history of non-compliance, or those which handle products for several clients/brokers. We do not have any such cold stores in Wiltshire.

Our Public Protection Service Food Safety and Trading Standards officers are actively reviewing all our meat processing food businesses in the county where we have an enforcement responsibility, and they will carry out appropriate checks as necessary to verify meat traceability/authenticity. The FSA are offering to support the costs of any formal samples taken to establish meat authenticity if this is found to be warranted.

We will keep you updated as the FSA investigations progress.

**Maggie Rae, Corporate Director and Cllr Keith Humphries, lead member Public Health and Protection Services.**

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 138

**Service :** Adult Care

**Further Enquiries to:** Sian Walker

**Date Prepared:** February 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 756569

### **New government proposals on capping of residential and care home costs**

#### **Proposals**

New government proposals are that at a date to be agreed in the future; the personal contributions towards the costs of a care home will be capped at £75,000. The hotel costs of a care home i.e. food and room rental will still need to be paid by individuals after the cap has been reached.

Some people make their own decision to move into a care home and can pay anything from £500 to £1000 a week. If paying an average of £750 per week, the cost would reach the cap of £75,000 in just under 2 years. Given the average length of stay in a care home for older people is 2 years it is unlikely that the majority of people will ever reach the point where contributions are capped.

At the current time where someone is paying for themselves and they reach the capital threshold of £23,250, the Council will be asked to step in to reassess the person with a view to contributing to the funding of the care. At that time the Council will consider whether the fee being charged is appropriate for the services being provided and whether they meet the assessed needs of the individual. The Council will carry out an assessment with the person with a view to either taking over funding or finding a more appropriate resource to meet their need.

The Council is working with care home providers to get a better understanding of the fees they charge and the number of people who fund their own care. This is so we can be ahead of the game and be able to proactively support customers in making the right choices

#### **Care Home Contributions – criteria in Wiltshire at this time...**

There are certain situations, where the value of your home, will be ignored by both the Department for Work and Pensions and the Local Authority after you have moved permanently into a Care Home.

This disregard will apply if any of the following people continue to live in your former home:-

- i) your husband, wife or partner
- ii) a relative over 60
- iii) a relative who is "incapacitated" (sick or disabled)
- iv) a relative who is under 16 and whom you are liable to maintain.

In addition the Local Authority (but not the Department for Work and Pensions) has discretion to ignore the value of your home when a long-term Carer remains living in it.

If the value of your home is disregarded because someone else is living there, i.e. one of the above, and that person moves out or dies, then the value of the property would then normally be taken into account from the date of the change in circumstances.

(If the resident dies first then no further action is required - there is no retrospective charging)

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 139

**Service :** Public Health and Public Protection, Safer Communities

**Further Enquiries to:** John Carter

**Direct Line:** 01225 770590

**Date Prepared:** March 2013

**Message from Maggie Rae, Corporate Director and Cllr Keith Humphries, lead member Public Health and Protection Services**

#### **Horsemeat in food investigation update**

##### **Test results**

We thought it would be helpful to provide an update on the current position for local authorities in the ongoing horsemeat investigations.

The Food Standards Agency has published the second set of test results from the food industry, which has been checking for the presence of horse DNA in products labelled as beef.

Overall 3634 results have been received from a range of manufacturers, retailers, caterers and wholesales throughout the UK. The overwhelming majority (over 99%) contained no horse DNA at or above the 1% threshold.

The 13 products found to contain horse DNA at or above the 1% threshold have been named and withdrawn from sale.

No tests to date on samples containing horse DNA have found the veterinary medicine phenylbutazone (bute).

##### **Inspections of meat processing premises**

The Food Standards Agency have requested this week that local authorities prioritise inspections to all cold stores and all approved meat processing premises.

Officers from the Food and Safety Team will be visiting all approved meat processing premises in Wiltshire to undertake inspections. These will focus on documentary, physical and identity checks, meat authenticity and traceability, health marks and identity marks, labelling, re-wrapping and packing.



Formal samples will be taken for analysis where inspections indicate concerns about meat authenticity.

Information on the checks carried out and any action taken will be fed back to the Food Standards Agency.

We will keep you updated on progress with these investigations.

## COUNCILLORS BRIEFING NOTE

### No 140

**Service Area:** Neighbourhood Services

**Further Enquiries to:** Ali Stewart

**Date Prepared:** March 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 756178

#### **Paths Improvement Grant Scheme 2013**

The Paths Improvement Grants Scheme (PIGS) aims to help local people make innovative improvements to countryside access and the rights of way network in their area. The scheme is a partnership between Wiltshire Council's Rights of Way and Countryside section and the Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum. Parishes can bid for up to 50% match funding, if their proposal is approved they then undertake the schemes themselves.

Projects that can be considered for PIGS funding include;

- improvements to the existing rights of way network such as upgrading surfaces and replacing stiles with self-closing gates or kissing gates
- creating new rights of way or permissive routes to avoid busy roads or provide links to existing routes or services
- creating areas of informal recreation/exercise
- providing parking areas
- meeting changed needs of the community

Anyone can put together the background work for bids. However, the bids themselves have to be submitted from parish or town councils in Wiltshire. The reason for this is to demonstrate support for the scheme from the local council.

If you have suggestions for a scheme, please contact Mike Crook at Wiltshire Council as soon as possible to discuss whether or not it might meet the criteria.

Telephone: 01225 713349 e-mail: [michael.crook@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:michael.crook@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Further details of the scheme and some examples from previous years can be found on the Countryside Access Forum website:

[www.swindonlaf.org.uk](http://www.swindonlaf.org.uk)

The scheme is open for bids until Friday 24 May 2013.

#### **Summary of 2012 PIGS schemes**

In 2012:

- ☐ Around 45 parishes and individuals contacted Wiltshire Council to discuss possible ideas, 38 of these had potential as PIGS schemes
- ☐ Applications were made for schemes in 15 parishes, there was also a "group submission" for gates for 7 parishes from Wiltshire's Southern Area Board

- ☐ 13 schemes were agreed in principle, as follows. Most have now been delivered by the parish councils

Parish	Scheme
Alderbury	Alderbury to Whaddon new link
Bishops Cannings	Replace 3 stiles with gates
Burbage	Hard surfacing a route within the village
Cricklade	Hard surfacing a route within the town
Hindon	Replace 2 stiles with gates
Hullavington	Reopen a link severed by the MoD site
Idmiston	Hard surfacing a route within the village
Market Lavington	Info board at new row MoD are proposing
Poulshot	Replace 3 stiles with gates
Steeple Ashton	Ditch works and surfacing route within village
Sutton Mandeville	Repair a characterful small bridge
West Ashton	Replace 6 stiles with gates
Southern Area Board	Combined submission from numerous parishes to replaces stiles with gates

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 141

**Department:** DCE

**Further Enquiries to:**

Ian Baker- Wiltshire Online Programme Manager  
ian.baker@wiltshire.gov.uk

**Date Prepared:** 27 March 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 793349

### Wiltshire Online Programme – Feb to April news update

#### Summary of Progress

In my last update to you I was pleased to tell you that we had awarded the contract for superfast broadband to BT. Since January the Great Western Broadband (GWB) superfast rollout has been progressing quickly through the initial planning stages with BT and South Gloucestershire Council. We have also made good progress in a number of other areas across the Wiltshire Online Programme, the headlines are:

- All libraries in Wiltshire now have the Wiltshire Online public Wi-Fi operating and available.
- Over 40 volunteers and learners have been recruited in the last 2 months following an article in Your Wiltshire Magazine.
- The pilot project with Age UK Salisbury to provide low cost refurbished laptops has now been launched with nearly all of the 30 units being reserved within the first two months.

#### Public Wi-Fi

All hub sites and offices that have customer areas now provide public Wi-Fi. We have achieved our milestone to have all libraries offer this service and have over 3,600 registered users. Wiltshire Libraries have been very supportive and feel the availability of Wi-Fi compliments their service and customers' needs.

The next phase is to provide public Wi-Fi to all Youth and Community Centres over the next 6 months

## **Digital Literacy**

Lack of skills is a huge barrier to getting online with over 68,000 adults in Wiltshire having never been online. Many more have tried and been put off due to a lack of knowledge or confidence.

The response to the Digital Literacy article in the Your Wiltshire Magazine has resulted in over 40 volunteers and learner enquiries. This has been the most successful outcome from a single publicity event. The next stage will be to allocate volunteers to the learners wherever possible and to request the prospective volunteers to submit applications.

A project involving sixth formers from Devizes School has been launched. This has involved providing volunteer training to 24 students who then provide 1:1 computer support, after school at Devizes Library on Mondays. This is organised on a rotational basis to allow all students to participate between now and the end of the school's summer term. Initial feedback from the learners and students has been very positive. A quote from the local volunteer coordinator illustrates this success:

*"I thought the session went really well again and we had some very good feedback from the learners about the knowledge and ability of the students. I believe at least one of the learners is going to contact the school directly to say thank you. One of the new learners this week, an 80 year old lady who was working with Alice, said to me "I've learnt lots & I've had fun. I'll be back next week".*

## **GWB Broadband rollout**

On 30 January 2013 Wiltshire Council, in partnership with South Gloucester Council, awarded the contract to provide superfast broadband to BT.

Over the next three years we will ensure that 91% of all premises across Wiltshire are able to access superfast broadband and that all premises are able to access a standard broadband service by March 2016.

The joint investment for this programme includes £15.5 million from Wiltshire Council and £4.6 m from Central Government. In addition, BT is investing £12.8m. This means that our rural communities will benefit from the same infrastructure, service providers and prices as people living in most towns.

The new superfast broadband services will give speeds of up to 80Mbps download and 20 MBs upload depending on distance from the cabinet. The significant majority of premises will be able to access speeds of over 50Mbps.

Our deployment of superfast broadband is now in the planning stage involving service areas from Planning and Highways to ensure an efficient and effective delivery. During this period BT will be physically inspecting and surveying the existing infrastructure, such as the green street cabinets and underground ducting. Once this work has been completed we will be clear about the extent and timing of

the rollout. We will be releasing further information about timescales and rollout plans in May.

Several communities have made contact with the team to enquire whether local broadband projects may change the council's investment in their area. In particular would the council withdraw any deployment should a community project go ahead? In these cases the intervention area would remain unchanged and be subject to the same ongoing planning and survey work. However some communities may wish to bid for local project funding from the Rural Communities Broadband Fund (RCBF). There are a number of caveats to this funding, for example investment from the council's project cannot be used and the community will need to establish its own project team. Information about this fund is available from:

<http://rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/funding-sources/rural-community-broadband-fund>

If you would like to discuss this further please contact me using my email address at the start of this briefing.

We will ensure that Area Boards, Parishes and Councillors are updated regularly about the project's rollout plans and timescales. The Wiltshire Online website has the latest information about the rollout including a helpful video and map showing where we are able to target investment.

### **Low cost laptops**

Wiltshire Online is working with Age UK Salisbury District to distribute low cost laptops to those over 65+ where the cost of equipment is a barrier to getting online.

Wiltshire Council donated 150 laptops to the scheme. Each laptop has been wiped and refurbished with a Microsoft operating system, Libre Office and commonly used software. Each laptop, along with a case and mouse, will be made available at a cost of under £60.00. Costs have been kept low as only the cost of refurbishment is passed on.

The pilot with Age UK Salisbury is going very well. Ten laptops were issued to recipients within the first few weeks of the scheme's launch. Age UK's assistance in providing the "get you started" help for the residents has been greatly appreciated.

Most recently Carer Support Wiltshire has agreed to work in partnership with Wiltshire Online to ensure the full time carers they work with can access a low cost laptop and also support. A pilot similar to the one with Age UK will start shortly after Easter.

### **General queries**

The Wiltshire Online website ([www.wiltshireonline.org](http://www.wiltshireonline.org)) is intended to be the first point of information about the programme and will be regularly updated throughout the course of the programme.

Ian Baker

Wiltshire Online Programme Manager

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 142

**Department:** Economy and Regeneration

**Further Enquiries to:** Alistair Cunningham

**Date Prepared:** May 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 713203

### **Adoption of the Wiltshire & Swindon Aggregate Minerals Site Allocations Local Plan – May 2013**

#### **1. Context and overview of minerals planning in Wiltshire**

- 1.1 Planning for the release of minerals is a statutory responsibility. In addition, national planning policy<sup>1</sup> sets out the requirement that the Council, as a strategic planning authority, must produce plans setting out where aggregate minerals such as sand and gravel can be sustainably extracted to meet objectively assessed demand.
- 1.2 In meeting statutory responsibilities, Wiltshire Council works jointly with Swindon Borough Council on the preparation of Minerals 'Local Plans'. Since 2009 joint working has led to the review of the former Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Local Plan (2001) and the subsequent preparation and adoption of the following documents:
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2009);
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (September 2009).
- 1.3 The existing minerals planning policy framework provides a balanced approach to meeting market demand for construction minerals by ensuring that appropriate levels of controls on extraction are implemented to protect and enhance Wiltshire's rich environmental and cultural heritage.

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<sup>1</sup> The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 2012).

- 1.4 The final plan in the current suite of planning policy documents is the **Wiltshire and Swindon Aggregate Minerals Site Allocations Local Plan** ("the Plan") which sets out specific locations for, and controls over, future sand and gravel extraction.
- 1.5 It is proposed that Council on 14 May formally adopts this Plan.

## **2. Background: Plan preparation**

- 2.1 The Plan has been through an extensive preparation process. From an initial list of 62 potential site options promoted by landowners, the Council has, through site assessment work and full consultation, identified seven sites which are suitable to deliver a sustainable rate of production of 1.2 million tonnes of sand and gravel per annum. A map illustrating the location of these sites is provided in **Appendix A**. A list of electoral divisions containing the seven suitable sites is provided in **Appendix B**.
- 2.2 The Plan has also been independently and robustly examined by a government appointed Planning Inspector. The outcome of the examination process has led to the Inspector concluding that the Plan, incorporating the Inspector's modifications, is **sound** and should be adopted without delay.

## **3. Current position**

- 3.1 Following the receipt of the Inspector's Report, the Plan was presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 19 March. Cabinet approved the document and recommended it be adopted by the Council at its meeting on 14 May.
- 3.2 The Plan was presented to Swindon Borough Council on 11 April and formally adopted.
- 3.3 The adoption of the Plan represents a significant milestone in the delivery of the Council's planning policy framework. Once adopted, the Council will be in a strong position to direct and control minerals development, as well as comply with statute and national planning policy.

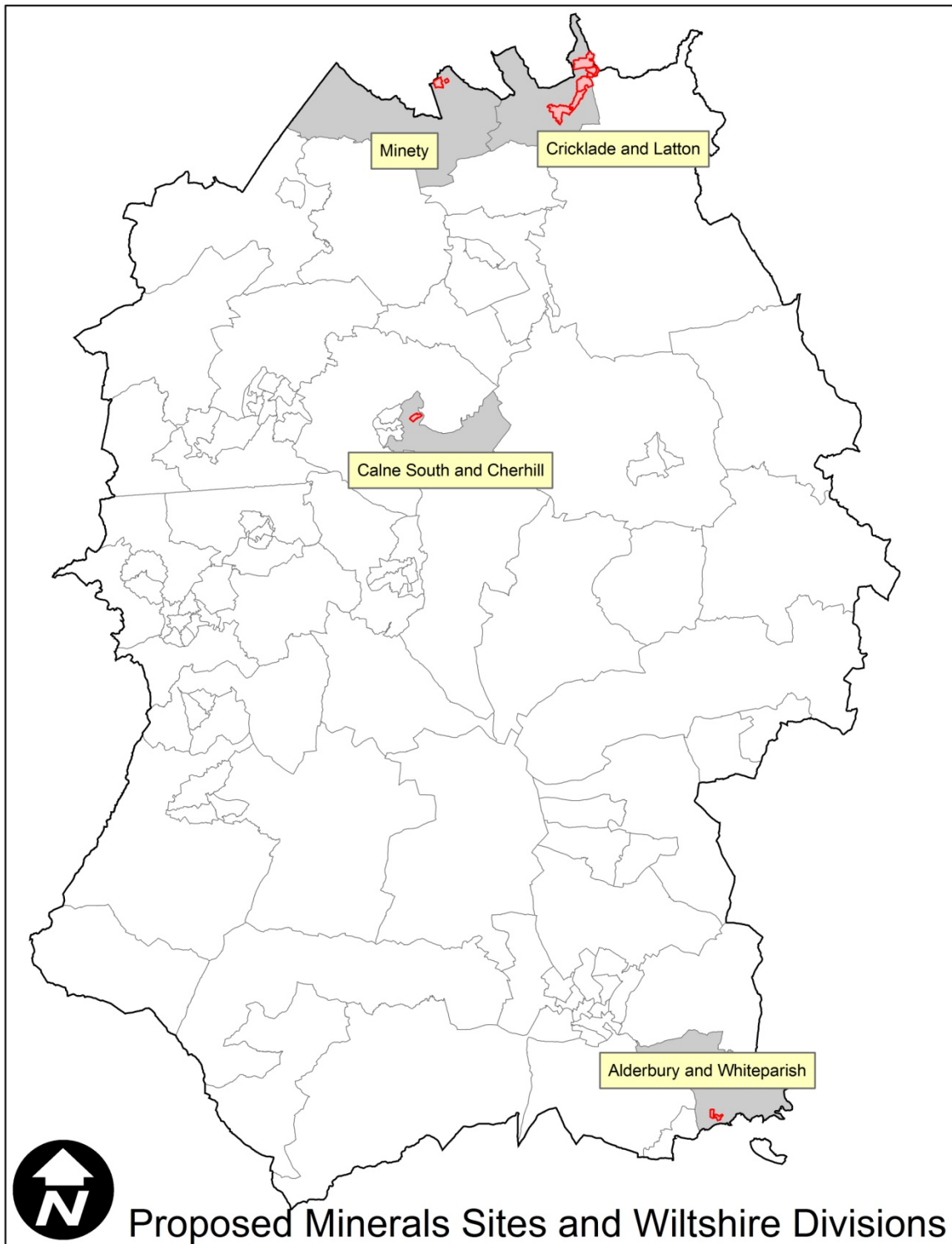
## **4. Further information**

- 4.1 Should you require further information in relation to minerals planning matters or the Council's minerals policy framework, please contact: Geoff Winslow, Spatial Planning Manager – Environment & Resources; [geoff.winslow@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:geoff.winslow@wiltshire.gov.uk) ; 01225 713213.



## **Appendix A**

### **Map of the allocated sites**



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## Appendix B

### Wiltshire and Swindon Aggregate Minerals Site Allocations Development Plan Document Local Plan – Proposed Minerals Sites and Wiltshire Electoral Divisions

Electoral Division	Proposed minerals site name	Size of site - hectares(ha)	Estimated resource yield	Current land use
Cricklade and Latton	Cox's Farm (inset map 1)	106.1ha	2,400,000 tonnes	Agricultural
	Blackburr Farm (inset map 2)	49.7ha	812,000 tonnes	Agricultural
	North Farm (inset map 3)	75.6ha	300,000 tonnes	Agricultural
	Land east of Calcutt (inset map 4)	172.6ha	2,200,000 tonnes	Agricultural
Minety	Land at Cotswold Community (inset map 5)	38.56ha	2,760,000 tonnes	Agricultural/former educational and residential facility
Calne South and Cherhill	Land near Compton Bassett (inset map 6)	23.4ha	450,000 tonnes	Agricultural

Alderbury and Whiteparish	Extensions to Brickworth Quarry (inset map 7)	25.2ha	1,948,000 tonnes	Agricultural/woodland



## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 143

**Service :** Public Health and Public Protection, Safer Communities

**Further Enquiries to:** Jenny Thomson or Jo McClay , Public Protection Managers

**Date Prepared:** 14 May 2013  
(01722) 434291

**Direct Line:** (01225) 716684 or

Update on FSA and Wiltshire Councils' action on horsemeat in food investigations

**From: Maggie Rae, Corporate Director and Councillor Keith Humphries, Cabinet Member**

We thought it may be helpful to update the current position here in Wiltshire regarding the recent national beef adulteration with horsemeat investigations.

Following all the initial media announcements and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) directives for local authority action which have followed, the Public Protection Service here in Wiltshire have taken all the steps we were required or otherwise might reasonably have been expected to take. This included:

- Prompt contact with approved meat premises and cold stores in Wiltshire under our jurisdiction who might handle/distribute potentially affected beef products – all had already taken steps to arrange specification testing on product and were asked to demonstrate supply chains/origin. All have returned this information directly to the FSA via the required mailing route and we supported this where there were initial difficulties.

We have had sight of the majority of the results. As far as we are aware, all results were negative for presence of horsemeat. The FSA have notified those local authorities where failures have been found.

This work also enabled us to refresh the current list of approved meat premises in Wiltshire that sit under FSA or our jurisdiction. We have sent this updated list back to the FSA.

Unfortunately there was one report to us from Newtownabbey Council N. Ireland regarding 1 - 5% pork found in a Wiltshire produced beef lasagne. This has been investigated by Trading Standards with the company and found to be a cross contamination during process issue, rather than deliberate adulteration. Remedial action has been taken to prevent a recurrence.

- We received FSA instruction to prioritise inspections to our approved meat premises and cold stores, particularly where these had not been visited for 12 months. Fortunately we had already visited most of them much more recently as part of the planned programme and followed up a cold store which turned out not to supply beef product. We were asked to make returns on their status and compliance and any speciation testing conducted by the companies by 30 April, which we have done.
- We followed up one FSA query specific to Wiltshire regarding the supply of horsemeat for the lions at Longleat, to ensure that this had not inadvertently been fed to the visitors – a Senior Trading Standards Officer has followed this up and has been able to reassure.
- We sent out letters to all Wiltshire schools, independent schools, hospitals, care homes and nurseries advising them about the issue and their responsibility for their own food contracts and the importance of having rigorous procurement procedures in place with reputable suppliers.
- We looked at the procurement of foodstuffs for supply by Wiltshire Council – this is extremely limited and our contractors, Elinor, were found to have taken appropriate investigations themselves to satisfy procurement of meat products - all being UK Red Tractor assured meat from fully accredited British abattoirs, not sourced from any of the plants involved in the current police investigation. Their suppliers were also carrying out product testing on processed beef products.
- Members briefings were issued following the extensive media coverage at the beginning of the investigations and concerns raised about BUTE.
- We have had very few complaints or queries from concerned consumers - these have been requests to ask if their food was safe to eat, requests for analysis, or asking if they should return products to the retailers.

As far as the national position is concerned:

- The FSA were holding regular 'bird table' meetings about the investigation. The last of these was held on 18 April 2013. Two reviews have been called. Professor Pat (currently vice-chair of Cambridge University Hospitals) is to lead an independent review of the FSA's response to the incident - to report to the next FSA Board meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> June.
- On 9 April, the Food Standards Agency published further test results from the first two phases of the UK-wide authenticity survey of beef products on sale at a range of retail and catering outlets. From the first two phases of the survey, out of a total of 362 samples taken, 354 were clear of both horse and pig DNA at the 1% reporting limit. Four samples have been confirmed as testing positive for horse DNA over 1% and three samples contained pig DNA over the 1% reporting limit. All these products were withdrawn from sale following receipt of the first test results and named on the Food Standards Agency website.
- These results are in addition to the results of 5,430 industry tests reported on 4 March 2013 which indicated that over 99% of processed beef products found no horse DNA at or above 1%. The findings of phases 1 and 2 of the local authority survey are consistent with those from the tests carried out by the food industry. The results confirm that adulteration of beef products with horse or pork meat has been limited to a relatively small number of products.

This sums up where we are in Wiltshire to date. We anticipate that we will be directed to participate in a further meat speciation study in the current year but we have not had any steer on this as yet. We will keep members updated.

**Maggie Rae, Corporate Director and Cllr Keith Humphries, lead member Public Health and Protection Services**

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 144

*Service :* Economy and Regeneration

*Further Enquiries to:* David Way

*Date Prepared:* May 2013

*Direct Line:* (01225) 718458

### Environmental Assessment of Neighbourhood Plans A guide for Wiltshire's parish and town councils

A number of town and parish councils are now preparing neighbourhood plans for their areas and Wiltshire Council has produced a step-by-step guide to help town and parish councils preparing neighbourhood plans understand the need for and undertake Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of their plans.

Consideration of the need to carry out SEA is a legal requirement (EU Directive 2001/42/EC) and should inform the preparation of a neighbourhood plan from the outset. SEA is a way of making sure the environmental implications of a plan are taken into account before decisions on policies are made.

Copies of the 'Environmental Assessment of Neighbourhood Plans' guide are available on the Wiltshire Council spatial planning 'neighbourhood planning portal'. This website contains useful information on the subject of neighbourhood planning, including where to go for advice and support and FAQs: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning.htm](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning.htm)

The council is encouraging town and parish councils to discuss the need for an environmental assessment, and the form it should take, with their spatial planning link officer at the start of the neighbourhood plan preparation process.

For further information please see the website listed above or contact the spatial planning team on 01225 713223 - email: [neighbourhood.planning@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhood.planning@wiltshire.gov.uk)



## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 145

*Service :* Neighbourhood Services

*Further Enquiries to:* Bill Parks

*Direct Line:* (01225) 702649

*Date Prepared:* May 2013

#### **Member Briefing – Changes to the Local Highway and Streetscene Service**

To ensure all members are briefed on the changes to the Local Highway and Streetscene Service I am writing to update you on the management structure reorganisation and the arrangements for the new contract.

#### **New Contract**

The Highway and Streetscene contract, which commences on the 1st June 2013, brings a number of service providers into one service. Currently the Highway and Streetscene service providers include: Ringway Infrastructure Services; Balfour Beatty Living Places; The Landscape Group (two separate contracts) and the Council's own in-house Streetscene Service. Balfour Beatty Living Places were the successful contractor and will now run all these services on behalf of the Council.

The Parish Steward Scheme, grass cutting, litter collection, town centre cleaning etc activities are all contained in the new contract and will be continuing throughout the new contract period. What the contract will do is bring together the synergies of those activities to achieve efficiencies and maximise the benefits.

The biggest change you will see on the ground will be the operational teams working to one community area board with all officers being responsible for an area, rather than an individual service. This is to encourage operatives to identify solutions to problems they find and assisting the Council to work more proactively. To encourage operatives to adopt this new ethos the team members will be known as Community Stewards.

The Council is working with Balfour Beatty Living Places on the implementation of the new arrangements. Training and support will be

needed to allow staff to change their working practises. Whilst some improvements will occur almost immediately, others will need to be introduced in phases when circumstances allow.

## **Management Restructure**

The Local Highway and Streetscene management structure has recently been reorganised to bring it in line with the Highway and Streetscene Contract. The main change in the structure has been the formation of generic officers responsible for all Local Highways and Streetscene Services in a given area. Below are listed the officers concerned:

1. A **Community Coordinator**, is responsible for the management of the Local Highway and Streetscene assets and the community priorities within one community board area. The Community Coordinator is the town and parish council contact for that community board area.
2. An **Engineer** provides the technical support and strategic service provision across two community board areas. Feedback to Community Area Boards is undertaken by the Engineer at the Community Area Board Transport Groups.

Attached is a map showing the officers allocated to your area.

The Community Coordinators will be contacting their parish and town councils during May to introduce themselves.

The Council are reminding town and parish councils there are still spaces available on the Local Highway and Streetscene Contract Workshops being held in May and June.

These workshops explore the new ways of working and communication arrangements for the Local Highway and Streetscene Service.

They will discuss the new Local Highway and Streetscene maintenance services. They will seek parish and town council's views on performance matters and opportunities to work more effectively in the future. They will seek to identify the priorities of the parish and town councils.

Wiltshire Council Members are welcome to attend. If you would like to participate please contact Fiona Waind, Support Manager, on 01249 706355 or email [fiona.waind@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.waind@wiltshire.gov.uk).

Community Areas	Date	Time	Location
Melksham	21 May 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	County Hall Trowbridge
Westbury	21 May 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	County Hall Trowbridge
Trowbridge	21 May 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	County Hall Trowbridge
Bradford on Avon	21 May 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	County Hall Trowbridge
Chippenham	5 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Monkton Park, Chippenham
Corsham	5 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Monkton Park, Chippenham
Malmesbury	5 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Monkton Park, Chippenham
Marlborough	5 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Monkton Park, Chippenham
Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade	5 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Monkton Park, Chippenham
Calne	5 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Monkton Park, Chippenham
Devizes	23 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Devizes Corn Exchange
Pewsey	23 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Devizes Corn Exchange
Tidworth	23 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Devizes Corn Exchange
Amesbury	23 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	Devizes Corn Exchange
Amesbury (alternative date and location)	7 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	City Hall, Salisbury
Salisbury	7 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	City Hall, Salisbury
Warminster	7 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	City Hall, Salisbury
South West	7 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	City Hall, Salisbury
Southern	7 June 2013	6.00pm – 8.00pm	City Hall, Salisbury

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 146

*Service :* Communities & Voluntary Sector Support

*Further Enquiries to:* Marc Read

*Direct Line:* 01722 434557

*Date Prepared:* 13/06/2013

*Title* Payroll Savings Scheme

Save for a Rainy Day – Save Directly From Your Salary



Wiltshire Council is offering its staff the opportunity to save directly from their salaries in partnership with local credit unions through 'Wiltshire Community Bank'. This is a simple, fast way of saving for a 'rainy day' or when planning for a big event.

Benefits include:

- You can save as little or as much as you want on a regular basis
- Saving money regularly helps protect you from unexpected pressures and helps you manage your money more effectively
- Payroll deductions are a convenient and easy way to save
- Because the payment is deducted before you receive your pay, you don't feel the impact, but you get the benefits of savings

- If you need to borrow money, credit unions offer low-cost loans to its members
- Money invested in a credit union benefits the local community, not shareholders

Wiltshire Community Bank is made up of local credit unions which are financial co-operatives – owned and controlled by their members.

Credit unions are regulated by the Financial Services Authority (FSA) which means that your savings are safe.



To apply simply complete a form on the Wiltshire Council [staff benefits](#) page or click [www.wiltsccommunitybank.co.uk](http://www.wiltsccommunitybank.co.uk)

#### Terms & Conditions

- No payments will be made if salary is reduced to statutory payments only because of sickness/maternity leave etc. In this case you could make arrangements to pay the instalments directly to WCB.
- The chosen level of deductions should be kept for at least 6 months but can be varied in exceptional circumstances.

## **Councillors' Briefing Note**

### **No. 147**

*Service :* Neighbourhood Services

*Further Enquiries to:* Mark Smith

*Direct Line:* 07521 313323

*Date Prepared:* 21/06/2013

#### Wiltshire Councils Highway and Streetscene Contract

Wiltshire Council's new Highway and Streetscene contract commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013 and covers a wide range of services including; highways maintenance, grounds maintenance, grass cutting, street lighting, bridge maintenance, winter maintenance and public convenience cleaning. The contract has an annual value of circa £25m, runs for five years with a possible extension of two years related to performance.

The contract will deliver savings of over £1million in the first year, with further efficiency savings in following years. The council has continued to promote awareness on the new contract, undertaking monthly Wiltshire Council, parish and town council briefings with community involvement meetings, the last one of which was completed at the beginning of June.

Naturally when transferring large scale contracts, from one provider to another there are service changes due to the practical requirements of introducing new ways of working, however Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) who are providing the service have considerable experience, with a proven track record in mobilising large scale contracts. The vast majority of services passed seamlessly from the previous providers to BBLP. However, some of the council's grass cutting arrangements have been affected during the transfer. The council is responsible for approximately 5.5 million square metres of grass across the county, the equivalent of about 900 football pitches. The grass is cut on varying cycles of between one week for a sports pitch and four weeks for low use amenity areas. BBLP have responsibility under the contract for cutting approximately 6,000 kilometres of rural highway verge throughout the county, this grass is cut twice a year, the first cut is nearing completion and is on schedule.

To ensure the disruption to council services was limited BBLP have continued to provide additional staff and equipment, worked extra hours, including weekends, and prioritised local community priority areas. Many areas have not been affected by the transfer, however some areas behind schedule. It is anticipated that all Wiltshire Council amenity areas will receive at least one cut during June and then cut to the previous frequency thereafter. BBLP have approximately 75 staff deployed on grass cutting, they have hired in additional machines and deployed additional staff to grass cutting activities at no cost to the council. Officers are liaising with the contractor on a daily basis as would be expected in a contract of this scale. In the event that Members have any specific queries that haven't been addressed through the normal channels please contact either Philip Whitehead, Portfolio Holder – Highways & Streetscene or Mark Smith, Service Director – Neighbourhood Services.

Philip Whitehead - Portfolio Holder – Highways & Streetscene 07769 894481

Mark Smith - Service Director – Neighbourhood Services 07521 313323

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 148

**Department:** Transformation

**Further Enquiries to:**  
Sarah Cosentino – Business Analyst

**Date Prepared:** 17 June 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 793349

### Wiltshire Online Programme – April – June news update

The Wiltshire Online programme has the overall aim of removing the barriers to getting online for the residents of Wiltshire. Cost, skills and infrastructure have been identified as the three biggest barriers and progress is being made to remove all three.

#### Summary of Progress

- The Great Western Broadband (GWB) Superfast rollout has released the names of the first communities to benefit from the project and residents will be able to order improved broadband from Spring 2014
- BT, Power Companies, Planning and Highways teams have been working together on a joint Location Protocol to ensure a smooth and time efficient process of surveying and reporting locations for new fibre enabled green cabs.
- BT have been working behind the scenes to update and upgrade their exchanges
- We have now installed public Wi-Fi in 75% of Community and Youth centres, all libraries and council offices that have public access
- Carer Support Wiltshire are now promoting and distributing low cost refurbished laptops to their service users
- The Wiltshire Online team has been speaking at UK conferences as there is national interest in our volunteer programme

#### Public Wi-Fi

All libraries now have free to the end user Wi-Fi access with over 200 users using the service daily. We are steadily progressing through the second stage of the rollout with 75% of Youth and Community centres now Wiltshire Online Wi-Fi enabled. Safeguarding is in place to protect our young and vulnerable users when using the Wi-Fi as the network is enabled with South West Grid for learning filters, the same filters as used in most Wiltshire schools.



## Digital Literacy

The lack of skills is a huge barrier to getting online with over 68,000 adults in Wiltshire having never been online and many more have tried and been put off due to lack of knowledge or confidence.

Our ambition is to have Digital Champion volunteers active (delivering free computer support) in every community area supported by an Area Coordinator Volunteer. We now have an Area Coordinator assigned to each community area. We have active teams of Digital Champions delivering support in 13 community areas. For the remaining areas we are working through a programme of recruitment, training and induction to ensure we have a team of Digital Champions ready and able to deliver free IT support.

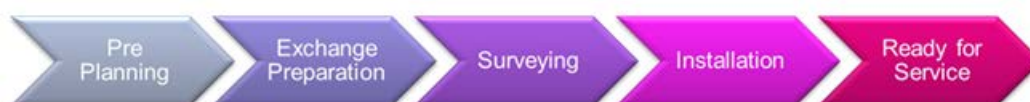
Central Government Broadband Delivery UK have asked the Wiltshire Online team to present at several national conferences including the Digital Inclusion: Enhancing Engagement and Skills, Improving Lives' conference in London. Wiltshire is considered to be at the forefront of designing and delivering a digital literacy programme.

## GWB Broadband rollout

Over the next three years we will ensure that at least 91% of all premises across Wiltshire are able to access superfast broadband and that all premises in the intervention area are able to access a minimum standard broadband service by March 2016.

To deliver fibre broadband requires the completion of a number of stages. As with any complex and wide scale infrastructure deployment there are areas which will be delivered earlier than others as the time it takes to work through each stage will vary from street to street, parish to parish. The rollout is due for completion in Spring 2016.

Below is a breakdown of the stages involved



The rollout is being designed to ensure the network provides the greatest possible coverage of superfast broadband with the available funding. We are taking into account many factors, including geography, planning requirements and the location of the existing telecoms infrastructure. These factors will dictate the order of the rollout. This approach will ensure the best value for money, but it does mean that we cannot prioritise specific locations and deviate from how the network will be rolled out across the area, as doing so would result in a time-consuming and costly project, and would ultimately reduce the number of premises we are able to deliver superfast broadband to.

On Monday 24 June Wiltshire Council announced the first communities in Wiltshire that can order super fast broadband in Spring 2014 as **Royal Wootton Bassett, Purton, Alderbury and Downton**. This was the first announcement of quarterly updates we will make available. The Wiltshire Online website will host the most up to date information at all times.

Residents and businesses are keen to know when they will be able to access super fast broadband and what speeds they will benefit from. We are very keen to work with Area Boards to help us disseminate a clear and concise message.

At this stage we are still working through the planning and surveying stage and we can only make available very high level information. When we have completed the surveying stage for each area we will have a robust action plan, this is when our residents will see work on the ground. For the first phase of communities this will be in January 2014. The Wiltshire Online team will then make itself available to each Area Board to coincide with the programme rollout. We will ensure we contact you before our rollout reaches your community area.

During these early stages the Wiltshire Online website will host the most up to date information.

### **Low cost laptops**

Wiltshire Council donated 150 laptops to the scheme. Each laptop has been wiped and refurbished with a Microsoft operating system, Libre Office and commonly used software. Each laptop along with a case and mouse will be made available at a cost of under £60.00. Costs have been kept low as only the cost of refurbishment is passed on.

The pilot with Age UK Salisbury went incredibly well with all the 30 laptops distributed to recipients within four weeks. Most recipients spent at least an hour with an Age UK advisor so they felt comfortable with their new laptop.

Most recently Carer Support Wiltshire has received 30 laptops and has promoted the project in their regular newsletter. Once again there has been a huge interest in the laptops. Carer Support Wiltshire has opted to assess each potential recipient over the phone to ensure they are going to the families that will really benefit. They have distributed over half to date, this email sent to them by a grateful recipient speaks volumes about the positive impact this project has

“Just to let you know my email address and that I’m online now, hurray. Many thanks, having this laptop has made me feel a normal person, in this current day and age of technology, you really do need to be online”.

Over the next period we will be working to identify a third partner and identify potential case studies that we can use as we work to develop the next phase of the project and explore more sustainable sources of laptops.

### **General queries**

The Wiltshire Online website ([www.wiltshireonline.org](http://www.wiltshireonline.org)) is intended to be the first port of call for any member of the public. We will regularly update the website throughout the course of the programme.

Sarah Cosentino  
Business Analyst, Programme Office  
Wiltshire Online

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 149

**Department:** Corporate Directors

**Further Enquiries to:** Jane Gray

**Date Prepared:** July 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 713161

#### **Innovative sharing of resources reduces costs and provides ideal location for South Wiltshire University Technical College**

We thought it would be helpful to provide an update on the proposals for a new South Wiltshire University Technical College and Wiltshire Police's move in Salisbury.

At last week's Salisbury Area Board, Police Crime Commissioner Angus Macpherson, Inspector Andy Noble and Deputy Chief Constable Mike Veale answered questions regarding the move and allayed fears that front-line services would be affected.

A public meeting involving the Police Crime Commissioner (PCC), Wiltshire Police, Wiltshire Council and the South Wiltshire University Technical College (UTC) will now take place on Wednesday, July 17 at The Guildhall in Salisbury from 6.30pm where people can find out more about the many elements to the proposals.

These include a new UTC opening in Salisbury in September 2014, subject to planning permission and agreement of heads of terms.

It involves the PCC granting a lease to us, as the local education authority, for the use of the current Salisbury Police Station as a UTC. The council will sub-let the building to the UTC, which would pay a minimal (peppercorn) rent. The UTC will open in September 2014, providing specialist technical education in science and engineering for more than 600 14-18 year-olds.

The proposal, which was agreed on 19 June, by Angus Macpherson and Jane Scott will have an impact on our city centre premises.

The UTC would take on the lease this November (2013), and it is proposed that the current police presence in Salisbury will be relocated to our premises at Bourne Hall offices and a front desk at Salisbury Library.

A public policing presence in Salisbury is important to the public and it is vital that there is a public access point in the city centre. The longer term view is that front counter services will be provided in the Salisbury Community Campus.

This sharing of our building and resources will result in efficiencies and savings as well as more accessible and customer focused public services. The proposal has the added benefit that it will provide a permanent location for the UTC avoiding costly temporary accommodation whilst a new purpose built facility was provided. By facilitating this arrangement it ensures that the South Wiltshire UTC opens as planned in September 2014 in fully-refurbished premises.”

You are all aware of the on-going budget cuts, along with increasing demand for local services. Working with Wiltshire Police, as one of our strategic partners, will help to improve the services provided to local communities. An example of this is the co-location model, which is working very well at Monkton Park in Chippenham.

We will keep you updated on this matter as the plans for implementing this proposal are developed and there is a better understanding of what this will mean for our Bourne Hill offices and Salisbury library. As the plan is to relocate the police services by November, we will schedule updates over the next few months to talk through the co-location and what this will mean.

In the meantime if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact one of us.

**Carlton Brand, Carolyn Godfrey, Maggie Rae, Corporate Directors.**

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 150

*Service :* Neighbourhood Services

*Further Enquiries to:* Mark Smith

*Direct Line:* 07521 313323

*Date Prepared:* 05/07/2013

### **Highways and Streetscene Grass Cutting**

Senior officers from Balfour Beatty Living Places (BBLP) attended an update meeting with Phillip Whitehead, portfolio holder for highways and streetscene, and Mark Smith, service director for neighbourhood services, on Monday, 2 July 2013. At the meeting BBLP confirmed it had fulfilled its commitment to complete the first cut of the urban grassed area by the end of June. It also confirmed the rural verge, amenity flail, low amenity grass and rough cut areas had all been cut to schedule and there had been no delay in these services.

BBLP gave a commitment that if any grassed areas are later identified as having been missed during the scheduled cut it would immediately return to rectify the issue.

The grass cutting frequencies will now return to the contract specification, which for urban grassed areas is one cut every two to three weeks.

Amanda Fisher, Balfour Beatty's managing director, will be attending full council on the 9 July 2013 to listen to the formal questions raised by members.

During June 2013 the council received around 110 complaints a week regarding grass cutting. This was 60 complaints more a week than the same time last year. The number of complaints has now returned to normal.

BBLP continues to provide additional resources to support the grass cutting service to ensure there are no further delays and is currently reporting all grass cutting is on schedule for July 2013.

Cllr Philip Whitehead – Portfolio holder highways and streetscene  
Mark Smith – Service director neighbourhood services

## Councillors' Briefing Note No. 151

*Service :* Commissioning and Performance – Childrens Services

*Further Enquiries to:* Julia Cramp

*Direct Line:* 01225 718821

*Date Prepared:* July 2013

### **Wiltshire Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People Consultation**

I am writing to you to make you aware of a consultation on overnight short breaks for disabled children.

In summary, following a joint review we are now consulting on some changes which include the potential closure of Hillcote, an NHS residential unit in Salisbury.

Please find attached a copy of:

- The consultation document
- A questions and answers paper
- A letter sent to the eight families currently using Hillcote

Julia Cramp

Joint Service Director, Commissioning and Performance – Children's Services

Wiltshire Council / NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Direct line: 01225 718821

Email: [julia.cramp@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:julia.cramp@wiltshire.gov.uk)



## **Joint Consultation on Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People**

### **Introduction**

This paper provides a summary of the recently completed joint Health/Local Authority review of overnight short breaks for disabled children and young people. The review has considered all overnight short break provision provided by or commissioned by NHS Wiltshire and Wiltshire Council. This includes Hillcote residential unit provided by Wiltshire Community Health Services, and Canon's House residential unit and the Family Link fostering service provided by Wiltshire Council. This paper proposes to move from the current position where significant resource is invested in residential short breaks services to a mixed model of residential and family-based provision.

### **Review methodology**

The review worked to the following principles:

- There should be equity of access across Wiltshire to overnight short breaks for families with a disabled child;
- Parents and carers should have choice between different types of overnight short break provision;
- The funding available for overnight short breaks must be used effectively, avoiding tying up resource in any provision that is not well utilised;
- Any recommendations made as a result of the review should be based on a cost neutral approach so that families with disabled children can be assured that they will continue to receive effective support.

The following tasks were undertaken:

- Analysis of the overall resource across Wiltshire for overnight short breaks;
- Analysis of current activity and use of overnight short breaks provision;
- A survey to ascertain the views of parents and carers who currently use overnight short break services;
- Analysis of similar provision in other authorities.



The review has been overseen by a Steering Group consisting of:

- the Joint Head of Commissioning for Children's Services for NHS Wiltshire and Wiltshire Council;
- the service lead for Canon's House and the Council's Children with Disabilities Teams;
- Wiltshire Council's Lead Commissioner for children with disabilities;
- representatives of Wiltshire Parent Carers Council (a group of approximately 600 parents);
- the Head of Specialist Services with responsibility for Hillcote from Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust;
- representatives of the Council's Family Link service.

### **Current overnight short breaks services**

**Hillcote** is a ten-bedded unit providing residential short breaks services for children and young people aged 4 - 18 with a learning disability and complex needs. The service is provided by Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and commissioned by NHS Wiltshire. The service is available for overnight and day care throughout the year. The service is run from a Grade II listed house in Salisbury (owned by Salisbury Foundation Trust).

**Canon's House** is an eight-bedded registered residential home in Devizes which offers short term breaks for children aged 5 – 18 with a disability and complex needs. The unit offers short breaks of 24 hours or more over weekends and during school holidays. Overnight breaks are provided during midweek in term time. Canon's House has an Outstanding rating from OFSTED.

**Family Link** is a family-based short breaks scheme for disabled children. It is designed to give children a regular short break within a family based setting where children are cared for in a family link carer's own home.

### **Activity data**

Activity for the year 2011-2012 was analysed for all three services. The total number of children using these services was 111.

	<b>Canons House</b>	<b>Hillcote</b>	<b>Family Link</b>
Overnights	2663	756	663
Children receiving overnight breaks	65	21*	19

\*As of July 2013 there are now only 8 children and young people using Hillcote and from April 2014 is anticipated that there would be only 5 children and young people using the service.

The number of children using Hillcote has reduced in the past three years and this presents a significant challenge to the provider. The unit now closes when not required.

The proportion of hours of service delivered by the Family Link service is comparatively low. In other authorities the use of family based short breaks is much higher.

### **Financial analysis**

The total expenditure on the three overnight short break services for Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire in 2011/12 was 1.474m. These costs are direct service costs and do not include any corporate overheads or corporate management costs which are additional.

The cost for providing each service is as follows:

	<b>Canons House (£,000)</b>	<b>Hillcote (£,000)</b>	<b>Family Link (£,000)</b>
Total	745	608	123

The following table shows the share of cost and activity for each service:

	<b>Canons House</b>	<b>Hillcote</b>	<b>Family Link</b>
Cost (£)	51%	41%	8%
Activity (Nights)	66%	18%	16%

Family Link can be considered good value compared to the other services in terms of the comparison of spend to activity. (For every 1% of spend it produces 2% of the activity). This is because family based care is less costly to provide than residential provision.

Comparing the two residential units, Hillcote is a lot more expensive than Canons House in terms of unit costs. A key reason for this is that the numbers of children attending Hillcote has reduced; this has the effect of high unit costs given the high fixed cost element of running a residential unit. The continuing reduction in numbers of children and young people using Hillcote means the cost per child of delivering the service is continuing to rise.

## **Parents' views**

Initially all families using the services were invited by letter to attend formal consultation events in 2012. However, interest was so low that together with Wiltshire Parent Carer Council it was decided to undertake an on line survey instead of the consultations. All families using services were invited to complete a short survey to give their views on provision. Each family was personally contacted and offered a range of ways of responding. Just less than 20% of families using the services responded survey and all but one of these used Canons House.

Overall comments were positive about the quality of the services they currently receive. Key points were:

- The most common reason for using the services from the family perspective was a break from caring.
- The most common benefit to the child identified by parent carers was the opportunity for their child to spend time with other young people of a similar age.
- The preferred option for those using overnight short break services was a residential home. The least preferred option was an increase in community based activities to replace overnight short breaks. (In interpreting this feedback it is important to note that all the respondents to the survey currently use residential short break services).
- There was a strong preference to be able to use services at weekends and during school holidays rather than mid week and term time.

Parents identified difficulties with sleep, behaviour, continence and meal times as key issues that lead to the need for overnight short breaks.

## **The national context**

A review of overnight short breaks provision in other areas has found a general trend of reducing bed capacity within residential facilities and a move towards outreach provision. Some examples are outlined below.

- Peterborough reduced from 21 to 8 bed provision places by offering creative and responsive packages of support in the home. Their new outreach team in the community was linked to their residential provision which reassured families.
- Medway reviewed their services with a recommendation to close their NHS overnight short breaks centre.
- Dorset closed an NHS residential unit and now provides overnight short breaks through a mixed model.

- North Somerset put their overnight short breaks provision out to tender with contracts for sitting services, outreach day care services, an overnight carers' service and a residential unit.
- Newport City Council have employed two full time foster carers and made adaptations to their homes so that they can provide overnight breaks for a number of children.

In summary, the national picture shows a move towards greater use of family based support and a marked reduction in residential overnight short break provision.

### **Options considered**

Based on the results of the review, three broad options were considered:

#### **Option 1 - Keep both residential units open**

Continue with Canons House offering the bulk of overnight short break activity for Wiltshire, Hillcote offering a smaller amount of activity to families in the South of the County and the Family Link service continuing as is.

#### **Option 2 - Close one residential unit**

Use the annual savings from the closure of one unit to invest in alternative services to support children and young people in new ways. This would include an early intervention services that will increase the potential for children to access opportunities with their peers and develop independence skills. Given the geographical locations, activity levels and the unit costs analysis of both services the proposal would be to close Hillcote releasing approximately £608k revenue per annum for investment.

#### **Option 3 - Close both residential units**

Use the combined annual savings from the closure of both Hillcote and Devizes to invest in community based provision.

### **Analysis of options**

#### **Option 1 – Keep both residential units open**

Benefits

- Continuity for existing service users and staff.
- Consistency with the positive survey feedback from parent carers.

## Issues and Risks

- This option does not represent an efficient use of public money because of the low numbers of children and young people using Hillcote and the higher and growing unit costs at Hillcote.
- The decreasing numbers of children using Hillcote means the service is not viable to the provider.
- The low numbers of children using the service at Hillcote means that the main benefit identified for young people in the parent carer's survey - of meeting peers - will no longer be realised.
- Funding will not be released to develop the other desired services required such as early intervention and more services in carers homes to improve outcomes for children.
- This option does not address the equity issues for families living further away from the residential units.

## **Option 2 – Close one residential unit (Hillcote)**

### Benefits

- Release funding for investment in new services to deliver improved outcomes for children.
- An opportunity developing the remaining residential unit as centre of excellence. Staff would work in a 'satellite' capacity with families and children by delivering support in areas such as behaviour, sleep and continence issues.
- Release funding to increase family based provision, increasing the geographical spread of services.
- Resolve issues relating to the financial viability of Hillcote.
- Retain ongoing residential overnight care in line with the wishes of parent carers.

### Issues and Risks

- A change for families who use the service at Hillcote
- Impact to staff at Hillcote
- Managing a change programme in service provision
- Reduction in choice for residential services

### **Option 3 – Close both residential units (Canon's House and Hillcote)**

#### **Benefits**

- Enable a radical redesign of services
- Maximise revenue and capital available for new services
- Opportunity to provide individualised services for children and young people

#### **Issues and Risks**

- This would not be consistent with feedback from parent carers
- A highly complex change programme would be required
- Risk of gap in provision during the transition to new service models
- Lack of continuity for children and young people and their families
- Based on need it would be likely that a replacement residential unit would be required. This would need a substantial capital reinvestment. The logical place for a replacement unit would be in a central location such as Devizes, which raises the question: Why close Canon's House in the first place?

### **Proposal**

It is proposed that Option 2 above is implemented because it will ensure a range of services required to meet the needs of families and achieve the best outcomes for children. This option will also ensure a more efficient use of public money.

Specifically the proposal is to:

1. Close Hillcote from April 2014.
2. Reinvest savings in more family based overnight provision, allowing a wider geographical spread of services, greater equity of provision and a more cost effective use of public money.
3. Reinvest savings in additional services for families to help with the key difficulties they have identified (e.g. sleep, incontinence, behaviour and meal times) to empower families and enable improved outcomes for children. These services would work in collaboration with family based carers, Canons House and Special Schools.
4. Develop service specifications for the new services with input from families.
5. Develop the new services so they can start as soon as possible.
6. Jointly manage the change through a Steering Group consisting of officers from Health, Wiltshire Council and representatives from Wiltshire Parent Carer Council
7. Work with families who would otherwise be using Hillcote from April 2014 to ensure the needs of their children and families continue to be fully met.
8. Continue to provide overnight short breaks that deliver a break from caring for parents.

This proposal is cost neutral – any saving made will be reinvested in the services described.

### **Taking part in the consultation**

We would appreciate you sharing your views with us on the proposed changes to overnight short breaks for disabled children. To take part in this consultation please use the following web link, on the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council website:

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Unit 3 Fordbrook Business Park  
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SN9 5NU

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Wiltshire Parent Carer Council will share the consultation feedback they receive with the other agencies for the purpose of this consultation process.

### **The consultation period**

This consultation will run for 3 months from Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> July – Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.



## **Joint Consultation on Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People**

### **Questions and Answers**

- **Will there be a reduction in services?**

No. There is not expected to be a reduction in services. We are working to provide a wider range of services.

- **If Hillcote closes what will happen to the children who go there?**

We will meet with the 5 families who would be affected by the proposal to discuss how to ensure we continue to meet the needs of the child and family.

- **Is this because of NHS cuts or Council cuts?**

No. This proposal is cost neutral, which means any savings made by closing Hillcote will be reinvested in the new services. This proposal would make better use of the public money currently tied up in providing the service at Hillcote.

- **Is this because of poor performance at Hillcote?**

No. The service at Hillcote has been highly valued by families. This proposal is about having a better range of services, achieving better outcomes for children and making better use of public money.

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The proposal is for services to be available in more locations across the county due to more family based short breaks provision. For families currently using Hillcote transport will be taken into account in the new care plan.



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Yes. It is our intention to provide services that will enable children and young people to meet with others of their own age in similar circumstances.

- **Will there be enough capacity if Hillcote closes?**

Yes. In addition to making use of Canon's House and the family based care, any saved money will be reinvested to ensure sufficient capacity.

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Canon's House and Hillcote are currently both equally able to support children with complex medical needs. For children who currently use Hillcote the new care plan will ensure their medical needs continue to be fully met.

- **Who have you consulted with about this proposal?**

We have conducted a survey with families currently using overnight short breaks and consulted with Wiltshire Parent Carer Council in addition to the wider consultation with families of disabled children. We have discussed the proposal with officers from the Health Clinical Commissioning Group, the provider of Children's Health Services and Wiltshire Council and learnt from other counties. The main consultation is now beginning and will run for 3 months until 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

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Yes we still want to provide residential breaks for families who need this type of service in addition to increasing support to families to help them manage the issues they experience in caring for and supporting their child at home.

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At this stage it is too early to say. Where appropriate, members of staff may move into new roles within the NHS Children's Community Health Service. The staff have been briefed about the changes and are aware of the current position.

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The consultation will end on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2013. Feedback from the consultation will be reviewed together with the suggested new care plans for children currently using Hillcote. If the proposal is then approved it is intended that the new arrangements will take place from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2014, however arrangements for individual children will be subject to the details of their care plan.

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Wiltshire Council

Where everybody matters

23 July 2013

Recipient's address

Children's Services  
County Hall  
Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge  
Wiltshire  
BA14 8JN

Our ref : JC/ML/cf

Dear Parent/Carer

**Wiltshire Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People Consultation**

Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group have recently worked with Wiltshire Parent Carer Council to review overnight short breaks, including support provided by Canon's House in Devizes and Hillcote in Salisbury. I am now writing to let you know that we have launched a consultation on overnight short breaks for disabled children who live in Wiltshire. Please find enclosed a copy of the consultation document and questions & answers. You can also view these documents online at the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council website: [www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk](http://www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk).

The consultation document describes how we would like to make some changes to the way we deliver overnight short breaks and respite for families. In particular we want to be able to offer more support to families of disabled children and young people to help address some of the difficulties they have told us they face, for example relating to behaviour, sleep, and continence. We would also like to be able to offer more overnight short breaks provided in a family environment. To enable these new services to be developed the consultation document explains that we are now consulting on the closure of Hillcote residential unit from April 2014. The Unit is currently used by eight children and young people.

We would like to meet with you to discuss these recommendations and how we can continue to provide overnight short breaks for your child and respite for your family. We will contact you shortly to arrange a convenient date for a meeting.

The service at Hillcote will continue unchanged until after the consultation ends in late October and during this time the support for your child will not be affected and remains in place. After the consultation ends a final decision will be made and we will let you know what is happening and any changes.

We would appreciate you sharing your views with us on the proposed changes to overnight short breaks for disabled children. To take part in this consultation please use the following web link, on the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council website:  
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Yours sincerely,

**Julia Cramp**

Joint Service Director, Commissioning and Performance  
NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and Wiltshire Council  
Direct line: 01225 18821  
Email: [julia.cramp@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:julia.cramp@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Enc.

23 July 2013

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Yours sincerely,

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Direct line: 01225 18821  
Email: [julia.cramp@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:julia.cramp@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Enc.

## **Joint Consultation on Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People**

### **Introduction**

This paper provides a summary of the recently completed joint Health/Local Authority review of overnight short breaks for disabled children and young people. The review has considered all overnight short break provision provided by or commissioned by NHS Wiltshire and Wiltshire Council. This includes Hillcote residential unit provided by Wiltshire Community Health Services, and Canon's House residential unit and the Family Link fostering service provided by Wiltshire Council. This paper proposes to move from the current position where significant resource is invested in residential short breaks services to a mixed model of residential and family-based provision.

### **Review methodology**

The review worked to the following principles:

- There should be equity of access across Wiltshire to overnight short breaks for families with a disabled child;
- Parents and carers should have choice between different types of overnight short break provision;
- The funding available for overnight short breaks must be used effectively, avoiding tying up resource in any provision that is not well utilised;
- Any recommendations made as a result of the review should be based on a cost neutral approach so that families with disabled children can be assured that they will continue to receive effective support.

The following tasks were undertaken:

- Analysis of the overall resource across Wiltshire for overnight short breaks;
- Analysis of current activity and use of overnight short breaks provision;
- A survey to ascertain the views of parents and carers who currently use overnight short break services;
- Analysis of similar provision in other authorities.



The review has been overseen by a Steering Group consisting of:

- the Joint Head of Commissioning for Children's Services for NHS Wiltshire and Wiltshire Council;
- the service lead for Canon's House and the Council's Children with Disabilities Teams;
- Wiltshire Council's Lead Commissioner for children with disabilities;
- representatives of Wiltshire Parent Carers Council (a group of approximately 600 parents);
- the Head of Specialist Services with responsibility for Hillcote from Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust;
- representatives of the Council's Family Link service.

### **Current overnight short breaks services**

**Hillcote** is a ten-bedded unit providing residential short breaks services for children and young people aged 4 - 18 with a learning disability and complex needs. The service is provided by Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and commissioned by NHS Wiltshire. The service is available for overnight and day care throughout the year. The service is run from a Grade II listed house in Salisbury (owned by Salisbury Foundation Trust).

**Canon's House** is an eight-bedded registered residential home in Devizes which offers short term breaks for children aged 5 – 18 with a disability and complex needs. The unit offers short breaks of 24 hours or more over weekends and during school holidays. Overnight breaks are provided during midweek in term time. Canon's House has an Outstanding rating from OFSTED.

**Family Link** is a family-based short breaks scheme for disabled children. It is designed to give children a regular short break within a family based setting where children are cared for in a family link carer's own home.

### **Activity data**

Activity for the year 2011-2012 was analysed for all three services. The total number of children using these services was 111.

	<b>Canons House</b>	<b>Hillcote</b>	<b>Family Link</b>
Overnights	2663	756	663
Children receiving overnight breaks	65	21*	19

\*As of July 2013 there are now only 8 children and young people using Hillcote and from April 2014 is anticipated that there would be only 5 children and young people using the service.

The number of children using Hillcote has reduced in the past three years and this presents a significant challenge to the provider. The unit now closes when not required.

The proportion of hours of service delivered by the Family Link service is comparatively low. In other authorities the use of family based short breaks is much higher.

### **Financial analysis**

The total expenditure on the three overnight short break services for Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire in 2011/12 was 1.474m. These costs are direct service costs and do not include any corporate overheads or corporate management costs which are additional.

The cost for providing each service is as follows:

	<b>Canons House (£,000)</b>	<b>Hillcote (£,000)</b>	<b>Family Link (£,000)</b>
Total	745	608	123

The following table shows the share of cost and activity for each service:

	<b>Canons House</b>	<b>Hillcote</b>	<b>Family Link</b>
Cost (£)	51%	41%	8%
Activity (Nights)	66%	18%	16%

Family Link can be considered good value compared to the other services in terms of the comparison of spend to activity. (For every 1% of spend it produces 2% of the activity). This is because family based care is less costly to provide than residential provision.

Comparing the two residential units, Hillcote is a lot more expensive than Canons House in terms of unit costs. A key reason for this is that the numbers of children attending Hillcote has reduced; this has the effect of high unit costs given the high fixed cost element of running a residential unit. The continuing reduction in numbers of children and young people using Hillcote means the cost per child of delivering the service is continuing to rise.

## **Parents' views**

Initially all families using the services were invited by letter to attend formal consultation events in 2012. However, interest was so low that together with Wiltshire Parent Carer Council it was decided to undertake an on line survey instead of the consultations. All families using services were invited to complete a short survey to give their views on provision. Each family was personally contacted and offered a range of ways of responding. Just less than 20% of families using the services responded survey and all but one of these used Canons House.

Overall comments were positive about the quality of the services they currently receive. Key points were:

- The most common reason for using the services from the family perspective was a break from caring.
- The most common benefit to the child identified by parent carers was the opportunity for their child to spend time with other young people of a similar age.
- The preferred option for those using overnight short break services was a residential home. The least preferred option was an increase in community based activities to replace overnight short breaks. (In interpreting this feedback it is important to note that all the respondents to the survey currently use residential short break services).
- There was a strong preference to be able to use services at weekends and during school holidays rather than mid week and term time.

Parents identified difficulties with sleep, behaviour, continence and meal times as key issues that lead to the need for overnight short breaks.

## **The national context**

A review of overnight short breaks provision in other areas has found a general trend of reducing bed capacity within residential facilities and a move towards outreach provision. Some examples are outlined below.

- Peterborough reduced from 21 to 8 bed provision places by offering creative and responsive packages of support in the home. Their new outreach team in the community was linked to their residential provision which reassured families.
- Medway reviewed their services with a recommendation to close their NHS overnight short breaks centre.
- Dorset closed an NHS residential unit and now provides overnight short breaks through a mixed model.

- North Somerset put their overnight short breaks provision out to tender with contracts for sitting services, outreach day care services, an overnight carers' service and a residential unit.
- Newport City Council have employed two full time foster carers and made adaptations to their homes so that they can provide overnight breaks for a number of children.

In summary, the national picture shows a move towards greater use of family based support and a marked reduction in residential overnight short break provision.

### **Options considered**

Based on the results of the review, three broad options were considered:

#### **Option 1 - Keep both residential units open**

Continue with Canons House offering the bulk of overnight short break activity for Wiltshire, Hillcote offering a smaller amount of activity to families in the South of the County and the Family Link service continuing as is.

#### **Option 2 - Close one residential unit**

Use the annual savings from the closure of one unit to invest in alternative services to support children and young people in new ways. This would include an early intervention services that will increase the potential for children to access opportunities with their peers and develop independence skills. Given the geographical locations, activity levels and the unit costs analysis of both services the proposal would be to close Hillcote releasing approximately £608k revenue per annum for investment.

#### **Option 3 - Close both residential units**

Use the combined annual savings from the closure of both Hillcote and Devizes to invest in community based provision.

### **Analysis of options**

#### **Option 1 – Keep both residential units open**

Benefits

- Continuity for existing service users and staff.
- Consistency with the positive survey feedback from parent carers.

## Issues and Risks

- This option does not represent an efficient use of public money because of the low numbers of children and young people using Hillcote and the higher and growing unit costs at Hillcote.
- The decreasing numbers of children using Hillcote means the service is not viable to the provider.
- The low numbers of children using the service at Hillcote means that the main benefit identified for young people in the parent carer's survey - of meeting peers - will no longer be realised.
- Funding will not be released to develop the other desired services required such as early intervention and more services in carers homes to improve outcomes for children.
- This option does not address the equity issues for families living further away from the residential units.

## **Option 2 – Close one residential unit (Hillcote)**

### Benefits

- Release funding for investment in new services to deliver improved outcomes for children.
- An opportunity developing the remaining residential unit as centre of excellence. Staff would work in a 'satellite' capacity with families and children by delivering support in areas such as behaviour, sleep and continence issues.
- Release funding to increase family based provision, increasing the geographical spread of services.
- Resolve issues relating to the financial viability of Hillcote.
- Retain ongoing residential overnight care in line with the wishes of parent carers.

### Issues and Risks

- A change for families who use the service at Hillcote
- Impact to staff at Hillcote
- Managing a change programme in service provision
- Reduction in choice for residential services

### **Option 3 – Close both residential units (Canon’s House and Hillcote)**

#### **Benefits**

- Enable a radical redesign of services
- Maximise revenue and capital available for new services
- Opportunity to provide individualised services for children and young people

#### **Issues and Risks**

- This would not be consistent with feedback from parent carers
- A highly complex change programme would be required
- Risk of gap in provision during the transition to new service models
- Lack of continuity for children and young people and their families
- Based on need it would be likely that a replacement residential unit would be required. This would need a substantial capital reinvestment. The logical place for a replacement unit would be in a central location such as Devizes, which raises the question: Why close Canon’s House in the first place?

### **Proposal**

It is proposed that Option 2 above is implemented because it will ensure a range of services required to meet the needs of families and achieve the best outcomes for children. This option will also ensure a more efficient use of public money.

Specifically the proposal is to:

1. Close Hillcote from April 2014.
2. Reinvest savings in more family based overnight provision, allowing a wider geographical spread of services, greater equity of provision and a more cost effective use of public money.
3. Reinvest savings in additional services for families to help with the key difficulties they have identified (e.g. sleep, incontinence, behaviour and meal times) to empower families and enable improved outcomes for children. These services would work in collaboration with family based carers, Canons House and Special Schools.
4. Develop service specifications for the new services with input from families.
5. Develop the new services so they can start as soon as possible.
6. Jointly manage the change through a Steering Group consisting of officers from Health, Wiltshire Council and representatives from Wiltshire Parent Carer Council
7. Work with families who would otherwise be using Hillcote from April 2014 to ensure the needs of their children and families continue to be fully met.
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## **Joint Consultation on Overnight Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People**

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We have decided to propose these changes to achieve a better range of support for children and families and to make best use of public money.

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## Councillors' Briefing Note No. 152

**Department:** Public Health

**Further Enquiries to:** John Goodall

**Date Prepared:** 29 July 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 716825

### **The NHS Health Check programme in Wiltshire**

In April 2013 responsibility for commissioning NHS Health Checks transferred to local authorities from Primary Care Trusts as part of the transfer of Public Health functions resulting from the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

In Wiltshire during 2012/13, over 30,000 people aged 40 to 74 were invited to attend for a NHS Health Check. Over 14,800 (49%) were completed. Uptake in Wiltshire is similar to the national average and higher than the average for the SW of England. A communications campaign will be launched locally to increase local take up further.

The implementation of the NHS Health Check programme has recently been [reviewed by Public Health England](#). The review reiterated that checking 40-74-year-olds' blood pressure, cholesterol, weight and lifestyle could prevent 650 deaths, 1,600 heart attacks and 4,000 cases of diabetes a year in England.

Introduced in 2009, the programme aims to help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes, hypertension, and kidney disease. It assesses people who have not already been diagnosed with a cardiovascular disease (CVD) condition. National guidance requires the entire eligible population to be invited for a NHS Health Check every 5 years.

CVD is one of the leading causes of death in Wiltshire, accounting for approximately 31% of all deaths. Recent data suggests that in Wiltshire over 15,000 individuals registered with GPs have coronary heart disease, over 9,000 have suffered a stroke or TIA (mini stroke), and over 67,000 have hypertension. There are also individuals who have these diseases and conditions but who have not yet been diagnosed, together with others who may be at risk of developing CVD.

The NHS Health Check assesses an individual's risk of developing CVD over the next 10 years by looking at age, sex, family history, height, weight, cholesterol and blood pressure. Steps to reduce that risk are identified. These may include stopping smoking, losing weight, increasing exercise, or prescribed medication.

Wiltshire's NHS Health Checks programme began with pilot schemes in 2010/11, which developed into a county-wide service in 2011/12. The call and recall service is provided by GPs using their practice lists to invite patients to attend for a check. Approximately 25% of the county's population aged 40-74 is already on a CVD-related register; therefore the total eligible population is approximately 160,000. As NHS Health Checks are offered to 20% each year, this equates to around 8,000 invitations each Quarter, with the aim to attain 75% take up.

A range of services are run in Wiltshire which complement NHS Health Checks. These include Stop Smoking and weight management services, physical activity programmes, and Health Trainers.

A TV programme, Long Live Britain, is scheduled to air on BBC1 either side of the 10pm news on Monday 5th August. For the programme, the production company, Maverick TV organised health screening in Manchester using checks which are similar to the NHS Health Check.

**Maggie Rae, Corporate Director**

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 153

*Service :* Neighbourhood Services

*Further Enquiries to:* Mark Smith

*Direct Line:* 01225 716666

*Date Prepared:* August 2013

#### Ragwort and Japanese Knotweed in Wiltshire

Members may have received a letter regarding Ragwort and Japanese Knotweed in Wiltshire.

We are aware that Ragwort is one of the most frequent causes of plant poisoning of livestock in Britain and we are continuing to work hard to manage this invasive species and others growing on highway and other council owned land.

Since 2004 the council has recorded sites with Ragwort and Japanese knotweed. Our policy of ragwort removal has been successful in many remote locations, and techniques have improved over the years. Ragwort is now at a more manageable level and the council's highway maintenance teams regard the removal of these invasive plants as an integral part of managing the large rural highway network. The Council has an annual ragwort removal programme where priority is the removal of ragwort on these verges, particularly where there is a high risk of spreading to land used for the grazing of horses, other grazing animals, or for the production of animal feed.

If you wish to discuss this further, or require any advice on responding to Ragwort issues in your division, please contact Mark Smith, Director of Neighbourhood Services, who will be pleased to talk with you.

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 154

*Service :* Neighbourhood Services

*Further Enquiries to:* Mark Smith

*Direct Line:* 01225 716666

*Date Prepared:* August, 2013

### **Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme**

Members might like to be aware of the council's success in being used as an Evidenced Case Study in a national pothole follow-up report.

The Highways Maintenance Efficiency Programme (HMEP) exists to transform and improve the condition of roads and highways for every local community. Backed by Government and funded by through the Department for Transport it seeks to share best practice throughout the industry to deliver greater efficiencies so that local highways funding can be fully maximised and go further:-

'Managing local highways is now a critical challenge for local authorities who are in the spotlight and feel concerned about the future of their single biggest asset: local roads and highway infrastructure.'

Wiltshire Council was chosen together nationally with three other authorities in demonstrating how the Pothole Review Recommendations have supported the council's policies and procedures.

Further information and a summary of the report can be read

[www.dft.gov.uk/hmep/docs/potholesreview0913final-01.pdf](http://www.dft.gov.uk/hmep/docs/potholesreview0913final-01.pdf)

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 155

*Service:* Children & Families

*Further Enquiries to:* Owen Evans or Lin Hitchman

*Direct Line:* 01225 716538/01225 713665

*Date Prepared:* 31 July 2013

**Title    WILTSHIRE ADOPTION CAMPAIGN 2013**

### **Background**

1. Wiltshire Council will be running a campaign to encourage more people to volunteer to become adopters.
2. The campaign will run from August 2013 until January 2014, and will use bus sides and digital media.
3. There will be three bursts of publicity: for the launch in August, again during National Adoption Week and finally in January.
4. The number of children waiting to be adopted in Wiltshire has risen from 8 to 11 (37%) in the last year, reflecting a national trend. Nationally there are over 4,000 children waiting to be adopted across the country. The number of people approved as adopters in Wiltshire last year was 32.
5. If suitable matches cannot be found in Wiltshire, many adopters will be matched with children from outside Wiltshire. Any interviews will need to reflect this, to answer the question why the campaign is necessary when the number of children in the county waiting to be adopted is low and the number of parents waiting to adopt already exceeds the number of children by a wide margin.

## **Public Relations Campaign**

6. A PR campaign will also run to support the advertising. This will consist of press releases being issued at each of the three stages of the campaign. The press releases will target local weekly papers, parish magazines, local radio stations, community websites and TV.
7. In the first stage of the campaign (August), a press releases will be issued at the launch of the campaign, and a second a few weeks later with profiles of children (with names changed) waiting to be adopted.
8. The second stage of the campaign will be based around National Adoption Week in November and will also be accompanied by a press release. This press release would aim to include a case study of someone from Wiltshire who has successfully an adopted a child or children. An approach will be made to Wiltshire Life and others about carrying the story.
9. A Council spokesperson may be required for radio interviews. Ideally this will include live interviews into BBC Radio Wiltshire's breakfast or drive time programmes.
10. The final stage of the campaign, in January 2014, will be supported by a press release quoting figures for the number of people coming forward as adopters and possibly include a case study of someone who has successfully completed the Adopter Recruitment process.
11. Each stage of the PR campaign will be followed up by direct contact with media outlets to encourage them to run with the story and to find out any additional information they may need.
12. Amongst the children waiting to be adopted there are sibling groups, older children, children with disabilities and children from ethnic minority backgrounds. Interviews need to reflect that there are children waiting to be adopted from a wide set of backgrounds and circumstances.

## **Q&A**

### **Why is the Council running this campaign?**

Following various high-profile cases the number of children being taken into care has increased. This is reflected across the country, where over 4,000 children are waiting to be adopted. An additional 600 adopters are needed each year to keep up with the increasing number of children waiting to be adopted.

### **Does Wiltshire have a particular problem?**

The number of children awaiting adoption in Wiltshire is lower than many local authorities, and the County has a good track record in attracting adopters, but we need to do more to help reduce the number of children waiting to be adopted both locally and nationally.

Currently there is a need within Wiltshire for adopters who could parent sibling groups of 2+ children aged 3-7. In addition there is a need for adopters who could meet the needs of children with complex health needs or a disability. Some of the sibling groups have a child with a disability.

### **What is the Government's stance on Adoption?**

The Government began their reforms to the adoption system in 2010. Central to the Coalition's reform programme is a belief in the importance of recruiting more adoptive families and reducing the amount of time a child waits to be adopted. This can be seen in, changes to recruitment and assessment, the increased use of 'fostering for adoption', changes to the way in which children are matched with adoptive families, a greater amount of support for adopters and greater accountability of local authorities in regard to the number of children placed for adoption and the time this takes.

### **How long does it take to adopt a child?**

We aim to meet or exceed to Government's target of six months.



## **Who can and can't adopt?**

There are few limitations on the type of person who can be considered as adopters. We assess people on merit, not on age, marital status, income or sexuality. It doesn't matter if you own or rent your home, work full-time or not at all – what is important is whether you can offer a child or a group of siblings a caring and loving environment in which to grow up and thrive.

## **Does the child have a say in the process?**

The voice of the child and their wishes and feelings are fully taken into account throughout the adoption process. The child's welfare, safety and needs are paramount. For the child's welfare it is often necessary for them to be adopted away from the area where their birth parents live. If there is no suitable match available in the Wiltshire we will search regionally or nationally for a suitable match.

## **What is Wiltshire Council doing to encourage people to adopt older children/ children with disabilities/sibling groups?**

By encouraging as many potential adopters as possible from as wide a range of backgrounds we are more likely to find people who would like to adopt children with different circumstances.

The needs of disabled children will be recognised and promoted when decisions are made.

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 156

*Service:* Highways & Streetscene

*Further Enquiries to:* Adrian Hampton

*Direct Line:* 01249 706799 EXT 21799

*Date Prepared:* 5 August 2013

**Title: Update on new Highways and Streetscene contract - Community Days**

Wiltshire Council's new Highway and Streetscene contract includes a provision to support community lead priorities.

Communities, through their local parish or town council, are able to request that Wiltshire Council provides staff and equipment to assist in a community improvement activity. This will be provided on an allocated day known as a Community Day.

The idea is to encourage communities to identify local highway and amenity issues and then work in partnership with the council to resolve them.

This allows the council's limited resources to work in partnership with volunteer groups to deliver more in the community. Usually the council undertakes work on its land, with community groups assisting on privately owned land. There is much anecdotal evidence that if you improve whole areas this leads to greater community ownership and long term improvements in the maintenance of those areas.

The council can also offer advice and provide loan litter picking equipment, personal protective equipment, bags, and fluorescent vests to aid community groups.

Services provided during a Community Day include: grass cutting, litter collection, graffiti removal, pot hole filling, hedge cutting and other maintenance services.

The number of Community Days available are limited, with priority given to community activities that offer the maximum benefit to their areas.

If a parish or town council is interested in a Community Day they are requested to express interest to their Wiltshire Council coordinator and provide details of the proposals.

Parish and town council clerks have all been issued with contact details of their local community coordinator.

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 157

*Service:* Public Health

*Further Enquiries to:* Amy Bird

*Direct Line:* 0300 0034566 or mobile 0778 5320 485

*Date Prepared:* 1 August 2013

**Title: Update on the Temporary Closure of Trowbridge Birthing Centre by Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**

As you will be aware on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2013 Great Western Hospital, the provider of community maternity services in Wiltshire notified the Council and other partners of its decision to temporarily close Trowbridge Birthing Centre.

Great Western Hospital's lack of consultation with Wiltshire Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the run up to this decision being made has understandably caused anxiety within the local community.

To ensure lessons are learnt and that the views of Wiltshire Council have been articulated I have now met with both Stephen Rowland's, Chair of Wiltshire CCG and Nerissa Vaughan, Chief Executive of GWH to discuss the situation.

I have received confirmation from GWH that this closure is temporary - with the services at Trowbridge to reopen on 30<sup>th</sup> September – and have been further assured that robust plans are in place to ensure this happens. I have asked Great Western Hospital to provide an update on their progress towards reopening at the next Health and Wellbeing Board scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> September.

Jane Scott

Leader of the Council

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 158

*Service :* Economy and Regeneration

*Further Enquiries to:* Henning Totz      *Direct Line:* 01225 718461

*Date Prepared:* August 2013

### **Wiltshire Core Strategy – Consultation on Schedule of Proposed Modifications and associated documents**

The Wiltshire Core Strategy, which sets out long-term planning and development aims for Wiltshire, was examined in public by an independent Planning Inspector between May and July 2013.

Following the examination hearing sessions the council has published the following documents to give all interested parties the opportunity to comment before the Inspector completes his report:

- A Schedule of Proposed Modifications (August 2013) containing 'main' and 'minor' changes to the Core Strategy
- An update to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA)
- An update to the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

The Inspector has also requested that the council invites comments on the implications that the two recent ministerial statements relating to wind farm development and national planning practice guidance for renewable energy may have on the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

The consultation will take place for a six week period from **Tuesday 27 August to Wednesday 9 October 2013 inclusive**.

Details of where you can view the Core Strategy, Schedule of Proposed Modifications and associated documents (including the SA update, HRA update, ministerial statements and planning practice guidance document) are **attached**.

# Attachment

## **Wiltshire Core Strategy: Consultation on Schedule of Proposed Modifications (including SA and HRA updates); two ministerial statements relating to wind farm development; and national planning practice guidance for renewable and low carbon energy**

The Wiltshire Core Strategy, which provides the planning policy framework for Wiltshire, recently underwent discussion at a public examination conducted by an independent Planning Inspector.

Following the examination hearing sessions the council has published a **Schedule of Proposed Modifications** (August 2013) containing 'main' and 'minor' changes to the Core Strategy to give all interested parties the opportunity to comment before the Inspector completes his report.

The consultation will take place for a six week period from **Tuesday 27 August to Wednesday 9 October 2013 inclusive**.

The Schedule of Proposed Modifications should be read in conjunction with the Wiltshire Core Strategy Pre-Submission Document (February 2012) and the previously consulted on Schedule of Proposed Changes (September 2012).

A 'tracked changes' version of the Core Strategy containing all of the modifications being considered by the Inspector (September 2012 and August 2013) has also been prepared and is available on the council's website (details below).

Representations are invited upon the 'soundness' and legal compliance of the modifications only and should not relate to other matters. Once the consultation has ended the Inspector will consider the responses received on the 'main' modifications and assess whether they raise any issues of 'soundness' and legal compliance.

The council will also take into account any consultation comments made on the 'minor' modifications. These changes do not need to be considered by the Inspector but can be made by the council on adoption of the Plan.

The council has produced an update to the **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** and **Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)** based on the Schedule of Proposed Modifications. Comments can also be made on these updates.

The Inspector has also requested that the council invites comments on the implications that the following ministerial statements and national planning practice guidance may have on the Core Strategy:

- **Local planning and onshore wind:**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/local-planning-and-onshore-wind>
- **Onshore wind**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/written-ministerial-statement-by-edward-davey-onshore-wind>

- **Planning practice guidance for renewable and low carbon energy**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-practice-guidance-for-renewable-energy>

The consultation documents and representation forms can be viewed and downloaded on the Wiltshire Council website:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planninganddevelopment/planningpolicy/wiltshirecorestrategy/wiltshirecorestrategyexamination.htm>

Alternatively copies of the documents can be viewed at the main council offices (see below) and at all libraries across Wiltshire during normal opening hours:

<b>Wiltshire Council</b> County Hall Trowbridge BA14 8JN	<b>Wiltshire Council</b> 27/29 Milford Street Salisbury SP1 2AP
<b>Wiltshire Council</b> Monkton Park Chippenham SN15 1ER	<b>Wiltshire Council</b> 3-5 Snuff Street Devizes SN10 1FG

A separate form should be completed for each representation you wish to make. Completed representation forms can be sent electronically via email to [spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk) or posted to the following address:

Spatial Planning, Economy and Regeneration, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

Only those comments that are made in writing/email and that are received at the postal or email address provided within the time period specified will be considered. Late representations will not be forwarded to the Inspector.

For further information please contact the Spatial Planning team on 01225 713223 or email: [spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk)

**Alistair Cunningham**

Director, Economy and Regeneration  
Interim Director, Development Services  
Wiltshire Council

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 159

*Service :* Sustainable Transport

*Further Enquiries to:* Rob Murphy *Direct Line:* 01225 713458

*Date Prepared:* August 2013

#### **Connecting Wiltshire website and Personal Travel Planning**

In July 2012, Wiltshire Council secured £4.5 million through the government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to improve transport services and transport information in Wiltshire. These improvements include:

- Working with First Great Western to provide a new Trans Wilts rail service through Melksham. Subject to current franchise negotiations, we expect to make an announcement on the service in the next 6 weeks.
- Improving connections to rail stations such as walking and cycling routes, cycle parking and improvements to bus services. These are underway.
- Improving information about transport in Wiltshire through a new website, marketing campaign, and personal travel planning advice service. This note explains these.

The new Connecting Wiltshire website [www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk](http://www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk) will launch on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September. It will provide a 'one-stop shop' including a journey planner for people to find information on walking, cycling, rail, buses and driving in Wiltshire. The journey planner offers more integrated results than existing journey planners which only suggest routes by car and/or public transport. The Connecting Wiltshire journey planner suggests a route by car, public transport, cycle and walking.

#### **Connecting Wiltshire website**

The website provides transport information from a variety of sources (such as public transport companies).

It is aimed at people who are trying to plan their journeys and it will provide information on all modes of transport. The new website is also required to host the journey planner and provide technical features that the council website does not. The council's website provides travel information for stakeholders but not a journey planner service.

Most other councils have these websites, although our journey planner is a new feature that only Bristol and Swindon currently have.

### **LSTF funding**

The LSTF is ring-fenced and it requires councils to include revenue money to be spent on marketing and information related to sustainable transport.

### **Personal travel planning (PTP)**

PTP involves trained travel advisers offering individuals advice about their travel choices and helping them to change their travel behaviour. People who are receptive to advice are offered tailored travel information and incentives (such as a daily bus ticket) or the chance to win prizes (e.g. cycle lights, travel mugs, etc) if they agree to try a new form of transport. This type of programme has been seen to reduce car driver trips typically by around 11% and reduced the distance travelled by car by 12%.

There are three types of PTP programme that we are running:

- **Residential** – Our travel advisers go door-to-door in a number of locations throughout Wiltshire.
- **Business** – This has started at Salisbury District Hospital and will soon be starting in Wiltshire Council offices. It will expand to other businesses in 2014.
- **Schools** – This will be running in schools in Chippenham. If successful it may be expanded elsewhere in the county.



## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 160

*Service:* Parking Services

*Further Enquiries to:* Richard Mortimer, Parking Services Manager

*Direct Line:* 01249 706285, internal 21285

*Date Prepared:* 04/09/13

*Title:* Parking and Sustainable Transport Update

In light of the recent national and local media coverage on parking and its impact on the economy, this briefing note aims to update councillors on parking and sustainable transport in Wiltshire particularly in relation to Salisbury.

#### **Wiltshire's economy**

Boosting Wiltshire's economy is one of the council's key priorities and so far despite the national economic situation it is faring relatively well. Jobseeker claimant figures are below 2percent compared to 3.4percent nationally and 2.2 percent regionally.

Last year Salisbury was recorded as having the fewest number of empty shops in any retail centre in Britain and major companies such as Greggs and Hitachi are continuing to invest in the county. This context is paramount when looking at car parking and transport in the county. Car parking cannot be looked at in isolation which is why the council services responsible for these areas work closely together taking a holistic approach.

#### **Salisbury Park & Ride:**

A comparison of car parking usage and Park & Ride usage indicates a clear migration of users from the city's long stay car parks. The numbers overall using long stay around Salisbury has remained stable pointing to the council's Local Transport Plan 3's (LTP3) objectives in moving traffic to the Park & Ride sites being met. In 2010/11 – the year which preceded the council's introduction of the (LTP3) – usage was at an average of 23,000 cars per month compared with the following year (2011/12) of more than 27,000 cars monthly; an increase of more than 12 percent.

Data is being collected and analysed for the current financial year. However, comparing January and February this year usage has increased by 3.6% (an average of 24694 cars).

The more people who use Park & Ride results in fewer cars travelling into Salisbury's city centre, reduced congestion and improved air quality making the city even more appealing to tourists and shoppers.

### **Season car parking tickets:**

In December 2011 the council reduced car parking season ticket prices by 20 percent with the aim of helping people whose options on taking up alternative forms of transport were limited. The response to this was an increase in take up by 63 percent (before the reduction an average of 17 tickets were sold compared to 74 tickets currently sold). So far, this year's figures show an increase on purchases of more than 3.5 percent to 77 tickets sold per month. This increase in season car parking ticket sales has inevitably had a direct effect on pay and display income and will continue to reduce as more season tickets are sold.

### **Parking charges**

Car parking charges across Wiltshire will be reviewed in 2014.

Any surplus income generated from car parking has been put back into subsidising certain bus routes ensuring people without cars are able to travel within the county.

To support local people who wish to come together to hold events and activities within communities the council offered two concessionary days for each banded town that have parking charges. The choice of days is the town and parish councils and is generally being used to support local community events. This initiative has, in 2012, seen ten days used between eight town councils. In 2013 the initiative has seen 11 days used by nine town councils. This will be continued and reminders of this will be sent out to town council regularly to ensure good take-up.

### **Car parking in Salisbury**

To add some historical context, charges have increased in Salisbury since 2000 when Wiltshire County Council and Salisbury District Council jointly adopted the Salisbury Transport Plan to seek to address a number of economic, social and environmental objectives.

The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan Car Parking Strategy 2011-2026 (<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council/howthecouncilworks/plansstrategiespolicies/transportpoliciesandstrategies/localtransportplan3.htm>) was approved by Full Council in February 2011 following in-depth research undertaken by our then consultants, Mouchel, and an extensive public consultation exercise. The strategy outlines that the supply and management of parking can help achieve a number of objectives including:

- 1) support the local economy (e.g. by making it easy for shoppers and tourists to visit Wiltshire's market towns) and facilitate development growth

- 2) meet residents' needs for car parking near their homes (e.g. by introducing Residents' Parking Zones).
- 3) encourage sustainable travel and help reduce reliance on cars
- 4) raise revenue for the council to reinvest in public transport such as bus services

Salisbury was put into its own band in terms of parking charges because it is a Wiltshire's only city – which attracts a large number of tourists and shoppers – and it has a wider range of sustainable transport alternatives. Following representations, including from Salisbury City Centre Management, the council initially agreed a £2.00 flat charge (uplifted to £2.20 by resolution (v) in the report) for up to two hours. Subsequently, in response to an expressed public desire in Salisbury, Cabinet agreed to the reintroduction of a 1hr charge (£1.50) and a revised 2hr charge (£2.50) (see <http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=6406&Ver=4>).

In considering a report on the countywide impact of car parking charges, Full Council agreed to a 10p reduction in the 1hr charge in Salisbury (see <http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=17274#mgDocuments>). Also, in analysing the impacts of the charges, the report's key conclusions were that:

The council has developed a Salisbury Transport Strategy to help support and deal with the development growth in Salisbury. Parking charges and car parking supply form part of this strategy. The aims of the strategy are to:

- enable more people to enter the city centre – 45 percent by sustainable modes supporting the vitality, viability and resilience of Salisbury's economy in a sustainable way
- reduce congestion especially at the most critical junctions in the highway network
- improve air quality

## **Sustainable transport**

In July 2012, Wiltshire Council secured £4.5 million through the government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to improve transport services and transport information in Wiltshire.

Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) to improve transport services and transport information in Wiltshire. These improvements include:

- Working with First Great Western to provide a new Trans Wilts rail service through Melksham. Subject to current franchise negotiations, we expect to make an announcement on the service in the next 6 weeks.
- Improving connections to rail stations such as walking and cycling routes, cycle parking and improvements to bus services. These are underway.
- Improving information about transport in Wiltshire through a new website, marketing campaign, and personal travel planning advice service.

## COUNCILLORS BRIEFING NOTE

### No. 161

**Service Area:** Sustainable Transport

**Further Enquiries to:** Allan Creedy

**Date Prepared:** September 2013

**Direct Line:** (01225) 713444

### Traffic in Vicinity of the New Stonehenge Visitors Centre

This note is intended as an update for Parishes and Members regarding recent changes to roads near Stonehenge

It is acknowledged that there have been significant delays on the A303 this summer, and that these delays will have been affected to some degree by the closure of the A344 at Stonehenge Bottom.

The planning application for the new visitor centre proposal by English Heritage was supported by Wiltshire Council, but the stopping up of the A344 in the vicinity of Stonehenge was subject to an independent inquiry (arranged by the Department for Transport) following an application by English Heritage. Neither the Council nor the Highways Agency objected to the stopping up of the A344, but many others did; it was accepted that there would be a degree of additional delay on the A303. The Inquiry Inspector heard the objections to the road closure, but found the proposal to be acceptable, and approved the making of an Order to stop up a length of the A344.

Two roundabouts were constructed for different reasons. The A303/A360 Longbarrow junction was improved by the Highways Agency to provide capacity for the forecast flows on both routes through the junction. The A360/B3086/A344 junction was provided by English Heritage to accommodate the forecast flows at this junction, and to provide a safer form of junction for the future traffic flows.

We do not yet have data available to indicate the extent to which traffic flows on the A303 and local roads might have increased this year, but the Council understands that the July visitor numbers to Stonehenge were at a peak. This could be an indicator that A303 traffic levels have increased during the same period.

We have been aware that, in addition to the effects of traffic slowing to view the Stones, there was also an issue with drivers attempting to turn across the traffic stream to enter Byway 12, which passes close to the Stones. Action has been taken to address this latter problem, with traffic regulation orders being secured to prohibit right turning into and out of the byway at its A303 junction. It is hoped that this measure will be respected by drivers, including those whose satnav devices might otherwise have directed them onto the byway.

The Highways Agency is responsible for the traffic on the A303, and they are well aware of local concerns. Wiltshire Council will continue to work with the Highways Agency to find ways to mitigate the problems of delays on the A303 and the additional traffic on the alternative local routes.

## **Next Steps**

The traffic situation is anticipated to stabilise over the months following the opening of the new visitor centre, when an objective assessment can be made in relation to necessary actions. These are expected to include monitoring, and, if necessary, address the anticipated impact of vehicles on Byway 12, and to make arrangements to collect some traffic data to assess the ongoing impacts on local communities.

Visitor numbers to Stonehenge will also be monitored so that before and after comparisons can be made. English Heritage intend to erect local fold-down signing to alert drivers who are not pre-booked not to enter the visitor centre on those days when visitor numbers are at their highest. This could lead to some issues on the local network.

We will continue to work with the DfT and Highways Agency to press for a resolution to the constraints on the A303 trunk road, particularly as it affects journey time reliability around Stonehenge.

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 162

**Department:** Transformation

**Further Enquiries to:**  
Sarah Cosentino – Business Analyst

**Date Prepared:** September 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 793349

### Wiltshire Online Programme – July – September news update

*The Wiltshire Online programme has the overall aim of removing the barriers to getting online for the residents of Wiltshire. Cost, skills and infrastructure have been identified as the three biggest barriers and progress is being made to remove all three.*

#### Summary of Progress

- The Great Western Broadband (GWB) has released the names of the second communities to benefit from the project and residents will be able to order improved broadband from summer 2014
- The GWB programme has completed over 30km of test rod and sub duct work. BT, working with Openreach and Highways and Planning teams, have completed 15 surveys for new CAB locations with another 25 in progress
- Superfast Business knowledge hub has been launched and open to all Wiltshire businesses
- A team of volunteers are delivering free basic IT support across over 75% of the county
- Wiltshire Online volunteers delivered ITea and Biscuits to Chippenham residents to support Age UK's national campaign

#### Public Wi-Fi

All Wiltshire Council libraries, the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre and the majority of the youth development centres have the Wiltshire Online Wi-Fi service which allows members of the public to connect their own devices to a Wi-Fi network for free. Users register their details and are sent a pass code via text and email to allow access to the network. To keep users safe whilst online the network is filtered and any offensive web pages are blocked giving users confidence to use the internet and stay safe.

## Digital Literacy

The project can now boast a team of volunteers (a total of 67) offering computer support in 14 of the 18 community areas. This amounts to just over 75% of the county. Work is continuing to recruit volunteer coordinators in the remaining community areas of Corsham, Amesbury, Tidworth and Pewsey. All volunteers receive comprehensive training and ongoing support from the team.

In total over 250 people have registered for support and this number is set to grow substantially in the next 6 months as recruitment of more volunteers continues.

The week of 16 – 22 September marked Age UK's ITea and Biscuits campaign: a national drive to help support and encourage older people to get online and explore the magic of computers and the world wide web. Wiltshire Online took the opportunity to reach out to the people of Chippenham by teaming up with the area's Rotary Club to offer a morning of free, basic computer support. Digital champion volunteer and Rotarian Diana Wright organised the event, with the support of Wiltshire Online staff and fellow digital champions. The day was a resounding success, with some 11 local people receiving one-to-one support. Our volunteers helped with a wide range of queries, from how to upload digital images and use emails, through to accessing ebay and sending texts on a mobile phone.

Here are some comments from one 71 year old gentleman learner:

*It was very much worth coming, although I do use computers in certain areas, mostly related to music, there are various other areas where I am unfamiliar. So I picked up much useful information today and it was great! Thanks so much.*

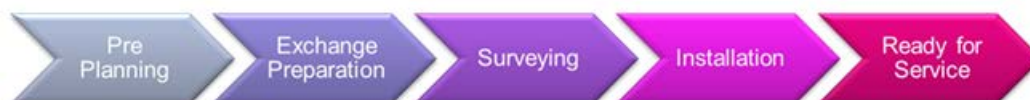
For more information about how you can support the digital literacy project in your area please contact Jenny Wilcockson on 01225 793 349

## GWB Broadband rollout

Over the next three years the partnership will ensure that at least 91% of all premises across Wiltshire are able to access superfast broadband (24Mb+) and that all premises in the intervention area are able to access a minimum standard broadband service (2Mb+) by March 2016.

To deliver fibre broadband requires the completion of a number of stages. As with any complex and wide scale infrastructure deployment there are areas which will be delivered earlier than others as the time it takes to work through each stage will vary from street to street, parish to parish. The rollout is due for completion in Spring 2016.

Below is a breakdown of the stages involved



The rollout is being designed to ensure the network provides the greatest possible coverage of superfast broadband with the available funding. We are taking into account many factors, including geography, planning requirements and the location of the existing telecoms infrastructure. These factors will dictate the order of the rollout. This approach will ensure the best value for money, but it does mean that we cannot prioritise specific locations and deviate from how the network will be rolled out across the area, as doing so would result in a time-consuming and costly project, and would ultimately reduce the number of premises we are able to deliver superfast broadband to.

On Monday 23 September it was announced that Kington Langley, Castle Combe, Broad Town, Broad Hinton, Whiteparish and Salisbury will benefit from the investment. Homes and businesses in these locations will be able to order fibre broadband from summer 2014. Coverage is being expanded in Salisbury, most of which already has access to the technology through BT's commercial roll-out.



The six latest locations join Royal Wootton Bassett, Purton, Alderbury and Downton, which were announced in June as the first communities to be included in rollout plans. The partnership aims to make fibre broadband available to more than 10,000 Wiltshire homes and businesses by June 2014.

Residents and businesses are eager to know when they will be able to access superfast broadband and what speeds they will benefit from. The Wiltshire Online team are very keen to work with Area Boards to help disseminate a clear and concise message. At this stage work is still progressing through the planning and surveying stage so only very high level information can be made available. As the surveying stage for each area is completed the result will be a robust action plan. The Wiltshire Online Team is working with the Area Board team to include broadband information in their forward plans to ensure that the Wiltshire Online Team alongside BT can visit each and every Area Board. These visits will be timed to coincide with the rollout.

At all times the Wiltshire Online website will host the most up to date information.

### **Superfast Broadband Business Support:**

Peninsula Enterprise, in partnership with Business West, are offering fully funded support to help ambitious businesses in Wiltshire identify, maximise and profit from the opportunities that superfast broadband and new technologies present. *More than 1,500 eligible businesses in Wiltshire are set to benefit from a £1 million investment from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Wiltshire Online to help them exploit new digital technologies enabled by faster broadband.*

Support offered, under the banner of Superfast Business, includes access to a team of expert advisers and technology specialists, a programme of events on hot topics offering both inspirational insights and practical solutions and access to an online knowledge hub website. The first event, focusing on tips for winning and keeping customers online, was held in Trowbridge on 12 September and further events are planned throughout September and October. Eligible businesses can then go forward and have access to a Business Advisor who will work with the business to put together a Support Plan to meet identified needs. Referrals will be made to specialist advisors who will provide the support required; businesses will be eligible for up to 12 hours of free one to one assistance. All businesses are able to access the Superfast Business Knowledge hub at <http://www.superfastbusiness.co.uk/>.

### **MIP (Mobile Infrastructure Project)**

MIP is part of a £150m government project delivered by BDUK (Broadband Delivery UK). This national project will identify current voice signal 'not spots' areas within the UK and Northern Ireland and provide the eligible areas with a minimum of 2G (voice quality only) access by erecting new masts that will be available to all four mobile operators.

Arqiva, BDUKs nominated supplier are completed surveys across the country to identify potential 'not spots', once the surveys are complete Wiltshire Council will be advised.

Wiltshire Council has been asked to support this project, the role will be to work with Arqiva to determine the land ownership of these sites, liaise with our planning department and provide information to support engagement with the local areas.

More information is expected in the Autumn.

### **Low cost laptops**

The low cost laptop project has been deemed a success by both partners and recipients. As part of the pilot phase for this project 30 laptops were provided to both Age UK Salisbury District and Carer Support Wiltshire. All laptops have been successfully issued to eligible individuals. Each recipient has received a laptop, mouse and carry bag as well as support logging on and using their new laptop. The project team has recently sought feedback from both the recipients and our partners Age UK Salisbury District and Carer Support Wiltshire. Feedback has been extremely positive from all parties with one recipient saying 'I love it, love it, love it. I have been able to stay in contact with my relatives in Australia, I enjoy downloading music and it has changed my life. I want to thank Wiltshire Council



and Age UK Salisbury District for enabling me to have this as without it I wouldn't have been able to afford one'

Early indications show that Carer Support Wiltshire would like a further 15 laptops and Age UK Salisbury District already have a waiting list of 25 people. The Wiltshire Online team are now exploring opportunities to source new equipment to build upon the success.

### **General queries**

The Wiltshire Online website ([www.wiltshireonline.org](http://www.wiltshireonline.org)) is intended to be the first port of call for any member of the public. We will regularly update the website throughout the course of the programme.

Sarah Cosentino  
Business Analyst, Programme Office  
Wiltshire Online

## COUNCILLORS BRIEFING NOTE

### No. 163

**Service Area:** Economy and Regeneration

**Further Enquiries to:** Georgina Clampitt-Dix  
Head of Spatial Planning

**Date Prepared:** September 2013

**Direct Line:** (01225) 713472

### Update on Community Infrastructure Levy

#### Introduction

This briefing summarises the current position regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in Wiltshire and sets out an updated timetable to take into account recent Government guidance and subsequent consultation on further reforms to the CIL Regulations. The updated timetable also reflects the synergy between the Wiltshire Core Strategy and CIL, which will be used to help fund infrastructure to support new development across the county.

#### What is the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)?

CIL is a charge on new development to help pay for infrastructure to support growth. From April 2014, as currently prescribed<sup>1</sup>, councils will effectively lose the ability to pool contributions from development towards infrastructure. By implementing CIL, councils will retain a vital income stream that helps to deliver, among other things, secondary schools and major transport schemes that are generally funded from more than one development.

The Community Infrastructure Levy 2013 (Amendment) Regulations (April 2013) set out how local communities will also benefit from CIL. Town and parish councils will receive 15% of CIL funds raised in their area, or 25% if they have an adopted neighbourhood plan in place. They will decide upon how and where the money is spent.

#### Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule consultation

Between October and November 2012, the Council consulted on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule. A charging schedule sets out how much the Council will ask for in CIL contributions from different types of development. **Table 1** shows the proposed rates of CIL in Wiltshire.

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<sup>1</sup> The Government has recently consulted on further reforms to CIL. An aspect of this consultation relates to the dates for implementing CIL and reducing the role currently played by Section 106 planning obligations (further details below).

Type of development	Rate of CIL
Residential	£70 per sqm <sup>2</sup>
Retail ( <i>except retail warehouse, supermarkets and similar development</i> )	£0 per sqm
Retail warehouse, supermarkets and similar development	£175 per sqm
Student housing and hotels	£70 per sqm
All other uses	£0 per sqm

**Table 1 - Proposed rates of CIL**

(Source: [Wiltshire Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule, October 2012](#))

### New CIL Guidance

In December 2012, the Government published new statutory guidance, which was updated in April 2013. This substantially increased the amount of evidence needed to support a CIL charging schedule, requiring that the Council:

- Justifies why it decided to set CIL at a specific rate (or rates);
- Demonstrates that CIL will not harm delivery of the Local Plan as a whole (i.e. Core Strategy);
- Shows how CIL will strike a balance between funding infrastructure and not putting development across Wiltshire throughout the plan period (up to 2026) at risk;
- Assesses the economic viability of strategic allocations and regeneration sites in the Core Strategy, and
- Sets out a draft list of projects or type of infrastructure that are to be funded by CIL (i.e. the 'Regulation 123' CIL spending list) and its future policy approaches to Section 106 Agreements at the draft charging schedule consultation stage.

### Government consultation on further changes to CIL Regulations

Between April and May 2013, the Government consulted on further proposed changes to the CIL Regulations. The wide scope of these changes affects the setting and implementation of CIL rates and included:

- Delaying the introduction of further limitations to the use of pooled planning obligations from April 2014 until April 2015;
- Exempting self-build homes from CIL;
- Making it easier to apply exceptional circumstances relief from CIL;
- Extending the scope of social housing relief from CIL to discounted market housing;
- Preventing double-charging through CIL and Section 278 (highways) agreements;
- Incorporating changes introduced by the recent guidance into the CIL Regulations;
- Extending the phasing of CIL payments to all types of planning permission;
- Allowing payments in kind of both land and infrastructure either on or off-site;
- Deducting existing floor space from the CIL liability if the use has not been abandoned;
- No additional CIL liability for new applications that introduce changes but do not increase floor space to permitted, but not completed, schemes; and
- Modifications to the appeals procedure for CIL.

<sup>2</sup> CIL is charged in £ per square metre of gross internal floor space of the development

The implications for the Council are the extra time and cost of ensuring that the evidence base, the process for setting CIL rates and their implementation are in full compliance with the new guidance and proposed changes to the CIL Regulations. As they apply to all councils who have not published a Draft CIL Charging Schedule for consultation, this extra work must be undertaken before the Council can proceed any further with the process.

### **Wiltshire Core Strategy public examination - next steps indicative timetable**

CIL must be spent on infrastructure to support new development. The Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out future levels of housing and employment development and is underpinned by an infrastructure evidence base. The CIL examination should not reopen infrastructure planning that supports a sound Local Plan; as such it is important for the CIL programme to be aligned with the Core Strategy, which is currently undergoing examination by a Planning Inspector. The following is an indicative timetable, over which the Council has limited control because the examination process is led by the Planning Inspector.

- Examination hearing sessions - finished on 19 July 2013
- Consultation on modifications to be made to the Plan - 27 August to 9 October 2013 (six weeks)
- Receipt of Inspector's Report - anticipated November/December 2013
- Adoption - early 2014

### **Updated CIL timetable**

The updated timetable will ensure that the evidence base and policy approaches will comply with the new guidance and proposed amendments to the CIL Regulations. It also reflects the close relationship between CIL and the Core Strategy, enabling the Council to take the examination into account but, also, to consult upon a Draft Charging Schedule as soon as possible.

<b>Stage</b>		<b>Date</b>
Prepare for implementation by establishing accounting and reporting systems.  (By April 2014)	Finalise evidence base in compliance with new guidance and proposed amendments to the CIL Regulations.	By November 2013
	Approval to consult on the Draft Charging Schedule and, following consultation, submission for an independent examination.	Cabinet Meeting: 17 December 2013
	Consultation on the Draft Charging Schedule	January - February 2013 (six weeks)
	Submission of Draft Charging Schedule for independent examination	March 2014
	Independent examination	May 2014
	Adoption and implementation	Cabinet/ Full Council: July 2014

**Councillors' Briefing Note**  
**No. 164**

**Department:** Public Health

**Further Enquiries to:** John Goodall

**Date Prepared:** 8 October 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 716825

**Type 2 Diabetes – reducing the risk in Wiltshire**

The prevalence of diabetes both nationally and in Wiltshire is rising. Spending on diabetes care currently accounts for around 10% of the national NHS budget. There are currently nearly 20,000 diabetics diagnosed in Wiltshire and an estimated further 7,000 people remain undiagnosed.

Whilst type 1 diabetes often develops in people under 40 and is not preventable, 90% of diabetes is type 2 and in many cases may be prevented by maintaining a healthy weight and an active lifestyle. The negative impact of diabetes on the lives of people in Wiltshire, and the future cost to local public services could potentially be reduced by early detection and treatment of, or prevention of type 2 diabetes. Work is therefore underway, led by Public Health, to raise awareness of risk factors amongst the general public and encourage those at high risk to get tested.

Diabetes can result in blindness, amputation, kidney failure and heart disease. Early diagnosis, treatment and good control of diabetes is essential to reduce the chances of developing complications and to improve people's chances of living a long and healthy life. On behalf of Wiltshire Council, and with the support of NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Diabetes UK will be touring Wiltshire during October to raise awareness of the condition and to offer residents a free type 2 diabetes risk assessment.

Those with type 2 diabetes, may complain of needing to pass urine all the time, excessive thirst, fatigue and repeated infections. However many people do not experience any symptoms and so recognising those people at risk is vital. Overweight patients are at an increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes. A simple blood test through the GP will diagnose diabetes and Wiltshire Council is working with our health service partners to raise its profile. Our work to combat the rise in the number of cases of type 2 diabetes also involves promoting and enabling healthy lifestyles.

All those visiting the Diabetes UK Roadshow will have the opportunity to talk to an expert and have their risk level assessed. Those who are given a 'moderate' or 'high' risk assessment will be signposted to their local GP for further support and a blood test, if appropriate. Expert advice and information will be available on diet, physical activity, and the different types of diabetes.

The Diabetes UK bus will be at the following locations:

Tuesday 15 October - Fore Street, Trowbridge 9am – 5pm

Wednesday 16 October – George Lane car park, Marlborough 9am – 4.30pm

Thursday 17 October – Guildhall Square, Salisbury 9am – 4.30pm

Friday 18 October - The Buttercross, Market Place, Chippenham 9am – 4.30pm

**Maggie Rae, Corporate Director**

## Councillors Briefing Note

### No. 165

**Service :** Economic Development and Planning

**Further Enquiries to:** Alistair Cunningham

**Date Prepared:** 4 November, 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 713203

### Solar Farm Developments, Wiltshire

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This briefing note is a fair representation of developments with regard to solar farms in Wiltshire at the time of writing (4 November, 2013). However, as government policy evolves the key messages may change over time and so it will be necessary to provide further updates.
- 1.2 Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) local planning authorities (LPA) are responsible for renewable and low carbon energy developments of 50 megawatts or less installed capacity, unless proposed development falls under permitted development (e.g. micro generation). Anything else will be considered by the Secretary of State for energy, with the LPA a statutory consultee.
- 1.2 This note summarises:
  - Current activity in solar farm development in Wiltshire
  - National and Local Policy on solar energy
  - Approach to planning applications and current issues
  - Contribution of Wiltshire's renewable energy to national targets

#### 2. EXISTING AND PROPOSED SOLAR FARMS

- 2.1 Wiltshire is seeing an increasing number of proposals coming forward. However, they appear to be dependent on Government tariffs and developers may be 'rushing' to exploit potential due to concerns over capacity in the national grid and the desire to get in first (see 'Grid capacity worries sparks UK solar farm boom'<sup>1</sup>). It is thus possible that not all consented schemes will be implemented, as the tariff for large

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<sup>1</sup> BBC, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-24659790>, 23 October 2013

schemes (5 mega watt or more) is only payable on implementation of the development and connection to the grid.

2.2 Concerns raised locally generally tend to be around initial highway impacts from construction traffic or the impact on the character and appearance of the area.

2.3 **Appendix 1** contains a schedule and map showing solar farm development activity across Wiltshire reflecting the position at 23 October 2013. This shows scale of development by site area and whether they are 'constructed', 'permitted' or 'pending decision'.

2.4 Conditions are attached to planning permissions relating to the removal of solar farms after use. For example:

2. *The local planning authority shall be notified in writing within one month of the event that the solar array hereby approved has started to feed electricity to the Grid. The installation hereby approved shall be permanently removed from the site and surface reinstated within 25 years and six months of the date of notification and the local planning authority shall be notified in writing of that removal within one month of the date.*

*REASON: In the interests of amenity and the finite operation of this type of development.*

3. *Within six months of commencement on site, a scheme for the Decommissioning and Restoration of the development shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, the details of which shall include how the land will be restored back to full agricultural use upon the development no longer being in operation or upon the expiry of 25 and six months years from the date of this planning permission whichever is sooner. The Decommissioning and Restoration scheme of this development shall be carried out in accordance with the scheme so agreed.*

*REASON: To ensure upon the development no longer being in use, the complete removal of all development allowed under this permission and the restoration of the land to its former condition.*

(Source: Notification of Planning Decision of 13/03729/Var (Rodbourn Rail Solar Park) and for 12/04169/FUL ( High Penn Solar Park)

### 3. NATIONAL POLICY

#### National Planning Policy framework

3.1 One of the 12 core planning principles in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is to support the transition to a low carbon future by, inter alia, encouraging the reuse of renewable resources through the development of renewable energy (6<sup>th</sup> bullet point, paragraph 17).

3.2 Paragraphs 93 to 98 are particularly relevant to solar farms.

- 3.3 Paragraph 93 of the NPPF states: “*Planning plays a key role in...supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development*” (emphasis added). Specifically in determining planning applications, paragraph 98 goes on to state that local planning authorities should:

“*Approve the application<sup>2</sup> if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.*”

Applicants are not required to demonstrate the overall need for renewable energy developments (paragraph 98).

- 3.4 Paragraph 97 of the NPPF recognises that “*cumulative landscape and visual impacts*” is a relevant consideration in planning for renewable energy developments.

**Government Planning practice guidance for renewable and low carbon energy (July 2013)**

- 3.5 The guidance provides advice on planning issues associated with the development of renewable and low carbon energy. It is supplementary to the NPPF and a material consideration in planning decisions.

“*Planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the environmental impact is acceptable.*”

(Paragraph 3)

- 3.6 Key general messages from guidance:

- The need for renewable energy does not automatically override environmental protections and the planning concerns of local communities (paragraph 5).
- In drawing up plans (local and neighbourhood plans) consideration should be given to local potential for renewable and low carbon generation, and policies to encourage their development in the right place. There is no quota that the Local Plan has to deliver (paragraph 6).
- The views of the local communities should be listened to (paragraph 8).
- Landscape character assessment provides a tool to help assess impact (paragraph 9)
- Positively expressed criteria based policies should be used in Local Plans – “*i.e. that proposals will be accepted where their impact is or can be made acceptable*” (paragraph 14) - See paragraph 15 of attached guidance for more information.
- Separation distances alone should not be used to rule out proposals. The test is on whether the impact of a proposal is unacceptable. Local context including factors such as topography, local environment and nearby land uses all need to be considered (paragraph 16). Set back distances for safety are acceptable (e.g. for solar farms this could relate to the positioning of a perimeter fence for safety reasons, in order to prevent animal and human

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<sup>2</sup> Unless material considerations indicate otherwise



interference, as well as buffers for maintenance of fencing and soft landscape features such as hedgerows outside the 'fence').

3.7 Paragraphs 24 to 28 address solar technology (see attached guidance). In summary, this acknowledges:

- Potential for negative impact on rural environment but recognises that visual impact within landscape can be addressed through well planned and well screened solar farms.
- Solar farms are normally temporary and conditions can be used to ensure their removal when no longer in use.
- Cumulative impact is a valid consideration. With effective screening and appropriate land topography the zone of visual influence could be zero.

3.8 Guidance is provided on the information needed to assess cumulative landscape and visual impact (paragraphs 28, 41 to 44) including:

- Visual amenity - establish area where proposed development may be visible (consider view points, people who experience and nature of views)
- Landscape - consider significance of cumulative impacts and temporary and permanent impacts (sensitivity of landscape and magnitude of predicated change).
- Consider all existing and proposed solar farm within 'defined radius' of centre of proposal under consideration (to reflect local circumstances), to identify cumulative zone of visual influence.

3.9 Very little is said in the guidance about views of the local community and how these should inform decision making. The emphasis is on "planning concerns of the local community" (emphasis added), clarifying that these will need to directly relate to the matters that are raised in the guidance or other valid planning considerations, generally those that are raised in national or local policy.

## 4. LOCAL POLICY

### Saved Local Plan Policies

4.1 Specific local policies that apply to renewable energy developments Wiltshire can be found within the former district local plans as follows, although these don't all relate to solar energy:

- Policy NR19, Renewable Energy Proposals, Kennet District Local Plan -
- Policy NE16, Renewable Energy, North Wiltshire District Local Plan
- Policy C34, Renewable Energy, West Wiltshire District Local Plan
- Policy PS8, Renewable Energy, Salisbury District Local Plan

- 4.2 These have been saved until such time that they are superseded by Core Policy 42 and together with other relevant saved policies on landscape, transport, ecology etc will inform decision making.

### **Emerging Local Plan Policy (Wiltshire Core Strategy)**

- 4.3 Core Policy 42 relates to 'standalone renewable energy installations'. Consistent with the NPPF, this states that proposals will be supported subject to resolution of all site specific constraints; and requires proposals to demonstrate how impacts on a number of factors have been satisfactorily addressed and taken into account:

- (i) landscape, particularly in and around the AONBs
- (ii) Western Wiltshire Green Belt
- (iii) New Forest National Park
- (iv) biodiversity
- (v) historic environment including the Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site and its setting
- (vi) use of the local transport network
- (vii) residential amenity, including noise, odour, visual amenity, safety and
- (viii) best and most versatile agricultural land

- 4.4 Other Core Policies within the Plan will also be applicable, for example:

- Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Core Policy 51 Landscape
- Core Policy 59 Ensuring the conservation of the historic landscape
- Core Policy 59 Stonehenge, Avebury and associated World Heritage Site
- Core Policy 61 Transport and New Development
- Core Policy 62 Development Impacts on the Transport Network

## **5. RENEWABLE ENERGY TARGETS AND DELIVERY**

- 5.1 The UK has a national target to achieve 15% of its energy from renewable sources as well as wider carbon reduction targets. This is broken down into 30% of electricity, 12% of heat and 10% transport energy. While these policies commit the UK to action, they have not been translated to targets for each Local Authority area or region.
- 5.2 The UK Government has a range of measures in place to incentivise renewable energy such as the Renewable Energy Obligations, Feed in Tariffs, Renewable Heat Incentive, as well as policies on Nuclear. In essence the policies combine to support a mix of technology rather than backing a specific technology or location.

- 5.3 While the core strategy does not contain a specific target, it includes a measure of installed capacity of 367MW by 2020, which would be required if Wiltshire is to meet its share of the national target of 30% electricity generation from renewable sources.
- 5.4 The most recent installed capacity figures (April 2013) come from Regen SW survey, which show a capacity of 62 MW of electricity generating potential (all sources including wind and solar). If the applications for solar farms permitted since April 2013 are added to this figure it would rise to around 107 MW demonstrating the potential from solar energy.

## 6. CURRENT ISSUES IN PLANNING FOR SOLAR FARMS

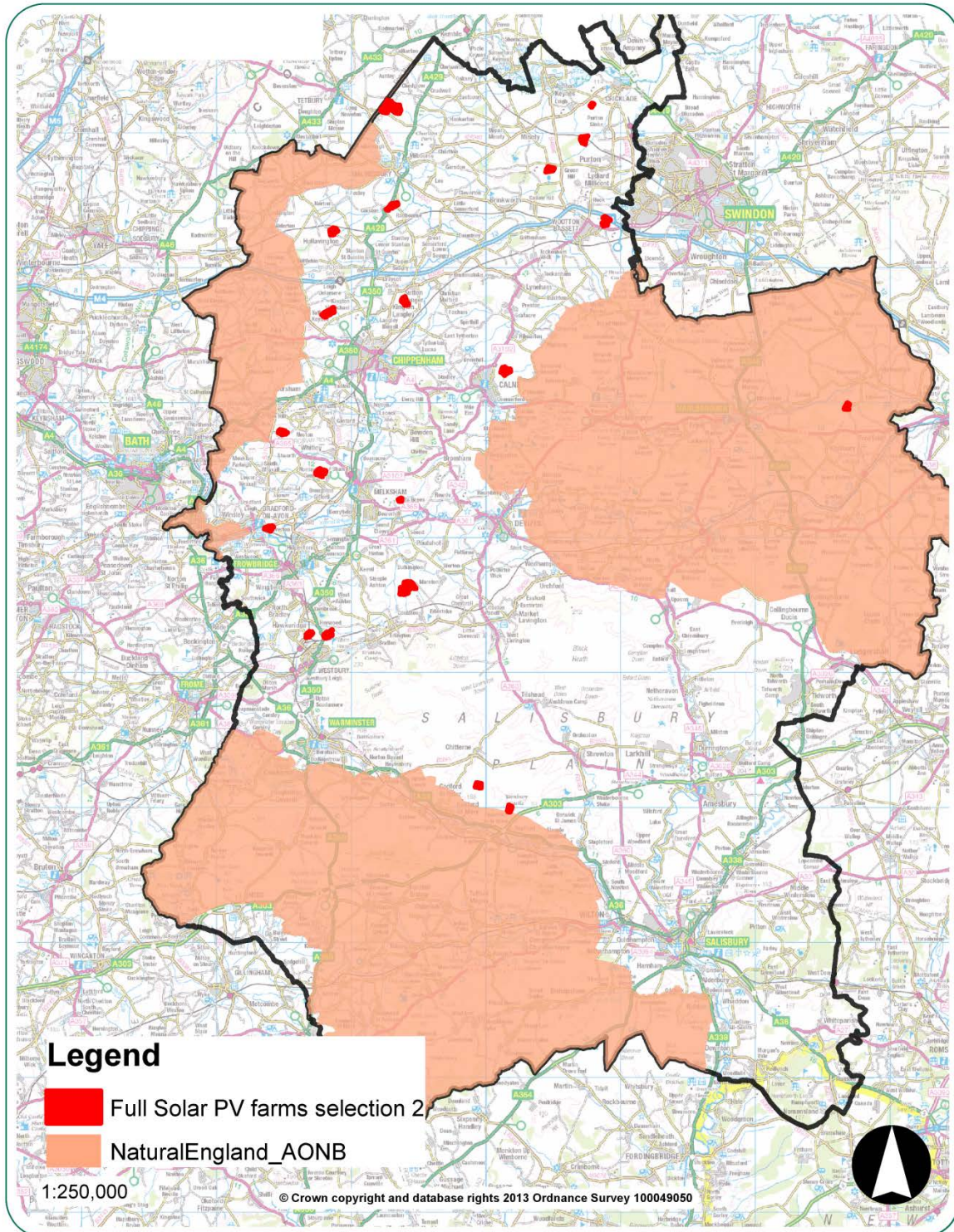
- 6.1 Landscape and visual impact is arguably the key consideration in assessing planning applications. A 'Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', in accordance with Landscape Institute guidance, is required together with a full set of plans to show how the solar installations including perimeter fencing and security equipment to assess the impact of the proposed development. The advice of specialist landscape officers is important in order for the case officer to understand whether the individual and cumulative impact of a proposal is acceptable. Currently insufficient information is being submitted and as a result guidance is in preparation to advise developers submitting applications on what evidence they need to submit with the application.
- 6.2 A GIS database of permitted and emerging proposals is now well developed to facilitate the consideration of cumulative impacts of any proposal.
- 6.3 A number of other issues have been identified that require consideration:
- What impact, if any, could solar farms have on military operations within Wiltshire? e.g. is a buffer required for safe operation of airfields. Government guidance recognises that glint and glare is a valid consideration in terms of aircraft safety.
  - Development of model conditions to be applied to planning permissions across Wiltshire including consideration of temporary conditions.
  - Can height of solar structures and associated perimeter fences be managed or is this restricted by industry standards (e.g. to allow grazing animals underneath, prevent access by animals and humans)?
  - Developers could incentivise communities to accept renewable energy developments by offering payments to fund community projects. To date this has generally only happened in relation to wind turbine developments and is the subject of a Government consultation ([www.gov.uk/government/consultations/onshore-wind-call-for-evidence](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/onshore-wind-call-for-evidence)). However, as local planning authority the fact that the developer is offering a sum of money is not a valid reason to permit or refuse an application and as such cannot be enforced through a planning agreement. See **Appendix 2** for discussion note.

- Although solar farms do not attract financial contributions from the Community Infrastructure Levy or section 106 agreements they are subject to business rate retention.

Economic Development and Planning  
4 November 2013

## Appendix 1

### Map showing planning apps for solar PV farms (>1MW), as of 23/10/13 (application boundaries not to scale)



## STATUS OF SOLAR FARMS (>1MW)

(Source: planning database)

Application reference no.	Site Name	Proposed Capacity (MW)	Proposed site area (ha)	Development status (as of 23/10/13)
W/11/01064/FUL	Land South And East Of The Cemetry Holt Road Bradford On Avon Wiltshire	5.00	15.1	Constructed
13/04872/FUL	Land at Bentham Farm Bentham Lane Bentham Purton Swindon Wiltshire SN5 4JB	8	18	Pending decision
13/04055/FUL	Land East of Manor Farm Wadswick Box Corsham Wiltshire SN13 8JB	9.6	14.2	Pending decision
13/00699/FUL	Land north of Deptford Farm Wyllye Warminster Wiltshire	7.5	11	Pending decision
N/11/00003/FUL	Lake Farm, Draycot Cerne, Sutton Benger, Wiltshire SN15 4SQ	5.00	17	Constructed
N/11/01081/FUL	Upper Marsh Farm, Brokenborough, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 9SR	5.00	14.2	Constructed
W/12/02081/FUL	Land Adjacent Sewage Treatment Works Slag Lane Westbury Wiltshire	6.10	12.5	Pending Decision
N/13/01495/FUL	Lane East & West of Hill Hayes Lane, Hullavington, Chippenham, Wiltshire	7.00	17.5	Pending Decision
N/13/01723/FUL	Braydon Manor Farm, Braydon, SN5 0AG	7.00	14.8	Pending Decision
N/13/01561/FUL	Newton Diary Farm, Brokenborough, Malmesbury, Wiltshire	7.20	7.45	Permitted



13/01962/WCM	Land South of 40 Park Lane, Heywood, Wiltshire	3.50	12.2	Permitted
13/02191/FUL	Spittleborough Farm Swindon Road Lydiard Tregoze Royal Wootton Bassett Wiltshire SN4 8ET	10.00	22.7	Pending Decision
13/02309/FUL	Stokes Marsh Farm Coulston Westbury Wilts BA13 4NZ	16.60	50	Pending Decision
12/04169/FUL	High Penn Farm, Calne	12	25.5	Permitted
W/12/02072/FUL	Land West Of 198 Norrington Lane Broughton Gifford Wiltshire	12.30	22.1	Permitted
W/12/00467/FUL	Land North Of Craysmarsh Farm Bowerhill Lane Bowerhill Wiltshire	1.80	4.5	Permitted
E/2012/0946/FUL	Land at Rudge Manor Farm Rudge Marlborough SN8 2HN	7.00	21.9	Permitted
W/12/02216/FUL	Land North East Of Codford Dairy East Farm Church Lane Codford Wiltshire	7.50	14	Permitted
N/12/01122/FUL	Rodbourne Rail Farm, Grange Lane, Corston St Paul, Malmesbury	5.00	14.05	Permitted
N/12/03968/FUL	Land at Chelworth Industrial Estate, Braydon Lane, Nr Cricklade, Wiltshire	1.00	2.1	Permitted
N/12/02104/FUL	Long Newnton Airfield, Brokenborough, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 9SR	12.00	34	Permitted
N/13/01311/FUL	Land at Battens Farm, Allington, Wiltshire, SN14 6LT	11.00	27	Permitted

## APPENDIX 2: Renewable Energy Community Benefit Packages

1. Payments to communities have been common practice for renewable energy applications and have been the subject of recent announcements by Central Government to incentivise communities to accept wind energy projects ([www.gov.uk/government/consultations/onshore-wind-call-for-evidence](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/onshore-wind-call-for-evidence)). However, there is no legislation in place to ensure that payments occur and it is down to the good will of the developer to make them. Planning legislation does not permit the collection of payments from a developer to the community simply because the development is located nearby. Although the Government paper applies to wind turbines, the principle could be applied to other forms of generation including solar farms.

2. Indeed, in the above paper the Government recognises:

*"In many cases the onshore wind industry are already providing a variety of different amounts and types of community benefits on a voluntary basis and outside the planning system"*

*\*There is a strict principle in the planning systems in all parts of the UK that a decision about a particular planning proposal should be based on planning issues; it should not be influenced by additional payments, or contributions offered by a developer which are not linked to making the proposal acceptable in planning terms. Current planning legislation also prevents local planning authorities from specifically seeking developer contributions where they are not considered necessary to make the proposal acceptable in planning terms. This is to ensure that unacceptable development is never permitted because of unrelated benefits being offered by the applicant."*

(paragraph 3.22)

3. Since payments are not covered under planning legislation they should be regarded as a matter between the community in question and the developer and is not something that the council should necessarily be involved in. In most cases these funds have been given to the parish council. However, two case studies cited in the Government's paper show different mechanisms:
  - Burton Wold case - Kettering Borough Council administers the community benefit fund, which is for 'Residents and community groups within the electoral ward' and 'will be for the life of the wind farm to deliver energy efficiency projects and education to the local community'.
  - Delabole Windfarm, North Cornwall - there is a Community Committee of local representatives that decide how the money is spent from their fund (£9,000 per year for small-scale projects) and the fund is available to those living in Delabole or in areas directly surrounding the wind farm. This is administered by the developer.
4. Notwithstanding the above, industry needs to do more to improve the level and quality of community benefit packages. In response to the Government report, DECC is expecting the onshore wind industry, as represented by RenewableUK (trade body for England), to announce a revision to their existing community benefit protocol to increase the current recommended community benefit package value in England fivefold from £1,000/MW of capacity per year to £5,000/MW of capacity per year for the lifetime of the windfarm (usually around 25 years).



## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 166

**Department:** Transformation

**Further Enquiries to:**  
Sarah Cosentino – Business Analyst

**Date Prepared:** November 2013

**Direct Line:** 01225 793349

### Wiltshire Online Programme – Broadband Update

#### Highlight

- We have published our most up to date fibre coverage map
- We will bring superfast broadband to over 10,000 homes and businesses by June 2014
- Royal Wootton Bassett, Purton, Alderbury, Downton, Kington Langley, Castle Combe, Broad Hinton, Broad Town, Whiteparish and Salisbury (expanding on the areas in Salisbury not picked up commercially) will be some of the first communities to be able to order a superfast service in summer 2014.

#### Message from Cllr John Thomson, Deputy Leader

*The work of the Wiltshire Online broadband delivery team is constantly being recognised as best practice and the rollout is currently ahead of schedule. As explained in this update the detail in the contract is commercially sensitive and cannot be shared publicly. May I request all members consult the website for information and be mindful that contacting the small delivery team for more information they are unable to share is diverting them from continuing to effectively manage the rollout.*

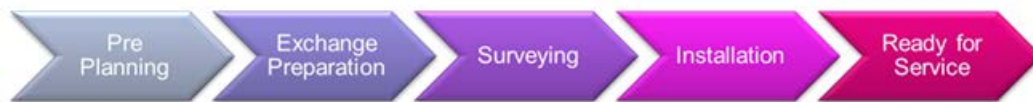
#### GWB Broadband rollout summary

Wiltshire Council is working in partnership with South Gloucestershire Council as part of the Great Western Broadband (GWB) delivery project.

The partnership will ensure that By March 2016 at least 91% of all premises across Wiltshire are able to access superfast broadband (24Mb+) and that all premises in the intervention area are able to access a minimum standard broadband service (2Mb+).

To deliver fibre broadband requires the completion of a number of stages. As with any complex and wide scale infrastructure deployment there are areas which will be delivered earlier than others as the time it takes to work through each stage will vary from street to street, parish to parish. The rollout is due for completion in Spring 2016.

Below is a breakdown of the stages involved



The rollout is being designed to ensure the network provides the greatest possible coverage of superfast broadband with the available funding. We are taking into account many factors, including geography, planning requirements and the location of the existing telecoms infrastructure. These factors will dictate the order of the rollout. This approach will ensure the best value for money, but it does mean that we cannot prioritise specific locations and deviate from how the network will be rolled out across the area, as doing so would result in a time-consuming and costly project, and would ultimately reduce the number of premises to which we are able to deliver superfast broadband.

### **Progress to date**

To date we have announced Royal Wootton Bassett, Purton, Alderbury, Downton, Kington Langley, Castle Combe, Broad Hinton, Broad Town, Whiteparish and Salisbury (expanding on the areas in Salisbury not picked up commercially) as communities who will be able to order superfast broadband by June next year as part of this programme.

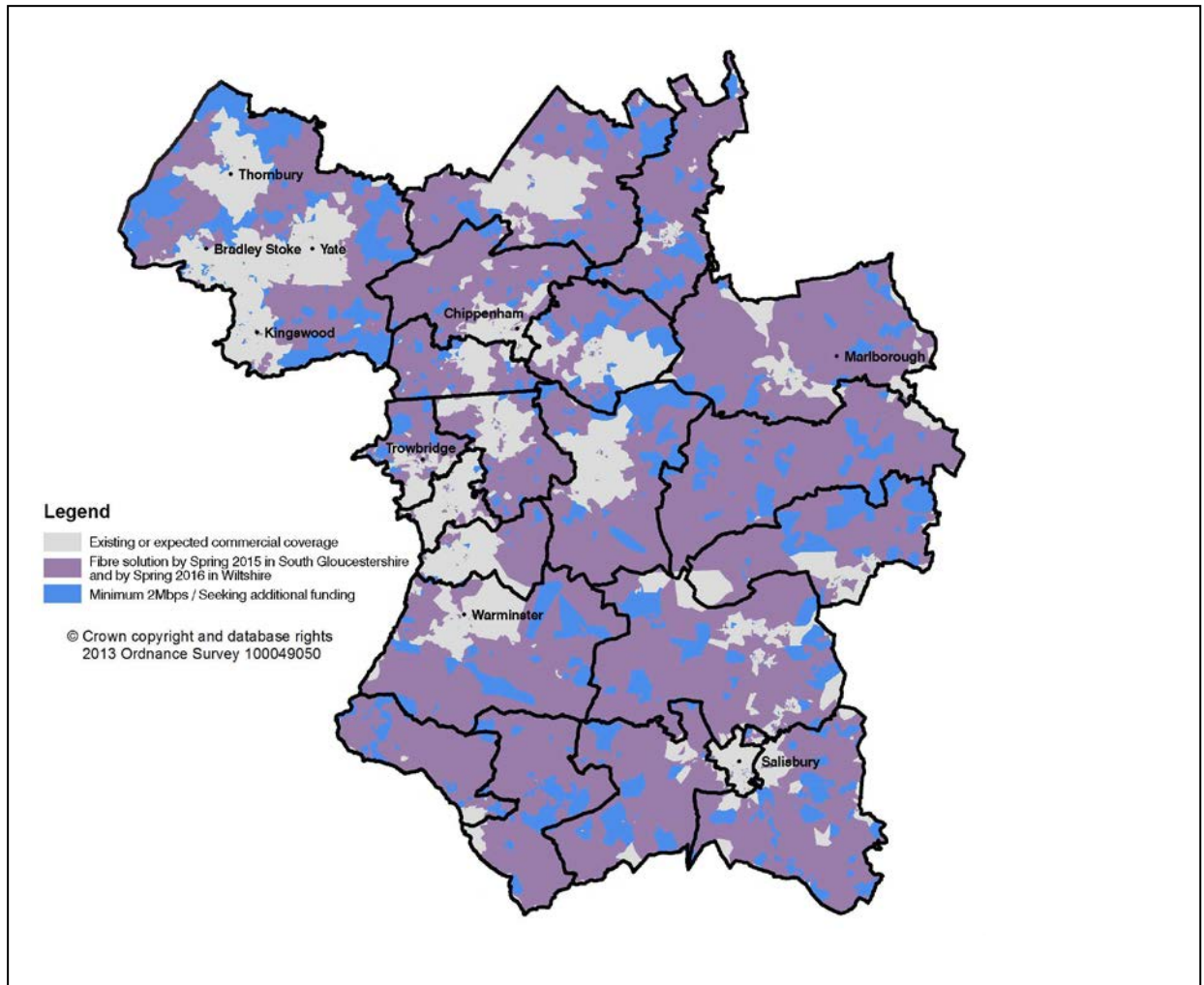
### **Sharing information about the project**

Our website is kept up to date with as much information as we are able to share, we cannot share any further detail about the rollout. We are working on the first quarterly update on the progress of the rollout to date. We are committed to making quarterly community announcements and the next will be due in January 2014.

We are unable to share high level rollout plans publicly but the contract is carefully managed. The GWB (Great Western Broadband) board oversees the effective delivery of the contract and the activities of the project delivery team.

### **High level fibre map**

We have been working closely with BT and BDUK (Government broadband delivery team) to release a high level map that provides a footprint of our expected fibre deployment. This map is subject to change and will look different as we work through the rollout and complete further surveys and should be used as a guide only.



### How to use the map

- The purple on the map shows an overview of the expected rollout of fibre broadband as a result of investment from Wiltshire Council and South Gloucestershire Council.
- The grey on the map shows current or proposed commercial plans.
- The blue on the map shows areas that will meet the universal service commitment of 2Mbps minimum speed by March 2016. In June 2013 the Treasury confirmed that a further £250 million will be available nationally to increase superfast broadband coverage. Wiltshire Council and South Gloucestershire Council will bid for this funding when it becomes available.
- The map should be used for indicative purposes only. The map is not accurate at postcode or premise level and should not be interpreted as such. This is because the broadband network is a complex infrastructure that does not fit clearly into postcode areas.
- The map is subject to change. The modelling used to create the map is based on a number of assumptions which may change following detailed planning and surveying. Any issues encountered during this stage may result in changes to the rollout plan. The map will be updated at appropriate stages as the programme progresses.

- For information on specific exchanges, please refer to <http://www.superfast-openreach.co.uk/where-and-when/>.
- Phased community announcements are posted quarterly on the Wiltshire Online and South Gloucestershire Council websites.

You can view a larger image of the map on our website [here](#).

### **General queries**

The Wiltshire Online website ([www.wiltshireonline.org](http://www.wiltshireonline.org)) is intended to be the first port of call for any member of the public. We will regularly update the website throughout the course of the programme.

Sarah Cosentino  
Business Analyst, Programme Office  
Wiltshire Online

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 167

**Service :** Adult Care Operations

**Further Enquiries to:** Rhonda Ward

**Direct Line:** 07990 508507

**Date Prepared:** 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013

**Title** **Ashton Street Day Centre**

In 2001 Central Government issued a White Paper called Valuing People – this paper related to the Health and Social Care approach, support and services offered to Adults with a learning disability and their family carers.

This document made clear recommendations to move away from day service buildings used only for and by people with a learning disability, the emphasis being to support people to access and be part of their local towns and communities.

Wiltshire Council undertook a Best Value Review of Learning Disability Services in 2001-2 which recommended a 9 staged approach to the modernisation of all its in house provision.

For Day Services this meant updating the approach offered by staff, providing a more flexible approach (move away from traditional Monday to Friday 9am-4pm Service) and the move out of old large institutional style buildings into those that continue to offer a base for people, for some activities to take place but the bigger emphasis was put of supporting people to access community facilities near to where they live and alongside other members of the public.

Ashton Street is the last of the original 9 day services in Wiltshire to move or be modernised in the way explained above.

The building was built in the 1950's and was originally a school, later moving to the traditional day service model which at the time would have supported around 100 people on a daily basis to take part in activities in the building.

The building now supports around 25-30 people per day (total on the books around 60). People use the building for around 20% of the activity program - crafts, music, cooking and the other 80% happens in the community – using leisure centres, library, meeting friends for social activities, drama, dance, rambling to name but a few.

Over the last 2 years the service with the support of the transformation team has been searching for suitable alternate properties in Trowbridge for the service to move to. When the developments within County Hall were coming to fruition with the support of Jane Scott it was suggested that the service move in to part of County Hall.

The plans were approved in late October and the service began contacting and talking to Customers, families and staff on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November.

To date the management team have met all staff working at Ashton Street, around 25 of the Customers and around 15 family and paid carers. People had lots of questions that related to staffing numbers, activities, the name of the space, how people will be supported to understand the changes, but to date no one who attended the meetings have said that it was not a good suggestion or they did not want the move to happen, in fact all have been supportive of the proposal, albeit some worries.

The team will continue to meet with individuals and families over the next few months to discuss any concerns or issues, they are compiling a frequently asked questions sheet and will arrange frequent coffee mornings and newsletters keeping people informed of progress.

The move is expected to take place in September 2014, there are no plans to change or reduce the staff or activities happening prior to the move offering a level of consistency to those who find change most difficult.

If you have further queries or questions please contact Rhonda Ward on 07990508507 or [Rhonda.ward@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Rhonda.ward@wiltshire.gov.uk)

## Councillors Briefing Note No. 168

**Service :** Waste Management

**Further Enquiries to:** Vicki Harris

**Date Prepared:** November 2013

**Direct Line:** (01225) 718523

### **Future Delivery of Waste Services in Wiltshire - Update**

On the 21 November the council's Cabinet considered a report on the high level specification of the waste services which will come into place in 2016 once the council has completed the current procurement project. This report also asked for Cabinet member's approval on how tenders will be evaluated.

#### **Specification (detailed breakdown of our services and how we want them delivered)**

The report focused on the areas in the specification that will be different to the services we currently deliver in Wiltshire. Cabinet have agreed these differences in the specification –

- The addition of mixed rigid plastics (e.g. margarine tubs, ice cream tubs, meat trays and yogurt pots) to the kerbside collection service.
- Contractors will tender for the collection of recycling co-mingled kerbside (mixed together) using existing blue lidded bins and a separate collection of glass using existing black boxes. We will also ask contractors to tender for the kerbside sort method that is currently used in Wiltshire, using existing bins.
- To harmonise the time taken to deliver new/replacement containers to residents. It is agreed that this should be a maximum of 10 working days.
- The contractor should be responsible for buying all waste and recycling containers and vehicles.
- The Council will stay responsible for communications and working with residents to encourage them to recycle, reuse and reduce as much of their waste as possible.
- There should be greater scope for the Council to get money from the sale of recycling through income sharing with the contractor.
- The introduction of open book accounting so the council only pays the contractor for changes that they can prove entails an additional cost. For example, additional assisted collections.
- Require the contractor to process more waste and recycling locally.

### **Evaluation of tenders**

The council's Cabinet members have also decided how contractor's tender submissions should be evaluated and the successful contractor decided.

For the waste collection and household recycling centre contracts it was decided that 70% of the evaluation would be based on the price that has been submitted and 30% on the quality of their proposal.

For the other waste management contracts it was decided that 80% of the evaluation would be based on the price and 20% on the quality of their proposal.

### **Next Steps**

We are currently working on developing the specification for each of the services we currently deliver, and would like to deliver in the future (as above).

Once this is completed, we will be inviting those contractors who have expressed an interest in delivering the services to complete a tender exercise. This invitation will be sent to contractors in January, with a return date in March.

It is important to note however that the council will continue to gather data and assess the costs of the in-house service. These costs can then be compared to any tenders that are submitted by contractors. This will mean that members can make an informed decision about the most cost effective service delivery for Wiltshire.



## COUNCILLORS BRIEFING NOTE

### No. 169

**Service Area:** Economic Development and Planning      **Further Enquiries to:** Alistair Cunningham

**Date Prepared:** 14 December 2013

**Direct Line:** (01225) 713203

#### Wiltshire Core Strategy – Examination Update

Following Council approval the draft Wiltshire Core Strategy (the Plan) was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in July 2012. The examination in public, by an independent Planning Inspector, subsequently took place between 6 May 2013 and 18 July 2013.

Since the close of the hearing sessions, consultation on the Plan has been undertaken on further proposed modifications that arose during the course of the examination. The implications of new Government policy on renewable energy were also included in the consultation, which ended 9<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

The council has now received a letter from the Inspector with his preliminary findings seeking the views of the Council on a six matters. These are:

1. Wiltshire's housing requirement
2. Level of affordable housing
3. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation
4. Strategic allocations at Chippenham
5. Settlement boundaries
6. Town centre boundaries

The Inspector has also stated that the matters above are not exhaustive of those that will be addressed by his final report.

The Inspector acknowledges in his opening paragraphs that he recognises the importance of having a sound plan in place as soon as possible and is working towards this end. He also states that: *"many aspects of the plan appear justified, positively prepared, consistent with national policy and likely to be effective in their implementation"*.

The matters raised by the Inspector are summarised below. The full letter is attached and will be available on the council's webpage from today.

#### **Wiltshire's housing requirement**

The Inspector considers that on the balance of evidence provided by objectors the Council's objectively assessed housing need, at a level as low as 37,000 homes, does not appear justified.

The Inspector's interpretation of the evidence leads him to find that the objectively assessed housing need across Wiltshire should be in the region of 44,000 homes for the plan period. However, the Inspector goes on to refer to the Council's sustainability appraisal which identifies the broad acceptability of between 35,800 and 42,100 homes and expressly states that he is minded to find that the housing requirement should be expressed as a minimum figure towards the upper end of this range (at least 42,100 homes), and invites suggestions as to how this can be established in the Core Strategy.

In order for the plan to be made sound a modification will be required to reflect an overall increase in the housing requirement for Wiltshire. The Inspector indicates that this could be achieved through modifications to the plan to show the distribution of 42,100 dwellings across the three Housing Market Areas and the distribution of development within the community areas. Rather than proposing additional allocations be made within the plan to meet the higher requirement, he considers that this could be done through the early production of a Sites Allocation Development Plan Document.

### **Level of affordable housing**

The Plan presented for examination proposed a requirement of 40% affordable housing on sites of more than five dwellings. The Inspector is concerned that the evidence does not justify this figure, with particular reference to the Council's Affordable Housing Viability Assessment prepared by consultants in 2011. He considers that the figure is too aspirational and will be too challenging to secure in practice, placing at risk delivery of key elements of the plan (e.g. delivering energy efficiency in new homes) and unreasonable burdens on development.

The Inspector is seeking confirmation of whether evidence exists to support a lower figure than 40% or if this is not the case, to undertake a review of the evidence to justify alternative lower figures that will be viable.

### **Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation**

The Plan is required to outline the number of Gypsy and Traveller pitches to be delivered within the plan period to meet Gypsy and Traveller accommodation needs. The Inspector has considered objections to the plan that the need is underestimated and requested further work to be undertaken to ensure the plan has a robust indication of necessary pitch provision.

The Inspector recognises that the plan should also identify a supply of specific sites for pitches over the next five years and give broad locations for the remainder of the plan period to be in conformity with national policy. However, he indicates that he is satisfied that this can be achieved through the programmed Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocation Development Plan Document.

### **Strategic Allocations at Chippenham**

The Inspector has highlighted concerns raised by an objector to the plan, Chippenham 2020 (site promoter of an area to the east of Chippenham which is not included in the submitted plan). The Inspector considers that the assessment of options including the Chippenham 2020 site within the Sustainability Appraisal, particularly in relation to informing the transport effects of proposals, was not equitable and the justifications put forward by the council were unconvincing. The Inspector

concludes that this is sufficient to undermine the justification for the strategic allocations within the Core Policy 10 'Spatial Strategy: Chippenham Community Area'.

The Inspector is therefore considering modifications which would remove all strategic allocations at Chippenham to avoid undue delay to the progress of the submitted plan. He suggests that the council could then produce a Site Allocation Development Plan Document for Chippenham which identifies sites to meet its development requirement, underpinned by a revised Sustainability Appraisal.

### **Settlement boundaries**

The Plan carries forward the settlement boundaries defined within the current district local plans and the adopted South Wiltshire Core Strategy. However, the Inspector has raised concerns that these boundaries require reviewing and updating. The Inspector also recognises that a wholesale review of boundaries would likely place a disproportionate delay on the adoption of the submitted plan. He therefore suggests that a timely review of the settlement boundaries could be undertaken through the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

### **Town Centre boundaries**

National planning policy states that councils should define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas. The council proposed that this work would be undertaken as part of an early review to the Plan, once adopted. As such, the Plan as presented relies upon the saved policies contained within the extant local plans published by the previous district authorities.

The Inspector has sought clarification as to the preferred method and timing of the town centre boundary review to ensure that these matters can be swiftly resolved.

### **Next Steps**

The matters raised by the Inspector will require careful consideration, which will include revisions to the council's Local Development Scheme in order to provide confidence to the Inspector that a number of matters can be resolved swiftly through other development plan documents. This would avoid unreasonable delay to the adoption of the Plan.

Members will be updated with the response to the Inspector in a subsequent briefing note.



# The Planning Inspectorate

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Mr A Cunningham  
Director of Economy and  
Regeneration  
Wiltshire Council  
County Hall  
Trowbridge  
BA14 8JN

Our Ref: PINS/Y3940/429/9

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2013

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Dear Mr Cunningham,

## Wiltshire Core Strategy

I acknowledge receipt of the latest bundle of Examination documents which include the outcome of the most recent post-hearings consultation and EXAM/34A (28<sup>th</sup> Nov), the track changed Core Strategy. Whilst my report is not yet complete and as indicated in my last letter, I am in a position to seek the views of the Council on a number of key matters. In so doing, I am conscious of the Council's formal request under S20(7c) for me to modify the submitted plan in order to secure soundness.

As you would expect, I recognise that Wiltshire is a large county and that the Core Strategy seeks to address a broad range of inter-related and often complex issues. There are many good planning reasons for having a sound plan to be in place as soon as possible and I appreciate the endeavours of your team to supply information and clarifications to date. Working further towards this end, the matters summarised below are those upon which I am most interested to hear how the Council may wish to proceed. Such matters are not exhaustive of those that will be addressed in my final report albeit many aspects of the plan appear justified, positively prepared, consistent with national policy and likely to be effective in their implementation.

### 1) **Housing**

As you will be aware, the National Planning Policy Framework requires, amongst many other matters, that any Local Plan/Core Strategy should be based upon robust evidence to ensure that the full objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing are met within a specific Housing Market Area (HMA) as far as is consistent with other Framework policies. The Framework, which post dates some of the Council's evidence such as Topic



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



Paper 15, has the aim of boosting significantly the supply of housing and indicates that Councils should plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups.

Against this context, I am mindful of the body of evidence that has been provided to the Examination, including the Council's Topic Papers, the SHMA and the wealth of submissions made by interested parties. In short, I am currently inclined to conclude that the balance of the evidence does not support an objectively assessed housing need as low as 37,000 homes.

For example, based upon the Fordham work, allowing for completions and notwithstanding an affordable housing need that may exceed 1,100 dwellings per year<sup>1</sup>, levels of housing need appear to warrant provision in the order of 44,000 dwellings over the plan period. Alternatively, based upon ONS population projections, the Council's evidence suggests the housing need would appear to be in the order of 43,200 (43,900 allowing for concealed households). Various alternative assessments of housing need produced by interested parties have utilised the available data in differing ways, for example employing the Chelmer methodology, to indicate that levels of need exist above 44,000 dwellings over the plan period<sup>2</sup>. Such approaches incorporate consideration of 2nd home ownership, vacancy rates and the economic aspirations of the Council. Ultimately they support an objectively assessed need that is significantly greater than the minimum CS figure of 37,000 dwellings over the plan period.

Rates of migration undoubtedly influence levels of housing need and I have had regard to the Council's balancing housing markets model. However, a housing figure as low as 37,000 homes over the plan period does not appear justified. My current interpretation of the evidence leads me to find that the objectively assessed housing need across the three Wiltshire HMAs would be in the region of 44,000 homes for the plan period.

With paragraph 47 in mind, the Council will be aware that the Framework requires a Local Plan to be aspirational but realistic. Against this context, the setting of a housing requirement which is undeliverable may compromise the ability of the Plan to effectively deliver sustainable forms of development supported by adequate infrastructure. Topic Paper 15 indicates that past delivery rates have averaged approximately 2,100 homes per annum during the period of 2001-2008. The Council consider that the potential deliverability of housing should result in a base for the dwelling requirement that does not exceed 43,200 new dwellings over the plan period which seems reasonable. Indeed, the evidence indicates that a notable increase in average housing delivery over the remainder of the plan period would be required to deliver, for example, in excess of 44,000 homes.

Nonetheless, the Framework calls for a significant boost to housing supply. The preferred Option 1 within the Council's SA identifies the broad acceptability of between 35,800 and 42,100 new homes. With regard to the evidence, including past delivery rates, and to ensure consistency with national policy, I am minded currently to find that the CS housing requirement should be expressed as a minimum figure towards the upper end of this range. Any

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<sup>1</sup> STU/21 para 9.49 on

<sup>2</sup> See POS Barton Wilmore and Gladman and Redrow et al

suggestions you may have as to how this can be established within the CS would be appreciated.

Such a modification would have implications for other parts of the CS, for example, the disaggregation of housing across the three HMAs, the distribution of development within the community areas and the indicative housing land supply. Could you please indicate how the Council would contemplate accommodating such a change?

I note from Table 3 of the Council's updated Housing Land Supply Statement that the Council considers that it has a deliverable housing land supply of some 11,164 homes for the period 2013-2018 which would represent in the region of a 5 year (+5%) housing land supply based on a requirement of approximately 42,000 homes. Such figures would need to be revisited and confirmed for the most up to date assessment to indicate consistency with national policy. Is it feasible, for example, to identify a broad disaggregation for each HMA whereby the early production of a Sites Allocation DPD could provide a means of providing the subsequent detail of site allocation? Such a process could be complementary to any neighbourhood planning process currently underway or those which subsequently emerge and would supplement the planned CS Review. To ensure consistency with the Framework, I would need clarification as to how the LDS would be amended and how the housing land supply would be met against an increased housing requirement.

## **2) Affordable Housing**

The evidence indicates a considerable need for various forms of affordable housing throughout Wiltshire. Core Policy 43 seeks the provision of at least 40% (net) on sites of 5 or more dwellings and financial contributions in other circumstances. In essence and whilst I recognise a considerable need for such housing, I am concerned that the figure of 40% is not justified adequately by the evidence base, particularly the Affordable Housing Viability Assessment (STU/51).

STU/51 provides some support for the policy figure of 40% for both the strategic sites and other notional sites but it does so primarily on the basis of tenure being affordable rent. If, for example, social rent were required, STU/51 indicates the likely need for flexibility to be necessary in securing other potential infrastructure, particularly in areas of lower value. Similarly, STU/51 indicates that 40% affordable housing can only be required on the basis of the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 from 2013 (in the context of providing housing for affordable rent) and that Code 5 from 2016 would only be viable if supported by a proportionate increase in sales values in the intervening period.

The Framework requires a Local Plan to be produced with due consideration of relevant standards and policies together with their impact upon development throughout the economic cycle. It would therefore appear that a range of tenures delivering 40% affordable housing without subsidy (accommodating changes to the Code for Sustainable Homes) is most challenging to secure under current and foreseeable circumstances. As mentioned previously, the CS can reasonably be aspirational but must also be capable of effective delivery.

Whilst the Council has proposed to delete its requirement for affordable housing to be constructed to the latest Housing Corporation Standards, there

appears to be no substantive evidence which analyses alternative affordable housing proportions, for example those lower than 40%. Whilst being progressed, there are only limited details of the Council's intended Community Infrastructure Levy. The Framework (para 173) is clear that the sites and scale of development in a plan should not be subject to such a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened. With particular regard to STU/51, the CS approach to affordable housing does appear to risk the delivery of key elements of the plan.

Core Policy 43 acknowledges that the provision of affordable housing may vary on a site by site basis with regard to factors which include development viability. This introduces a necessary degree of flexibility which could aid the effectiveness of the CS. Nonetheless, the CS should be justified adequately and the balance of the evidence does not currently support the 40% figure as a minimum requirement for affordable housing on sites of five dwellings or more. The justification and effectiveness of the policy is in question. However, there is insufficient evidence to establish what alternative figure may be justified and therefore I am faced with a conundrum of how Core Policy 43 and its supporting text may be modified to ensure the CS as a whole is justified adequately and will be effective in operation.

For example, the simple deletion of the 40% reference within Core Policy 43 would remove the unjustified requirement on all sites but it would not provide particular precision for the plan as a whole or an effective means of maximising the provision of necessary affordable homes in the county. Supplementing the modified policy by keeping a broad target within the supporting text may be feasible but would require justification and I remain conscious of the need to avoid the ineffective burden of individual site negotiations on the majority of schemes which come forward. Can the Council direct me to any evidence which supports clearly a lower figure than 40%? It may be necessary for the Council to revise STU/51 to look at alternatives which will be clearly viable in a more comprehensive range of circumstances so that the objectives of the CS may be fulfilled. Clearly, subsequent review could be programmed as necessary. I would appreciate your constructive thoughts on how to progress this important matter.

### **3) Gypsy and Travellers**

The 'Planning policy for traveller sites' (PPTS), alongside the Framework, sets out national policy on this issue and indicates the evidence based approach that local planning authorities should take in relation to gypsies and travellers.

As indicated by the PPTS (para 6), there is an expectation that a robust evidence base exists to establish accommodation needs and inform the preparation of a local plan. By its own evidence, the Council acknowledges that the Gypsy and Travellers Needs Assessment (GTAA) undertaken in 2006 and which informed the draft RSS had a number of weaknesses that led to an underestimation of need and a consistent understatement of the level of requirement for residential pitches. It relied too heavily on caravan count data, failed to provide an accurate estimate of the travelling community residing in bricks and mortar, produced a low estimate of need from unauthorised sites, included a high pitch turnover on the supply side and did not examine adequately the needs of Travelling Showpeople. Furthermore, it also sought to provide an indication of requirements only between 2006 and 2011. The

subsequent Proposed Changes to the draft RSS increased pitch provision and were used by the Council to inform its Wiltshire Core Strategy Consultation Document (core policy 31).

Subsequent concerns as to the efficacy of the proposed pitch provisions led to what the Council has termed 'a light touch' review of the GTAA to provide revised pitch requirements for the period 2011-2021. The pitch provisions in the CS are lower than those in its Consultation Document. The Council's Topic Paper 16 provides a review of the GTAA and uses the July 2011 caravan count as evidence of current need. The Council considers that this Topic Paper represents an up to date statement of the need for traveller pitches in Wiltshire as of December 2011.

During the Examination process a number of issues were raised in relation to the Council's justification for Core Policy 47 and the content of Topic Paper 16. In particular and with regards to the latter, concerns were raised at the validity of the figures contained in Table 6 and the absence of any independent benchmarking of the Topic Paper as a whole. These concerns would appear to have some validity in as much as overcrowding on local authority sites and unauthorised developments/ encampments may have been underestimated with the consequent effect that there may be an additional need for pitches that exceeds the Council's figure of 88 ( Table 6 2011-2016). With regards to supply, the Council appears to countenance 10 pitches (Cricklade) which have unresolved issues of deliverability whilst a further 6 may have limitations as to their occupation (eg family members only). The evidence is not conclusive on these matters but leads to a concern that the potential supply of additional pitches (2011-2016) is overestimated. The net effect is that there is a degree of substantive doubt as to whether the figures within Topic Paper 16 justify robustly the pitch requirements within Core Policy 47. The data contained and presented in the caravan count for 2013 does not aid clarity on this point.

With regard to the PPTS (para 9) the CS does not identify a supply of specific deliverable sites for the next 5 years nor does it identify a supply of specific developable sites or broad locations for growth for the remainder of the plan period. Consistency with this aspect of national policy is not achieved.

The Council has proposed a change to Core Policy 47 that would make clear that the pitch requirements are minimums. This would be prudent and would introduce flexibility within the plan which would aid the effectiveness of its delivery. The CS is also clear that a Gypsy and Travellers Site Allocation DPD, providing a further opportunity to work with neighbouring authorities, will be prepared to aid the implementation of Core Policy 47 and to deliver the pitch requirements therein. Overall however, the justification for the pitch requirements of Core Policy 47, which will inform any subsequent part of the development plan, is weak. Given the content and subsequent analysis of the GTAA, a more robust approach for the purposes of informing the CS may have been to pursue 'Alternative Option 4' to recalculate local need. It is unsatisfactory that the Council has chosen to merely undertake a limited review of a document which contained previously acknowledged flaws.

Indeed, Topic Paper 16 acknowledges that the data relating to the needs of Travelling Showpeople is limited and not robust enough to extrapolate beyond 2011. The 5 plots identified within Core Policy 47 appear to have been derived from the draft RSS which were required in the period to 2011 but not delivered. At best this figure is that of an historic identified need; rolling it forwards is a



simplistic approach which does not incorporate robust evidence of current or forecast needs for the immediate plan period.

Whilst the Topic Paper appropriately discounts the option of not making provision for transit sites, the subsequent CS approach is undermined by the absence of clear and substantive evidence. As Topic Paper 16 indicates: "Given the lack of consistent records the range indicated in Table 11 of between 17 ... and 35 ... unauthorised encampments may in reality be much higher than that recorded." The figure of 25 (2011-2016) is consequently not particularly well founded and is itself inconsistent with Core Policy 47 which seeks 25 between 2011 and 2021.

Notwithstanding the intended DPD, I must query whether the CS approach towards gypsies, travellers and showpeople is consistent with national policy and is justified by the evidence base. Whilst the Council has requested that I modify the plan to ensure soundness, this is most challenging and may not be feasible on the basis of the available data.

It appears to me that the Council could reassess this matter with a view to ensuring that it does not underestimate the requirements for the remainder of the Plan period. The programmed DPD could assist in matters of specific delivery but the CS should logically set a robust indication of necessary pitch provision for the relevant period, including the next five years whilst acknowledging the absence of a specific land supply. Consequently further work would appear to be required to ensure that there is reliable data to inform the strategic content of the plan. Your constructive thoughts on how to progress this matter would be welcome.

#### **4) Chippenham and Strategic Allocations**

Without going into full details, there is a body of evidence which provides support for the strategic allocations identified in Core Policy 10. Nevertheless, the Council is obliged to consider whether reasonable alternatives exist in order to ensure that the submitted plan is justified adequately.

During the preparation of the submitted CS, the Council considered there was positive scope for further strategic development to the east of Chippenham. The approach presented was amended following consultation on the Wiltshire 2026 publication. In this context, yet not exclusively so, a number of concerns have been expressed at the way in which the Council has considered alternatives to the content of Core Policy 10 and the way in which options have been assessed. In short, I share some of those concerns.

It is important, as indicated by case law, that the process and outcomes of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) can withstand scrutiny as an evidence source which assists in justifying the content of the CS. With this in mind, the proponents of unallocated land to the east of Chippenham (the '2020 site') have submitted detailed evidence identifying potential shortcomings in the Council's SA and site selection process. A primary concern is the way in which the Council has dealt with the 2020 site in relation to other options.

Whilst recognising that professional judgements need to be made in undertaking the SA process, it is important for reasons of robustness and legal compliance, that the SA process deals with reasonable alternatives in a fair and

comparable manner. The reasoning for the Council's amended approach to strategic sites in Chippenham can be found within Topic Paper 12<sup>3</sup> and elsewhere. The process of site selection has been informed by the iterative SA which has been updated on numerous occasions. Yet the evidence does not indicate that the Council considered equitably the reasonable alternative of an East Chippenham allocation (reduced in scale compared to the Wiltshire 2026 proposal) against the preferred option that ultimately found its way to be part of Core Policy 10.

The Council's SA states that transport impacts are a key issue in the consideration of Chippenham's strategic site options. However and amidst a wealth of other evidence, the assessment of Option 3 (within STU/11) that informed the SA and which included the 2020 site, was undertaken without an assumption that a completed eastern distributor road would be provided through developer contributions. This is in contrast to the consideration of Options 1 and 2 with their associated infrastructure, the latter of which was assessed with the assumption that a necessary road bridge would be provided through developer contributions. The balance of evidence suggests both elements of infrastructure for Options 2 and 3 are capable of being delivered.

Whilst the Council's evidence acknowledges that mitigation in the form of a completed eastern distributor road for Option 3 was likely, the mitigation was not assumed to be in place for the testing/modelling of Option 3. Instead, Option 3 was tested on the basis of a connection to the A4. Such an approach is not equitable for the purposes of the SA; particularly when the evidence indicates that Option 3 could not be feasibly completed without the distributor road. The manner in which this matter has been treated has affected the content of the SA.

The consequent effect of such an approach risks the inaccurate identification of transport effects within the SA. The basis for the SA assessment of Option 3, particularly in terms of the 'Transport' criterion, is therefore not well founded. In this relatively narrow respect, it is unreliable evidence which does not accurately inform the identification of preferred options. The 'Entran' report prepared in support of the 2020 site provides evidence which supports a conclusion contrary to that of the Council. The justification for the different approach taken by the Council in relation to Options 2 and 3 is unconvincing<sup>4</sup>; I do not accept that the omission of testing the evidentially required eastern distributor road was necessary to ensure a 'level playing field' with other alternative options.

Furthermore, the evidence submitted by proponents of the 2020 site as part of the CS pre-submission consultation, which includes specialist SA evidence, indicates that the 2020 site would perform better against the SA objectives than perceived by the Council. Whilst I accept that different professional judgements can be exercised, this evidence is not countered specifically and fully by the Council, has some weight and consequently introduces a degree of substantive doubt as to whether the Council's SA accurately assesses the effects of the 2020 site against the SA criteria.

I have considered, in the context of all the SA criteria and the balance of the evidence available, whether the weaknesses in the Council's approach are

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<sup>3</sup> Topic Paper 12 Figure 1, Table 4 et al

<sup>4</sup> EXAM/09C

sufficient to undermine the justification for the content of Core Policy 10. Ultimately, I conclude that they do.

In totality and with regard to the strategic allocations of Chippenham, the SA does not inform robustly the equitable consideration of reasonable alternatives and the subsequent content of Core Policy 10. This is an unfortunate but fundamental shortcoming for this community area. I am unable to conclude that the content of the CS with regard to the strategic allocations of Core Policy 10 is justified and could form part of a sound plan. Consequently, I am considering a modification to the plan which would, in effect, remove the strategic allocations contained within Core Policy 10.

Submissions have been made to the Examination in relation to a large number of potential development sites in and around Chippenham. It is primarily for the Council to ascertain, through due and equitable consideration of alternatives, how best any new development should be accommodated. In the absence of a robust SA in these regards, I have insufficient clear evidence upon which to base a recommendation as to which sites should be developed through until 2026.

It therefore appears necessary for the Council to review its approach to development allocations within Chippenham. Without causing undue delay to the progress of the submitted CS, this could reasonably be secured through a subsequent plan, for example the Sites Allocation DPD or a document specific to Chippenham. Such a review would enable further consideration to be given to not only the housing allocations but also, as necessary, the provision of employment land.

Your thoughts on how this matter should be progressed would be appreciated.

## **5) Settlement boundaries**

The CS refers to defined settlement boundaries for the hierarchy at the level of Large Villages and above. By such means the Council intends to provide clarity on what forms of sustainable development may be carried out where in a manner consistent with the Framework. There is no compelling evidence to suggest that such an approach is flawed.

However, the Council has not reviewed the extent of the boundaries to inform the CS; instead relying upon the pre-existing development plan documents. Some of these were adopted some years ago, for example the Kennet Local Plan (2004), and it cannot be argued with great strength that the settlement boundaries contained therein are up-to-date for the purposes of the CS plan period. Indeed, the Council concedes in Topic Paper 3 'Settlement Strategy' that whilst existing boundaries offer protection to the countryside and guard against urban sprawl/ribbon development they are out of date, do not reflect current urban form and require review and updating ... 'a new boundary would be the ideal solution'. To review boundaries, the Council identifies community led planning as the vehicle to deliver the necessary updates. However, there remains a considerable risk that, for example, Neighbourhood Plans will not be delivered across the county in a comprehensive or timely fashion. Such an outcome would, in the context of the CS Settlement and Delivery Strategy, potentially stymie development initiatives on the basis of an unjustified evidence base and therefore not represent a positive form of planning.

The large geographic scale of Wiltshire and the sheer number and variety of its settlements does present challenges to the practical completion of an appropriate and swift review of settlement boundaries. Rather than delay to a disproportionate extent the adoption of the submitted CS, there appears scope to advance such a timely review through a Sites Allocation DPD as broadly referenced within CS paragraph 4.26. Such work could complement that emerging from any advanced community led planning process and would not negate such processes from reviewing the validity of revised settlement boundaries in the future. Can you identify any specific objection to such an approach and confirm how this may be incorporated suitably both into the CS and the LDS?

## **6) Retail frontages – town centre boundaries**

The Framework requires that plans should, amongst other matters, define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres. In this regard, the CS relies upon preceding documents and their saved policies. Due to the various ages of such plans, the approach of the CS is not strong in this regard. The evidence base cannot be considered to be particularly robust with regard to designated frontages and most town centre boundaries. The Council proposes that the partial review of the CS will provide an opportunity to update the designated town centres and their frontages; alternatively this could be accommodated through the Sites Allocation DPD. I would be grateful for your clarification as to the Council's preferred way of moving forwards on these matters and how they could be swiftly resolved.

I trust the above is clear. My work continues and subsequent matters may arise. In the meantime I would be grateful for your early indication as to how the Council would wish to proceed.

Yours sincerely,

*Andrew Seaman*

Senior Housing and Planning Inspector

## Councillors' Briefing Note

### No. 170

**Service Area:** Sustainable Transport

**Further Enquiries to:** Allan Creedy

**Date Prepared:** 16<sup>th</sup> December 2013

**Direct Line:** (01225) 713444

### **Traffic in Vicinity of the New Stonehenge Visitors Centre**

This note is intended as an update for Parishes and Members regarding recent changes to roads near Stonehenge

Earlier this year, the Council responded to local concerns over changes in traffic volume and routing by promising to undertake monitoring once the situation had become stabilised (i.e. once the new visitor arrangements were open and settled)

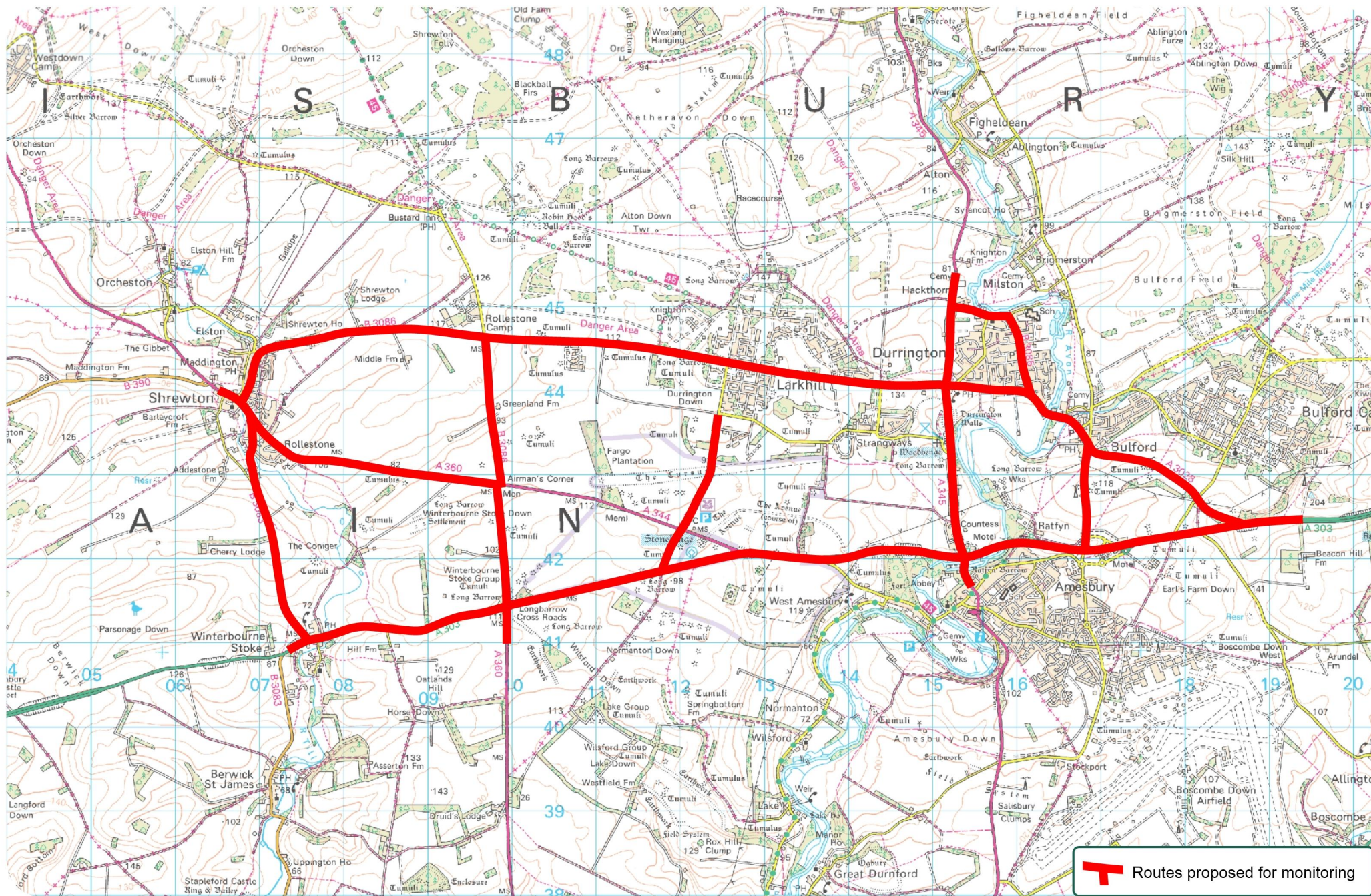
The Council can now confirm that it is commissioning an extensive monitoring exercise to be undertaken in two stages; the first during a "neutral" period (i.e. avoiding main local and school holidays, mid-terms and any other abnormal traffic period) scheduled during March 2014, and the second during the summer peak during July 2014.

The scope of the analysis will incorporate those routes through local communities cited as having experienced an increase in diversionary traffic, generally within the area shown on the attached plan.

The survey will use a number of data recording techniques including the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) which is used to individually track and record the behaviour of vehicles within and through the survey area.

This data will quantify impacts on local communities, and will be used to assess the extent and type of any necessary mitigation.





## Routes proposed for monitoring

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Wiltshire Council  
Where everybody matters

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles



## Councillors Briefing Note No. 171

**Service :** Waste Management

**Further Enquiries to:** Vicki Harris

**Date Prepared:** December 2013

**Direct Line:** (01225) 718523

### **Redesign of waste and recycling collection rounds for Waste Collection Services**

On 17 December 2013 the Council's Cabinet approved a proposal for achieving budget savings from re-designing the Council's waste and recycling collection rounds and changing the working patterns of Council drivers and loaders.

#### **The changes**

The report details a range of savings from two options which will provide the Council with significant cost savings and result in a collection day change for most residents from the end of September.

New waste and recycling collection rounds will be implement in 2 phases, the first in April 2014 and the second in September 2014.

In April the Council will reduce the waste management fleet by four vehicles and staff by 12 (four drivers and eight loaders) across the three in-house areas. This should be achieved by a reduction in agency staff covering vacant posts. There will be no changes to residents' collection days.

In September there will be further collection round changes which will mean day changes for residents but their collections would be on the same day in the fortnightly cycle (for example, household waste and garden waste on Monday in one week and plastic bottles and cardboard with black box recycling on the Monday of the second week).

In September the Council will also implement 'fixed compressed hours' for drivers and loaders. This will mean these staff continue to work 37 hours per week; but they would work four days per week instead of five. This would result in a longer working day of 9.25 hours, excluding breaks.

Council drivers and loaders would continue to work Monday to Friday but would take one day off during the week in addition to Saturday and Sunday.

### **Cost savings**

Accurate cost savings will be known once the options are modelled in detail but should be between £700,000 - £875,000 in a full year.

These changes represent a reasonable balance of savings and disruption to residents.

### **Impact on Council staff**

The table below shows the number of Council posts and vehicles that should be saved. The exact numbers will be known once the new rounds are finalised in June 2014.

<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Reduction in Vehicles</b>	<b>Reduction in Posts</b>
April 2014	4	4 Drivers + 8 Loaders
September 2014	5 – 7	5 to 7 Drivers + 10 – 14 Loaders
<b>Totals</b>	9 – 11	9 – 11 Drivers + 18 - 22 Loaders

### **Impact on Council contractors**

The savings shown above are only based on Council staff and vehicle savings.

We have been working with the Council's contractors throughout the project and will continue to work with them in the New Year to understand how these changes may affect them and their staff.

### **Key dates and next steps**

The table below shows the key dates and next steps of the project.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Date</b>
Report goes to Council's Cabinet	17 December 2013
Consultation with Council staff and trade unions	January – March 2014
Rounds modelled in detail	January 2014 – June 2014
Reduction of 4 Council vehicles and crews (no changes for residents or staff)	April 2014
New rounds finalised	June- July 2014
Communication programme for residents	August – September 2014
Collection calendars delivered	August – September 2014
New working pattern and rounds implemented	End of September 2014

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the project team on [Wastecommunications@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Wastecommunications@wiltshire.gov.uk)