

Future Chippenham programme Public consultation Briefing Note No. 21-01

Service: Future Chippenham programme, Major Projects team
Further Enquiries to: Simon Hendey
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Date Prepared: 14 January 2021
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Background

In March 2019, Wiltshire Council submitted a bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) from Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government. In November 2019, the council was awarded a grant of £75 million subject to entering into the grant agreement.

The grant ensures funding is available to contribute towards the cost of delivering the strategic infrastructure in and around Chippenham to support the potential longer-term growth of the area, should development come forward as part of the Local Plan process.

This includes supporting the delivery of a new distributor road to the east and south of Chippenham, linking the A350 at the northern and southern ends of the town, as well as specific improvement to J17 on the M4.

Future Chippenham programme update

Since the grant was awarded, Wiltshire Council has been negotiating terms and conditions with Homes England in order to enter into a funding agreement. Contracts were signed in December 2020 securing the £75 million grant.

The following progress has also been made on the project:

- Stakeholder and Engagement Strategy approved
- Strategic transport modelling discussions
- Environmental/ecology investigation and surveys
- Work to support the Environmental Impact Assessment across the whole site
- Draft sustainability strategy for the delivery of strategic infrastructure works
- Options assessment report for infrastructure works carried out
- Completion of strategic flood modelling and flood mitigation plan
- Draft Concept Framework for the site including strategic infrastructure works, utilities, parks and road bridges
- Development of a procurement strategy to support delivery of the infrastructure works

Future Chippenham

Connecting our communities

We now need to carry out a public consultation on the road route options. It was originally planned for the public consultation to take place in Spring 2020, but this was delayed because of COVID-19. The public consultation that will start tomorrow, will adhere to COVID-19 safety guidance. As we are unable to hold face-to-face events, we will be utilising virtual and digital consultation methods that meet Wiltshire Council's and Government's guidance.

We are however, committed to ensuring that every effort is made to gain input from as many consultees as possible throughout the consultation period.

Public consultation timeframe

We are carrying out an eight-week public consultation on the Future Chippenham proposals from Friday 15 January 2021 until 5pm on Friday 12 March 2021.

Several road route options have been developed and assessed against alignment with strategic objectives, environmental impact, deliverability and cost. As the project is developed climate change and biodiversity will form an integral part of the considerations. Three distributor road options and two link road options to Pewsham Way have emerged as potential options. Local people will be able to view and comment on these proposals to help shape the preferred route option for the road.

Details on these road route options and supporting documents will be available on www.wiltshire.gov.uk/future-chippenham

People will be able to complete the consultation response form online, email the consultation response form to futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk or post the consultation response form to the Future Chippenham team, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JN.

If people need any help completing the consultation response form or would like the consultation material provided as a paper copy or a different format, they can contact Wiltshire Council's Customer Services on 0300 345 0100.

Hard copies of the consultation material and survey form will also be available from the reception desk at the Monkton Park office.

As we are unable to hold public exhibitions, two live online public webinars will be held to explain the proposals in more detail. People interested in attending these free events can register via Eventbrite. The first webinar is being held on:

Thursday 28 January 2021 at 11am

To register: <https://future-chippenham-webinar-28-01-2021.eventbrite.co.uk>

A second webinar is being arranged for February 2021. Once registered a link will be sent to access the briefing which will be broadcast via Microsoft Teams.

Anyone wishing to ask questions about the proposals will be encouraged to submit these in advance by emailing futurechippenham@wiltshire.gov.uk stating 'Questions for Webinar' in the heading and which of the two webinars they will be attending.

The briefings will be recorded and will be available via the council's [YouTube channel](#).

During the eight-week consultation period, the level of responses and interest will be assessed to determine whether a further public webinar should be held.

In addition, the Future Chippenham team have been contacting Area Boards, local Town and Parish Councils and other key stakeholders to provide an update on the proposals.

Communications

A communications plan has been prepared to promote the consultation, including the public webinars. This will include a letter to residents living along the road route options, direct contact with specific organisations and stakeholders, news releases, posters, social media, e-newsletter promotions and updated webpages etc.

This will be regularly reviewed throughout the consultation period to ensure as many people as possible have the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

Next steps

- Public consultation to be held from Friday 15 January to 5pm on Friday 12 March 2021
- The preferred route will be announced Summer 2021
- Public consultation on Future Chippenham Masterplan Summer 2021
- Planning application submitted Winter 2021/22

Councillors Briefing Note No. 21-02

Service: Economic Development and Planning

Further Enquiries to: Georgina Clampitt-Dix

Date Prepared: January 2021

Direct Line: 01225 713472

Wiltshire Local Plan review

Introduction

1. The purpose of this note is to provide information for Councillors about the public consultation that has commenced to inform the preparation of the [Wiltshire Local Plan Review](#).
2. Alongside this, we are also consulting on the proposed Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document, which is a more straightforward consultation, comprising a single consultation document including: the proposed scope and content of the plan, and the approach to identifying sites to meet the temporary and permanent accommodation needs of Wiltshire's traveling community to 2036 (see www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-gypsy-travellers).
3. Both consultations commenced on 13th January and will end on 9th March 2021. Together, these two plans will replace the [Wiltshire Core Strategy](#) when adopted in their final forms and plan for the period to 2036.

Why is the Local Plan Review important?

4. A Local Plan determines where and how development takes place. It is a key component of the county's Development Plan and helps guide decision making and the content of all neighbourhood plans. All planning applications by law are determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is a legally required document containing planning policies and site allocations to deliver the council's strategic priorities.
5. The current Local Plan is the Wiltshire Core Strategy, which has a plan period of 2006 to 2026. The Government requires every Local Plan to be reviewed at least once every five years. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2015 and is therefore being reviewed. The Local Plan Review will update this and cover the period 2016 to 2036. It must plan positively to meet forecast development needs over this extended time horizon. Most notably it must plan to meet assessed housing needs in line with Government policy and set a spatial strategy for where and how development should take place.

Consultation to inform the Wiltshire Local Plan Review

6. Consultation is intended to be informal and is at an early stage, before a draft Plan is formulated and undergoes a further stage of public consultation.
7. The focus is on three topics, as follows, as well as seeking views on climate change matters:
 - A scale of growth for each main settlement (new homes and land for employment) and in rural areas for each Local Service Centre and Large Village (new homes) over the period 2016 to 2036;
 - What place shaping priorities should we plan for at the main settlements; and
 - Where development might take place.
8. Consultation is based around a 'settlement statement' for each main settlement (Principal Settlement and Market Town), with the aim of stimulating a community conversation about each place. In support of each statement, one 'Emerging Spatial Strategy' paper explains how a scale of growth was arrived at; and a 'Site Selection Report' for each settlement summarises the technical work for where development might take place.
9. The current strategy focuses the bulk of growth at the Principal Settlements. It is suggested that this continues, and so it is appropriate to test the emerging strategy in more detail here through the consultation given their importance. Preferred sites are therefore suggested for where development may take place at these settlements and views sought.
10. At Market Towns preferred sites are not selected. Instead views are invited on a pool of potential sites from which one or more (in full or part) might be chosen, informed by input from the local community and stakeholders and further, more detailed assessment in due course.
11. A scale of growth is also suggested for designated rural settlements (these are the Local Service Centres and Large Villages set out in the Core Strategy), as required by Government to inform neighbourhood plans; and views are invited on changes to planning policies for rural areas (which also include Small Villages) aimed at bolstering how local communities might meet local needs. This is contained in a separate paper entitled 'Empowering Rural Communities'.
12. Paragraphs 19 to 22 below provide a summary of the consultation material, the key supporting documents and contacts.
13. The consultation started on 13th January and ends on the 9th March 2021. Bearing in mind ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and our adopted [Statement of Community Involvement](#) including Temporary Arrangements it is intended that the main platform for engagement will be online.

How to get involved

14. Online the link is [Local Plan Review - Wiltshire Council](#)
15. From here everyone can access the consultation content, book their place at an online event and join a mailing list for updates. The first few events have now taken place.

16. Arrangements are available for those without internet access to receive copies of documents by request. Please direct people to an officer in Spatial Planning who can respond to these: email spatialplanningpolicy@wiltshire.gov.uk or call 0300 456 0100 (lines open 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday) and ask to speak to an officer in Spatial Planning.
17. Online events follow the format of other Council public briefing events. After a presentation on the purpose and content of the consultation, the audience pose questions in writing using the Q&A dialogue box. The online events, which members have been notified about, have/will be held from 7pm-8pm on the dates shown:
- Planning for Calne, Monday 18 January
 - Planning for Corsham, Tuesday 19 January
 - Planning for Royal Wootton Bassett, Tuesday 19 January
 - Planning for Chippenham, Wednesday 20 January
 - Planning for Tidworth and Ludgershall, Wednesday 20 January
 - Planning for Malmesbury, Thursday 21 January
 - Planning for Amesbury, Thursday 21 January
 - Planning for Marlborough, Monday 25 January
 - Planning for Bradford on Avon, Monday 25 January
 - Planning for Westbury, Tuesday 26 January
 - Planning for Salisbury, Tuesday 26 January
 - Planning for Devizes, Wednesday 27 January
 - Planning for Trowbridge, Wednesday 27 January
 - Planning for Melksham, Thursday 28 January
 - Planning for Warminster, Thursday 28 January
 - Planning for rural areas, Monday 1 February and Tuesday 2 February
18. Further meetings may be arranged with invitees where there are specialist or detailed subjects needing more in-depth discussion. Please contact Georgina Clampitt-Dix should you wish to suggest a further meeting along these lines.

Summary of Consultation Material

19. The consultation asks for people's views on three main topics to directly influence Local Plan content before it is drafted:

	Consultation topic	Where to look	Supporting information	Who to contact
1	<p>What should be the future scale of growth?</p> <p>Proposals for number of additional homes and hectares of land for employment (2016-2036) compared to the current plan at each main settlement - Principal Settlements and Market Towns and for the rural area outside of these.</p> <p>Housing market area geographies are used as a basis to distribute Wiltshire's growth so that homes are provided where they are needed.</p>	<p>The Emerging Spatial Strategy document explains how a scale of growth has been determined Emerging Spatial Strategy</p> <p>The 'Planning for... documents' - see below - set out the scale of growth for each main settlement and contain questions for people to respond to.</p>	<p>Assessments forecast scales of need for new homes, based on a standard method set by the Government. Housing: Housing need assessment Employment: Economic assessments</p> <p>Alternatives to the current pattern of growth (in the Wiltshire Core Strategy) were formulated for each housing market area (HMA): Chippenham HMA Salisbury HMA Swindon (Wiltshire part) HMA Trowbridge HMA</p> <p>They were tested and compared to produce an 'emerging spatial strategy'. Sustainability Appraisal formed part of the process (from hyperlink, click on Supporting documents, then from the Supporting documents list, click on Local Plan Review Interim Sustainability Appraisal).</p>	Georgina Clampitt-Dix Tim McCombe
	<p>Proposals for number of additional homes (2016-2036) for Local Service Centres and Large Villages.</p> <p>For Small Villages and all <i>other rural settlements</i> no numbers are identified, local communities may determine their own</p>	<p>Empowering Rural Communities document describes a first step to housing for each Local Service Centre and Large Village</p>	<p>Appendix one of the Empowering Rural communities document presents the number of homes and provides an explanation of the method.</p> <p>The document also provides advice for rural communities that have made a Neighbourhood Plan or are in the process of reviewing or preparing one</p>	Mark Henderson Tim McCombe

	Consultation topic	Where to look	Supporting information	Who to contact
	proposals for new homes to meet local need.	Empowering Rural Communities		
2	What should be the local priorities? For each <i>Market Towns and Principal Settlements</i> - a draft bullet point set of priorities to plan each settlement by have been identified	The 'Planning for...' documents list 'place shaping priorities' Consultation content	Priorities establish a joint basis for Local Plan and neighbourhood planning work They result from a review of issues in the Core Strategy and from discussions with the local community and stakeholders from earlier Local Plan consultations, and in most cases initial discussions with relevant town council.	Lead officer for settlement, see Appendix 1
	The Local Plan does not state place shaping priorities for <i>rural settlements</i> .		Rural communities may set place shaping priorities through neighbourhood plans under the umbrella of development to meet local needs.	Mike Kilmister
3	Where development should take place? For <i>Market Towns</i> : a pool of possible greenfield development sites is identified. For <i>Principal Settlements</i> : preferred sites and concept plans of site layout are shown.	'Planning for ...' documents show plans of possible or preferred sites. A Site Selection Report explains how the pool of sites or preferred sites have been arrived at. Both sets of documents are listed under: Consultation content	At <i>market towns</i> circumstances vary from town, but only one or a few sites will be selected for development at a town. Communities are invited to comment on sites and select which sites are appropriate for what development, if any. Ultimately sites may be selected by the Local Plan Review work or if appropriate, by neighbourhood planning. At <i>Principal Settlements</i> : large and complex sites need to be identified by the Local Plan. Sustainability Appraisal has informed the selection of sites at these settlements (from hyperlink, click on Supporting documents, then from the Supporting documents list, click on Local Plan Review Interim Sustainability Appraisal). Each 'Planning for...' document contains a 'settlement profile' that set out information about the town (housing	Lead officer for settlement, see Appendix 1

	Consultation topic	Where to look	Supporting information	Who to contact
			need and the local economy) and infrastructure - the consultation allows for people to comment.	
	For rural settlements no sites are identified.	Empowering Rural Communities	Draft policy is set out in the consultation document to guide where and how development should take place.	Mark Henderson Tim McCombe

Addressing Climate Change and Biodiversity Net Gain

20. An 'Addressing Climate Change and Biodiversity Net Gain' paper sets out information including:
 - Five linked key policy themes, in addition to the Spatial Strategy, that will help support the Plan's objective in respect of adapting to and mitigating climate change.
 - Sets out our approach on these key themes and asks people to help us develop what we already know about the social, economic and environmental challenges facing Wiltshire in terms of a changing climate.
21. The document poses a series of questions to help focus comments.
22. The emerging spatial strategy determine how growth is distributed and what constitutes a sustainable pattern of development. This continues to be an important means to help address climate change. The aim is to focus growth at the main settlements and the largest of these, Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge, in particular. This helps to deliver the following outcomes:
 - make best use of existing infrastructure, such as energy networks, public buildings, services and local transport networks, reducing the need for additional infrastructure that would create more carbon;
 - better support existing businesses by growing local spending and supply chains. In particular, it can help each town centre to continue serving its local community;
 - reduce the need to travel, and travel by the private car in particular, by providing jobs, facilities and services locally and support active means of travel such as walking and cycling; and
 - provide opportunities on a scale to design new neighbourhoods for renewable energy supply, alternatives to the private car and more energy efficient new buildings - opportunities that are likely to be more difficult to realise in rural areas.

Next Steps

23. Every comment received will be publicly available. A summary of the main issues raised will be prepared, published and considered by Cabinet.
24. Further work will cover other aspects of the plan (e.g. town centres) and look in more detail at locations for growth. It is intended that a draft plan will be published for further consultation by the end of the year.

The Local Plan Review and Neighbourhood Plans

25. The Local Plan Review sets the strategic context for neighbourhood planning. It has its most direct relationships with neighbourhood plans for main settlements - since they are the focus for growth; but also provides a framework for neighbourhood planning in rural areas as illustrated in the table above.
26. At some Market Towns neighbourhood planning may go on to select sites for development based on the pool sites and the consultation responses. The Local Plan Review will allocate sites only at main settlements in order to maintain land supply and where sites are large and complex and/or cross a parish/town council boundary.

27. Once the Local Plan Review has been formally adopted and a community then starts work on a new neighbourhood plan, each plan will need to show how their area expects to accommodate its housing requirements.
28. Just because the Local Plan has been updated does not mean that a made neighbourhood plan will be out of date because it sets a fresh scale of growth. Housing need is usually just one element of a community's vision and housing requirements one aspect.
29. No matter what the time horizon of their plan, communities may wish to review their plans so that they are in line with the Local Plan.

Appendix 1: Contacts

Settlement	Officer
Amesbury	Vicky Hodgson
Bradford on Avon	Mark Henderson
Calne	David Way
Chippenham	Louise Tilsed
Corsham	Mark Henderson
Devizes	Jane Wilkie
Malmesbury	Tim McCombe
Marlborough	Simon Nott
Melksham	David Way
Royal Wootton Bassett	Henning Totz
Salisbury	Ray Bryant
Tidworth and Ludgershall	Vicky Gee
Trowbridge	Sophie Davies
Warminster	Vicky Gee
Westbury	Luke Francis

Update on targeted COVID-19 community testing for asymptomatic people

Briefing Note No. 21-03

Service: Public Health
Date Prepared: 17 February 2021
Further enquiries to: Hayley.mortimer@wiltshire.gov.uk

We will shortly be introducing the Government's COVID-19 rapid community testing initiative for specific groups of asymptomatic people in Wiltshire.

Our programme is primarily aimed at the following groups of people:

- Smaller businesses (50 employees or less) where staff are unable to work from home
- Early years staff based at private (non-maintained nurseries)
- Childminders

Our test sites will be at the following locations:

- Trowbridge – County Hall
- Devizes – Leisure Centre
- Salisbury – Five Rivers Health and Wellbeing Centre
- Chippenham – Monkton Park

Devizes will be the first to open on 18 February and the rest will soon follow. Until the other sites are open, the Devizes site will initially be the only one that people can book a place for.

Those in smaller businesses who cannot work from home, staff at private (non-maintained) early years settings, and childminders have been chosen because they are not currently involved in any other national mass-testing programme.

People will have to book to arrange an appointment and will not be tested if they have not done this.

The tests are self-administered and will take less than 15 minutes and results should be known within half an hour.

This is not to be confused with surge testing. Surge testing is increased testing (including door-to-door testing) and enhanced contact tracing in specific locations in England and is not currently taking place in Wiltshire.

Free testing continues to be available to everyone in Wiltshire who has COVID-19 symptoms – high temperature, continuous cough or loss of / change in taste or smell. People should visit www.nhs.uk/coronavirus or call 119 to book a test in that instance.

With regards to early years staff, we're very aware that due to the need to have the correct ratios at settings, that logistically it might be difficult for them to release staff to attend one of the testing sites. We completely sympathise with this, but at the moment this is the only way we are able to provide this testing service. We are speaking to representatives at national Government to see if more can be done and will update everyone should the situation change.

When used alongside other measures, this type of community testing has the potential to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 within communities.

However, should people choose to participate in the testing programme, it must be stressed that getting a negative test result is only a snapshot indication that the person tested didn't have COVID-19 at that time. It is therefore not a passport to freedom and all other COVID secure measures must continue to be followed.

Anyone who receives a positive Lateral Flow Test result automatically activate legal obligations to self-isolate and may also claim for a Test and Trace payment if they are eligible.

If we all continue play our part, then we can control the spread of the virus and help ease the pressure that our health and care services are under.

NHS Test and Trace is working with government departments, institutions and employers across both public and private sectors to support delivery of asymptomatic testing to large organisations, including those providing critical services. More information on this can be found at [Register to order coronavirus tests for your employees - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-order-coronavirus-tests-for-your-employees)

More information, including comprehensive FAQs can be found at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-health-coronavirus-testing

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact Hayley Mortimer, Public Health Consultant on hayley.mortimer@wiltshire.gov.uk or Jessica Ryan, Public Health Specialist, jessica.ryan@wiltshire.gov.uk

We will keep you updated on this work.

Management of Council business and publicity during the pre-election period

Briefing Note No. 21-04

Service : Legal and Governance

Further Enquiries to: Ian Gibbons (Director Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer)

Date Prepared: March 2021

1. This note, previously issued in December 2020, is recirculated to provide general guidance for members and officers on the management of council business and publicity in the run-up to the Unitary, Parish and Police and Crime Commissioner elections on 6 May 2021. It supplements the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors and the Media Relations Protocol, included at Part 12 and Protocol 7 of the Constitution respectively. **The pre-election period began on 11 March and runs until 6 May 2021.**
2. The starting point is section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986, which expressly prohibits local authority publicity of a party political nature. The Council must not publish (or assist others to publish) material which, in whole or in part, appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party. Publicity is defined in section 6(4) of the 1986 Act as 'any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or a section of the public.'
3. This is reinforced by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members which states: *'You must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes) and you must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.'*
4. The Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity 2011 (included as Appendix 1 to the Council's Media Relations Protocol) sets out seven key principles local authorities should apply when making decisions on publicity. Publicity by local authorities should be:
 - Lawful
 - Cost effective
 - Objective
 - Even-handed
 - Appropriate
 - Consistent with the council's equality and diversity responsibilities

- Issued with care during periods of heightened sensitivity

5. Paragraphs 33 - 35 of the 2011 Code state:

33. Local authorities should pay particular regard to the legislation governing publicity during the period of heightened sensitivity before elections. It may be necessary to suspend the hosting of material produced by third parties, or to close public forums during this period to avoid breaching any legal restrictions.

34. During the period between the notice of an election and the election itself, local authorities should not publish any publicity on controversial issues or report views or proposals in such a way that identifies them with any individual members or groups of members. Publicity relating to individuals involved directly in the election should not be published by local authorities during this period unless expressly authorised by or under statute. It is permissible for local authorities to publish factual information which identifies the names, wards and parties of candidates at elections.

35. In general local authorities should not issue any publicity which seeks to influence voters.

6. The Council's approach is consistent with this guidance, and particular care will be taken during the period of heightened sensitivity leading up to the Unitary, Parish and Police and Crime Commissioner elections on 6 May 2021.
7. Generally, with regard to decision making within the Council the position remains that it is 'business as usual' unless there are very good reasons why this should not be the case. In most cases the pre-election period will have no impact on normal council business, including the determination of planning applications. Proposals or issues which may be controversial and likely to arise during the critical period should be identified and a common sense view taken in each case as to how the matter is to be handled. In cases where time is not critical it may be sensible to defer the matter until after the election. In other cases, this will not be possible because of statutory, contractual or other constraints.
8. Councillors should note that the display of election campaign material on council land and property, including highway land, is not permitted and action will be taken to remove any offending material.
9. The LGA has produced a short-guide on publicity in the pre-election period, available at:
<https://www.local.gov.uk/short-guide-publicity-during-pre-election-period>

10. Further advice may be obtained from:

Ian Gibbons – Director of Legal and Governance/Monitoring Officer

email ian.gibbons@wiltshire.gov.uk

And on the handling of publicity:

Ceri Tocock – Head of Communications

email communications@wiltshire.gov.uk

Councillors Briefing Note

Briefing Note No. 21-05

Further Enquiries to: Lucy Townsend

Date Prepared: 20 March 2021

Furlong Close update

Introduction

The future of Furlong Close remains an important issue for communities in Wiltshire. I thought it would be helpful to share further information on what is happening and how we're keeping in touch with our residents on the site in response to Hft's decision to close the site.

Background

Hft is the owner of the site at Furlong Close. In October 2020, Hft announced its plan to close Furlong Close in June 2021. Residents were informed by letter and meetings were held on the site in November.

Then, in a letter sent to the council and other local authorities dated 15 February 2021, Hft served 90 days' notice of termination of services at Furlong Close by 19 May 2021. This decision was also notified to residents, families and carers. The letter of notice was however unclear about Hft's plans for what would happen after termination. The council has written to Hft asking for clarification.

There has been opposition to the closure from residents, families and carers and supporters organised a petition that was noted at full council on 23 February 2021. The petition was not debated at the request of the petitioner.

Residents

For some of the residents, Furlong Close has been their home and they do not want to move. Families and the wider community have understandably raised concerns and it is important that questions and concerns are listened to and responded to. We will work with residents, their carers and family members to understand how we can continue to best meet their care and support needs. Most importantly, the wellbeing of the residents at Furlong Close is our main priority and we want to ensure the best outcomes for those who are currently living there.

Our focus has always been on supporting our residents as they consider their future options and what works longer term for them. We have been meeting with the residents, carers and families and we will continue to do this, for as long as they wish to engage with us, as it is important to ensure that, wherever possible, we can provide them with latest information when we receive it and listen to their views and try to answer any queries they may have.

So far there have been three meetings: 12 January, 3 February and 3 March 2021. After each meeting a note is prepared recording all questions raised. The note is shared with all attendees, families and carers, Hft and other local authorities.

Hft's plans for Furlong Close

We know there are many people anxious for a decision to be made regarding Furlong Close. We are meeting with Hft to do what we can to move this forward all the time taking into account how we can best support residents for the future.

As mentioned, Hft has given notice to the council and other local authorities with residents at Furlong Close to terminate the relevant contracts. Hft is the freehold owner of the accommodation at Furlong Close. Hft has informed the court that: "it has made it very clear that if the council wishes to continue arranging the same type of service at Furlong Close, then the council can do so with a different provider, and Hft will work with the council to agree terms so that the site is available to the council and other commissioners".

So far, Hft has offered to make the existing premises (or the necessary part of them) at Furlong Close available to the council 'on arms' length commercial terms' for a period of up to two years to enable the council to find alternative accommodation for those who are currently living at Furlong Close. Hft has not offered to sell the land to the council or make it otherwise available on a long-term basis so at this stage options do not extend beyond 2 years.

There has been no explanation of what the terms of any such agreement might be. Hft has not offered to sell the land to the council or to make it otherwise available on a long-term basis. The council's solicitors have made further enquiries with Hft's solicitors regarding the proposed arrangements but have had no further clarification, apart from a letter and a document with heads of terms for leasing the existing premises at Furlong Close to the council for a period of up to two years. Neither the letters nor the heads of terms give an indication of the rent that Hft would charge. We need to practise financial responsibility with public money throughout this process. As part of its enquiries the council also has asked Hft for clarification on how it proposes to contract with the 13 other local authorities that fund 14 residents.

Court challenge

One of the Wiltshire residents challenged Hft's decision in the Administrative Court in January 2021. To respect their privacy we have referred to this resident as "the claimant". The court refused permission for the challenge to proceed on 18 February 2021. The challenge was renewed by the claimant and there was a court hearing 10 March 2021.

At the hearing the council set out everything it had done following the first decision to close Furlong Close in October 2020. At the hearing Hft's barrister said that as a result of the decision in the letter of 15 February, the decision in the letter dated 13 October 2020 had been withdrawn and superseded and the claim against Hft was no longer relevant. Hft's barrister also said the effect of Hft's letter in February 2021 meant Hft no longer planned to close Furlong Close, but gave no further detail about their plan for Furlong Close after 19 May 2021. The court allowed the claimant to amend their claim so that it included the decision in Hft's letter of 15 February 2021 and allowed Hft to file their response to the amended claim by 23 March 2021.

The council is not a defendant and remains an interested party. After the claimant and Hft have filed further documents, the council has permission to file its observations before the court decides whether the claim may proceed on 25 March 2021. As a result of the court's decision at the hearing of 10 March 2021 the judicial review proceedings are now "live" at least until the court decides whether or not to grant permission to proceed. If permission is granted the proceedings will remain live until the final hearing that is likely to be listed in April or in May 2021.

Rapid Scrutiny Exercise

Following a request from the Leader of the Council, on 2 March 2021, Health Select Committee established a rapid scrutiny exercise to review the actions taken by the council in regards to Furlong Close. Due to legal proceedings now being "live" and with the council remaining an interested party, it is considered inappropriate for the rapid scrutiny exercise to proceed at this time. This pause has been agreed by the chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Health Select Committee, who will keep this decision under review and will be kept informed of the legal position.

Current situation

We know this is a difficult time for our residents and we want to continue an open and ongoing dialogue with everyone so they are very clear about future options. Following the letter with notice of termination on 15 February 2021, the council has reviewed its decision to suspend reviews and assessments. The council needs

to complete the reviews and assessments to inform consideration of future options for the residents.

Future options under consideration

In response to Hft's decision the council wishes to explore all possible options for the future of Wiltshire funded residents at Furlong Close, including whether another care provider would be willing and able to provide care and support to residents currently living there. However, in communications with Hft to date, Hft has made it clear to the council that Furlong Close will not be available to service users on anything other than a transitional basis, for up to two years to allow residents to be moved to new placements.

The options at this point being considered by the council for Wiltshire residents are set out below:

- a) Exploring with Hft whether the Furlong Close site could be made available to residents in future, and identifying an alternative care provider and terms of occupation of the Furlong Close site, including timescales and the cost of such provision;
- b) Identifying alternative appropriate residence and care provision in Wiltshire, preferably close to existing location and supporting existing friendship groups;
- c) Supporting adults, families and carers in identifying other alternative residence and care options.

Lucy Townsend

Corporate Director – People (DASS and DCS)

Councillors Briefing Note

Briefing Note No. 21-06

Service: Economic Development and Planning
Further Enquiries to: Mary Moore
Date Prepared: 12/04/2021
Direct Line: N/A
Email: Mary.moore@wiltshire.gov.uk

Payphones consultation

The council has received notification from BT regarding consultation on its current programme of proposed public payphone removals.

BT have identified **eight public payphones** in Wiltshire that have very low usage levels and propose to remove them under the 90-day consultation process. Details of these payphones are shown on the attached sheet, which include telephone numbers and addresses. BT has also placed consultation notices in the relevant payphone kiosks.

The following payphones kiosks have been listed for consultation:

1. TOWN BRIDGE, TROWBRIDGE
2. O/S THE LAMB PUB, COUNTY WAY, TROWBRIDGE
3. HALIFAX ROAD BOWERHILL MELKSHAM
4. OPP 51 PHOENIX RISE, PHOENIX RISE, WESTBURY
5. PORTWAY LANE, WARMINSTER
6. THE STREET, KILMINGTON, WARMINSTER
7. RANDALLS, CROFT ROAD, WILTON, SALISBURY
8. JCT MOODYS HILL/RECTORY HILL, WEST DEAN, SALISBURY

As the local authority, we are required to carry out our own consultation process to canvas the views of the local community. Therefore, we are seeking the views of the relevant parish councils, Wiltshire councillors and other groups and organisations representing the community on the proposed removal of these payphones.

Please provide reasons for any objections to the removal of specific phones, as a blanket objection is unlikely to carry much weight.

BT has provided some examples of factors that may be relevant (refer to their guidance at bottom of page):

- If there is predominantly privately rented or council housing in the area. This suggests people on a lower income without access to mobile and fixed telephones and supports the view that a public call box should be retained.

- There may be concerns about access to telephone services in areas with low population densities.
- The payphone may be sited in an area of poor mobile phone coverage.
- There may be a higher than average need to access emergency services, including breakdown services due to specific local factors for example, the call box is near a known accident blackspot.

BT offers the opportunity for parish councils and registered charities to adopt a kiosk for just £1, thereby protecting the heritage of the community.

Details about this can be found at <http://business.bt.com/phone-services/payphone-services/adopt-a-kiosk/>

The consultation period will close on Friday **14 May 2021**; please return your comments by Wednesday **12 May 2021**. All responses will be collated and directed to a single point of contact.

Your responses should be returned to Mary.Moore@wiltshire.gov.uk Development Officer, Regeneration, Economic Development and Planning, who will co-ordinate the decision response to BT on behalf of the council.

If we have not received a representation by the end of the consultation period, we'll assume that you have no objection to the removal of the payphone. Please be aware that once removed, kiosks cannot not be re-instated.

BT will remove payphones as soon as possible after the consultation period has ended.

Full guidance on the removal process can be viewed at:
<http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/consultations/uso/statement/removals.pdf>

The guidance also details the appeals process BT is required to follow, in cases of unreasonable objections.

Wiltshire Council will submit a response to BT on each proposed payphone removal.

All correspondence to BT should be addressed to:
BT Payphones, 4TH FLOOR, Monument TE, 11-13 Great Tower Street, London, EC3R 5AQ
or via email to btp.authorisation.team@bt.com

Please return in this format to ensure that the telephone number of the kiosk is clearly shown

	Telephone Number	Address	Postcode	Average calls per month	Posting Completed Date	Agree Adopt Object	Reason for objection - based on need for telephony only not the kiosk
1	01225751464	PCO PCO1 TOWN BRIDGE TROWBRIDGE	BA14 8JZ	41	10/03/2021		
2	01225769088	O/S THE LAMB PUB PCO1 COUNTY WAY TROWBRIDGE	BA14 7AQ	20	10/03/2021		
3	01225790634	PCO PCO1 HALIFAX ROAD BOWERHILL MELKSHAM	SN12 6UG	4	10/03/2021		
4	01373822739	OPP 51 PHOENIX RISE PCO1 PHOENIX RISE WESTBURY	BA13 3XS	0	10/03/2021		
5	01985219507	PCO PCO1 PORTWAY LANE WARMINSTER	BA12 8RB	1	10/03/2021		
6	01985844370	PCO PCO1 THE STREET KILMINGTON WARMINSTER	BA12 6RG	0	10/03/2021		
7	01722742607	PCO PCO1 RANDALLS CROFT ROAD WILTON SALISBURY	SP2 0EX	0	11/03/2021		
8	01794341969	JCT MOODYS HILL/RECTORY HILL PCO1 WEST DEAN SALISBURY	SP5 1JF	1	11/03/2021		

Notice date:



We're thinking about removing this payphone

Our research shows that this payphone doesn't get used very much now, so we think it might be time to take it away.

Alternatively, you might like to adopt a kiosk. Some communities have turned theirs into a defibrillator point, a library, or even a miniature art gallery.

Do you have any comments?

If so, please contact your local authority within 42 days of the date shown above. And if you'd like to find out more about adopting a kiosk, please visit www.bt.com/adopt for more information.

If you'd like to know where the next nearest payphone is, or which local authority you're in, please call us on **0800 661610** and choose option 1.

Update on Places Leisure centres transferring to Wiltshire Council

Briefing Note No. 21-07

Service: Communities & Neighbourhood Services
Date Prepared: 28 May 2021
Further enquiries to: louise.cary@wiltshire.gov.uk

We wanted to share a bit more information with you on the council's plans to transfer the current Places Leisure-run centres in Wiltshire into the management of Wiltshire Council.

In December 2020, the council's cabinet made the decision to bring its leisure centres back in-house, which supports the ambition to provide an equitable level of quality leisure services across the county, with the aim of creating a more active Wiltshire.

The council currently operates 10 leisure centres across the south and east of the county, with 10 leisure centres in the north and west that are managed on behalf of the council by Places Leisure. From October 2021, all leisure centres will be managed by Wiltshire Council.

The leisure centres that will move from Places Leisure to Wiltshire Council management are:

- Bradford on Avon Swimming Pool
- Castle Place Leisure Centre, Trowbridge
- Lime Kiln Leisure Centre, Royal Wootton Bassett
- Leighton Recreation Centre, Westbury
- Melksham Blue Pool & Gym
- The Activity Zone, Malmesbury
- The Olympiad, Chippenham
- Trowbridge Sports Centre
- Warminster Sports Centre
- Westbury Swimming Pool

All Places Leisure staff will be able to transfer to become Wiltshire Council employees, and plans are ongoing to ensure a smooth transition for leisure centre users. The council has been working closely with Places Leisure to engage staff throughout the process.

The emphasis of the project work has been on delivering business critical services and systems from day one of the transfer, to ensure staff can operate the facilities effectively and customers can continue to access and enjoy the sites and their activities.

A robust governance structure has been put in place to support the transfer process, including:

- Holding an Officer Leisure Insourcing Transition Board, chaired by Sam Fox, Corporate Director, Place. Group meets every three weeks.
- Having a weekly stand up check-in group chaired by Jess Gibbons, Director Communities and Neighbourhoods
- Weekly sub-groups for the HR, leisure, ICT, procurement and communications elements of the project

We will continue to keep you updated on any key developments.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Programme Lead, Louise Cary, at louise.cary@wiltshire.gov.uk

How to make suggestions for improved or enhanced bus services in Wiltshire

Briefing Note No. 21-08

Service: Communities & Neighbourhood Services – Passenger Transport

Further Enquiries to: Jason Salter
Date Prepared: 1st June 2021
Direct Line: (01225) 713454 or 7133334

On 15 March this year the government published ["Bus Back Better"](#) a national bus strategy for England, which outlines ambitious reform of how bus services are planned and delivered.

The strategy will deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered. It will make buses:

- more frequent
- more reliable
- easier to understand and use
- better co-ordinated
- cheaper.

The strategy is seen as an important part of the “levelling up agenda” and recognises that where commercial bus companies and local transport authorities work closely together buses are the easiest, cheapest and quickest way to improve transport. Some £3bn has been set aside in this parliament to be spent on increasing bus usage nationally through the national bus strategy.



As a prelude to this strategy the Government's Better Deal for Bus Users, in March 2020, granted Wiltshire £671,000 as revenue support to help to improve the provision of local bus services in our area in one or more of the following ways:

- to improve current local bus services - for instance increasing evening or weekend frequencies, or supporting additional seasonal services in tourist areas;
- to restore lost bus routes where most needed to ensure people have access to public transport services;
- to support new bus services, or extensions to current services, to access e.g. new housing, employment opportunities, healthcare facilities etc.

Last spring, we consulted on how this grant could best be spent, and I would like to thank those who responded to that consultation; the information provided has been most useful in shaping our thinking.

However, in the year since we have seen tremendous change, but now we are approaching the end of the lockdowns we need to make definite plans of how we will spend this money. Because so much has changed, not only because of the Pandemic, but also because we have many new councillors who may have different priorities, we are seeking up-to-date suggestions on how this money should be spent.

While compiling these requests, please bear in mind that this funding is:

- time-limited, with no guarantee that further funding will be available at the end of the experimental period to allow the improvements to continue.
- this money will need to be spread around the county and so requests for small improvements to existing services are likely to be more successful
- a new all-day service could cost in the region of £150,000 per annum to operate and be difficult to resource
- one additional journey, or an extension of an existing one can make a significant to a community's connectivity

At the moment we are only asking for suggestions for new services or changes/additions to existing services. However, as the National Bus Strategy is implemented, we will be asking for suggestions of improvements that would make significantly more people from your community use public transport. We realise however, that you will need much longer to consult on this with local residents.

If you provided ideas previously, which you consider are still valid you don't need to do anything; they will remain on our list. But if needs have changed, please advise our Bus Network Manager at buses@wiltshire.gov.uk by **Wednesday 14th July 2021**, so that he can assess the feasibility of introducing these on an experimental basis using this funding, over the next 12 – 18 months.

Please accept our apologies for the short timescale for this consultation, but the monies need to be committed in this financial year and some of the suggestions may require lengthy procurement exercises.

If you wish to discuss this request in more detail, or obtain guidance on the feasibility of a suggestion before submitting it, please ring the Bus Network Manager on 01225 713454 or email him at buses@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Temporary Pavement Licences

Briefing Note No. 21-09

Service : Enforcement, Highways Operations
Further Enquiries to: Tom Ince
Date Prepared: 07/06/2021
Direct Line: (01380 826334)

Temporary Pavement Licences in Wiltshire

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing note is to brief the Chair of the Licensing Committee on the latest position in relation to the Temporary Pavement Licence (TPL) process in Wiltshire.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Covid-19 and the restrictions imposed by Government have posed problems for the hospitality industry. The first national lockdown finished in early summer of 2020, whilst the Government allowed hospitality businesses to reopen social distancing measures significantly reduced their capacity, making many businesses unviable.
- 2.2 The Government acknowledged that the reduced capacity meant it was not cost effective for some businesses to open. The Business and Planning Act 2020 was introduced in July 2020, one element of the new act was the introduction of temporary pavement licences, these were designed to assist with capacity issues faced by hospitality businesses.
- 2.3 The objective of the TPL scheme is to promote outdoor dining and socialising. The scheme allows businesses to apply to place tables, chairs, barriers and similar items on the highway adjacent to the premises concerned, for the consumption of food and drink. The classifications of highway are set out in the act.
- 2.4 Local Authorities can charge up to £100 for each licence, Wiltshire Council has taken the decision not to charge for Temporary Pavement Licences.
- 2.5 The TPL scheme is a streamlined process that allows businesses to secure the licence quickly and easily. Where granted, they will remain in force for a year but not beyond 30 September 2022. This date was extended from 30 September 2021 in February 2021 following the third national lockdown and is laid down in legislation.

The new pavement licence scheme does not replace the existing scheme, where councils may give consent for tables and chairs to be placed on the highway via the Highways Act 1980. However, it does provide a cheaper, easier and quicker way for businesses to obtain a pavement licence for the short term.

- 2.6 Temporary Pavement Licences are subject to a 5 working day consultation period. Under the Highways Act scheme, it was 28 days. All applications are provided to the Town or Parish Council, Local Ward Members, Wiltshire Police, Fire Brigade, Chamber of Commerce and Council departments with an interest such as highways, public protection, parking services and licensing for consultation. The Council commits to determining all applications with 10 days of receipt.
- 2.7 Temporary Pavement licences are issued subject to conditions published by the licensing authority and those imposed by the Act. Wiltshire Council has a set of standard conditions; however site/establishment specific conditions are also added if applicable.
- 2.8 In addition, the Act imposes two further conditions:
 - a) **No-obstruction condition** - (Taken from national guidance). The no-obstruction condition is a condition that the licence must not have the effects set out in section 3(6) of the 2020 Act. When determining whether furniture constitutes an unacceptable obstruction in light of the no-obstruction condition, the provisions require that local authorities consider the needs of disabled people
 - b) **Smoke-free seating condition** - (Taken from national guidance). The national smoke-free seating condition seeks to ensure customers have greater choice, so that both smokers and non-smokers are able to sit outside.
- 2.9 The provisions in the Act provide an automatic entitlement to off sales for all licensed premises by temporarily modifying the Licensing Act 2003 to provide an automatic extension to the terms of most premises licences that only permit the sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises, to allow the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises. This makes it easier for licensed premises to sell alcohol to customers for consumption off the premises in England and Wales, which will allow businesses to trade and maintain social distancing.

Guidance has been issued by the Government and is available online: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-temporary-alcohol-licensing-provisions-in-the-business-and-planning-bill/alcohol-licensing-guidance-on-new-temporary-off-sales-permissions>

3.0 **Current Position**

- 3.1 The Markets Team within Enforcement (Highways Operations) currently administer TPL's for Wiltshire Council. The team also look after; Markets, Street Trading and Street Collections.
- 3.2 Since the introduction of the scheme Wiltshire Council has received 51 applications, with 20 or 39% being in Salisbury. 4 applications have been refused on the grounds of site safety.
- 3.3 Applications must be sent to Streettrading@wiltshire.gov.uk for processing. All documents are available via the Council's website.

- 3.4 It is anticipated that with hospitality businesses being able to serve customers inside the premises from 17 May 2021 that application numbers will fall.
- 3.5 Decisions on the issue or revocation of licences and any conditions attached to licences are currently delegated to the Enforcement Manager and Principal Compliance Officer within the Enforcement Team. There is currently no input from the Council's Licensing Committee due to the time critical nature of the process and the fact an application must be consulted on and determined within 10 days of receipt.
- 3.6 The Business and Planning Act 2020 does not provide the applicant with any right of appeal via the Councils Licensing Committee or any other body in the event of a refusal.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 The implementation of the new Temporary Pavement Licence process was implemented effectively by the Enforcement Team in July 2020 to allow Wiltshire Council to issue pavement licences as soon as the legislation was passed by parliament. The process continues to run smoothly with all applications determined within the timeframe set by Legislation.
- 4.2 The Council has supported business within Wiltshire by issuing Temporary Pavement Licences at no cost.

Briefing Note produced by Tom Ince (Principal Compliance Officer)

Email: tom.ince@wiltshire.gov.uk

Democratic meetings during the pandemic

Briefing Note No. 21-10

Service : **Legal and Governance**
Further Enquiries to: Perry Holmes (Monitoring Officer)
Date Prepared: 1 July 2021
Direct Line: Perry.Holmes@wiltshire.gov.uk

Purpose

1. To set out the council's response to the expiration of the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. These Regulations permitted the use of online meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic and expired on 6 May 2021. The Briefing Note explains how the council is managing meetings safely until restrictions are lifted (not before 19 July 2021).

Background

2. The Regulations removed the requirement to hold a council meeting in a physical place, allowing members to join an online meeting to participate and vote and meant meetings were considered 'open to the public' where live streamed. Wiltshire has employed online meetings effectively since April 2020 and the same approach has also been taken by many parish councils in Wiltshire that also fall under the Regulations.
3. In the spring, the Government announced that it would not extend the Regulations beyond 6 May 2021. The Government stated primary legislation would be required to make such a change, and this could not be prioritised within the current legislative programme.
4. Wiltshire Council, alongside many other councils, has been working with the Local Government Association (LGA), Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) and the Association of Democratic Services Officers (ADSO) to lobby government to re-consider its position in the context of the ongoing pandemic. LLG and ADSO sought a high court ruling to allow virtual council meetings to continue.
5. The High Court issued a judgement on 28 April 2021, ruling that Parliament would need to approve legislation to allow local authority meetings under the 1972 Act to continue to take place remotely. This judgement was despite the Secretary of State's support for the case and significant evidence of councils being unable to

deliver their usual democratic process during the pandemic without the assistance of the Regulations.

Implications

6. The lack of new primary legislation from government, and the ruling of the High Court, means that councils must ensure elected members and the public are able to participate in essential decision making in a manner that is consistent with the current Covid-19 regulations and guidance
7. A Government [letter to council leaders](#) issued on 25 March 2021 recognised concerns about in-person meetings and suggested that it may be appropriate for councils to use delegation to officers or individual cabinet member decision making to reduce the number of meetings held.
8. Government restrictions are in place until at least 19 July 2021. As such, the council's approach is that only meetings which are essential to decision making should take place in-person until restrictions are lifted.

Full Council

9. It is currently intended that Full Council on 20 July will again take place **in-person** at the Civic Centre to allow for social distancing.

Cabinet and committees constituted under different legislation

10. Cabinet is not constituted as a committee of the council under the 1972 Local Government Act. As such, the Cabinet meetings in June were able to take place online. There is no requirement for Cabinet decisions to be made at an in-person meeting, since decisions may be taken by individual members, and individual Cabinet Member decisions will continue where appropriate.
11. Licensing Sub-Committees fall under the Licensing Act 2003, which does not prescribe how hearings must take place. As such, the council intends to continue these meetings **online** whilst restrictions are in place.
12. Some other decision-making bodies, such as Schools Forum and the Local Pension Board, are also not committees of the council and will continue **online** until restrictions are lifted.

Area Boards and Overview and Scrutiny

13. Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings will continue to meet **online** until restrictions are lifted as these make recommendations but do not take decisions.
14. **Online** Area Board meetings have been working well and will **continue** until restrictions are lifted. As Area Boards operate executive powers delegated from the Leader, all Area Board decisions can be made by the Leader. Area Boards will be expected to discuss grant applications etc. with their community as normal, before forming a recommendation at an online meeting. The decisions will then be formally made by the Leader through a single-member decision, as was practice before the temporary Regulations were in place.

Area Planning and other committees

15. Other meetings, such as planning and governance committees, constituted under the Local Government Act 1972 will take place **in-person** where decision making is necessary to the running of the council business. In such instances, these may be held in different venues, public attendance will be limited, and Covid-19 precautions will be in place.
16. Committees or sub-committees will continue to meet **online** where they have workshop sessions or are forming recommendations, which can then be formally confirmed by another body or parent committee.

Informal meetings

17. Meetings that are not open to the public, such as informal agenda-setting meetings and briefings, will continue to take place **online**.

Practical considerations

18. Holding in-person meetings under current Covid-19 restrictions presents practical and financial implications for the council's larger meetings, particularly those that take place outside of council hubs. It will not be possible to deliver all meetings with the usual frequency and in the usual location.
19. Where meetings take place in-person, similar precautions will be in place as were implemented for Full Council, i.e. 1-metre minimum social distancing, mask wearing and designated seating. Members of the public will be required to register to attend meetings in advance and walk-ins on the day will be refused if the venue is at capacity. Elected Members wishing to attend meetings where they are not a member of that Committee are also asked to contact Democratic Services in advance so this can be accommodated.

- 20. Staff and public attending meetings may have not yet been fully vaccinated. Whilst government restrictions are in place, and as cases are rising in Wiltshire, it is important that mask wearing continues during meetings.
- 21. Meetings taking place in the Council Hubs will no longer be routinely web-streamed while the council seeks to develop a long-term solution for web streaming that includes hybrid meeting options. Exceptions will be made for meetings generating significant public interest, as with Strategic Planning on 22 June 2021.
- 22. A significant number of community venues are either not taking bookings during the pandemic or are being used as vaccination centres. There may therefore be some delay in reinstating in-person Area Board meetings following the easing of restrictions.

Next steps

- 23. Members will be advised which meetings are taking place in-person or online via their calendar invites and the meeting agenda. When restrictions end, in-person meetings will begin to resume, however, the date, time and location of meetings may vary from the planned timetable on occasion, due to venue unavailability.
- 24. The Council's Organisational Recovery team are developing a long-term solution to facilitate hybrid meetings in a cost-effective way. MHCLG are also considering permanent legislation allowing councils to choose their own approach to remote, hybrid and in-person meetings.

Town and parish councils

- 25. Town and parish councils will need to consider their own arrangements for holding meetings safely and efficiently. Guidance for local councils on the safe use of council buildings can be found at: <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings>

Conclusion

- 26. The approach outlined will be reviewed if the Government roadmap changes, or if public health advice for Wiltshire changes significantly.

Wiltshire Council mowing policy

Briefing Note No. 21-11

Services: Highways, Street Scene
Further enquiries to: Chris Clark and Craig Campbell
Date prepared: 5 July 2021

Grass cutting and wildflower growth are always a popular topic at this time of the year, and for good reason. With the recent wet weather and then the warm spell, we have had perfect conditions for prolific plant growth, and this can affect our amenity areas and the safety of our highways.

As always, we need to balance the need to ensure that our highways are managed safely with the need to protect our wild spaces and to encourage wildlife, particularly insects.

With this in mind, we periodically review the recommendations for grounds maintenance, taking into account feedback from local communities, to establish how it can be improved to encourage more flora and fauna into amenity areas while keeping highways safe – particularly at junctions, roundabout and bends. Currently the amenity maintenance is based on keeping grass cut regularly, while in rural areas, cutting is based on safety – the cutting schedules for these areas are listed below.

Rural highway verge mowing

This year we have modified our approach to mowing our rural roads, in recognition that these verges can provide a significant environmental benefit. Historically we carried out one single cut of the entire rural network through May and June. This year we started cutting visibility splays on junctions and some bends, along with some of the particularly narrow lanes in the middle of May. The remaining verges will be left uncut until September. Leaving these areas much later to cut will enable wildflowers to set seed and spread more widely in the verge.

In addition to this we have also been holding a pilot on the A350, where we have been ‘cutting and collecting grass’. We have identified areas that are able to utilise a rear mounted collector flail. This then impoverishes the soil and creates conditions that encourage the growth of wildflowers. Normally grass cuttings remain in situ, creating a nutrient-rich environment that wildflowers do not prosper in.

Progress on our current mowing program has been good; we have been utilising ten tractor flails across the county and we are anticipating that we should have completed the cut by 21 June. Following this, any issues reported to us will be investigated and revisited if necessary.



Highway verge cutting to enable wildflowers to thrive

Urban grass cutting

We mow the grass in urban areas regularly, but the frequency of mowing depends on the area and conditions. Cutting is deferred in very wet or frosty weather, and when it is very dry for a prolonged period, we may also suspend cutting so we can direct resources into other allocated works.

We are currently running some wildflower trials to enable wildlife to thrive in these areas. As with highways verge mowing, we 'cut and collect' in these areas to create better conditions for wildflowers to thrive. Current wildflower trials are only undertaken in large open spaces with good access for the tractor, relatively flat geography with appropriate locations for onsite composting.



Heathlands wildflower meadow in Warminster

The grass cutting schedule is as follows:

Urban mowing (Generally within 30mph zones)			
Area	Expected mowing season	Expected frequency of cut	Type of mow
General grass areas	Second week March - end of October	Monthly	Cuttings to be as flown
Environmental cut	One cut during March, July and September	N/A	Cuttings to be as flown
Wildflower/ conservation areas	A cut will take place the last fortnight of March and commence again in the last two weeks of September.	N/A	Cuttings to be collected and removed from site
Rural mowing (Generally outside of 30mph zones)			
Visibility splays and narrow lanes	May/June	Scheduled annual cut and then reactive to issues as they arise	Tractor flail – cuttings flown
Non-visibility verges	September/October	Scheduled annual cut	Tractor flail – cuttings flown
Pilot wildflower areas	September/October	Scheduled annual cut	Tractor flail – cuttings collected and disposed of in situ
Protected verges	September/October	Scheduled annual cut. Generally September but may differ, depending on plants that have been identified as being of ecological value	Tractor flail – cuttings collected and disposed of in situ

Areas of grass where bulbs have been naturalised are not cut for a minimum of eight weeks after flowering.

Councillors Briefing Note No. 21-12

Service: Highways and Transport **Further Enquiries to:** Spencer Drinkwater

Date Prepared: 14 July 2021 **Direct Line:** (01225) 713480

THE 'SUBSTANTIVE HIGHWAYS SCHEME FUND' BID APPLICATION PROCESS FOR FUNDING IN 2022/23

Background

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic and its impact on staff resources, the Substantive Highways Scheme Fund programme was put on hold during 2020/21.

The Substantive Highways Scheme Fund will be reinstated in the 2022/23 financial year to enable Area Boards to bid (via their respective CATGs) for funding to deliver priority transport schemes that exceed their Discretionary Highways Budget.

A two-year design and build programme has been adopted for Substantive Highways Schemes, whereby Area Boards submit funding bids in the current year for detail design prior to implementation in the following financial year. As such, the bidding process will take place in 2021/22 for funding in 2022/23.

Subject to source funding remaining available¹, the Substantive Highways Scheme Fund for the 2022/23 financial year will again be set at £150,000.

Mechanism for awarding Substantive Highway Scheme funding

The mechanism to be used to award Substantive Highway Scheme funding will be that agreed by the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport in July 2011.

With this mechanism, competing scheme bids are assessed and awarded funding according to two factors:

- Value for money
- Deliverability

Value for money is the ratio of the cost and benefit of the prospective schemes. Under this system, the benefit is determined from the priority score following assessment under the Scheme Assessment Framework (see **Appendix 1**) and the cost is that which would be borne by the council in implementing the scheme. In this way, the cost/benefit ratio of any

¹ Local Transport Plan Integrated Block – Annual Grant Funding from Department for Transport

scheme is calculated to both acknowledge and stimulate contributory funding from town/parish councils and other external bodies.

Deliverability is an assessment of how challenging a scheme would be to implement within the next financial year, considering technical, legal/procedural, operational, financial and public factors. Schemes are given a 'confidence score' based on these factors.

Appendix 2 sets out the Substantive Highways Scheme Bid Evaluation Formula, incorporating the above value for money and deliverability criteria. It should be noted that as the council is looking to fund those schemes that are easily deliverable, and offer the maximum benefit for the minimum cost, the successful bids will be those that achieve the lowest score.

Eligibility to bid for Substantive Highway Scheme funding

An Area Board is eligible to bid for Substantive Highway Scheme funding when the cost of implementing a scheme is estimated to exceed its annual Discretionary Highways Budget allocation.

Schemes that can be achieved within an Area Board's Discretionary Highways Budget or where it is reasonable and realistic to implement discrete, standalone sections in phases over time are not eligible for Substantive Highways Scheme funding. However, projects that comprise a number of separate but linked elements that form an integral highway improvement will be eligible.

Each bid must include a local financial contribution to the scheme. This can come from the relevant CATG or another source, such as a parish or town council, or be a combination of different sources. In addition, the sum of the local contribution and the bid for Substantive Highways Scheme funding must cover the full estimated cost of implementing the scheme.

Area Boards can submit up to two bids, although bidding more than once may reduce an Area Board's chances of success as the bids would effectively compete against each other.

Schemes that bids are submitted for must have been developed to a stage that demonstrates that they can be designed in 2021/22 and be deliverable within the 2022/23 financial year when the funding will be available. Development of a scheme could include topographical surveys, completion of statutory processes, early stage design, and detailed cost estimates. The extent of scheme development prior to the submission of a Substantive bid will depend on the type of scheme being proposed and advice should be taken from council officers.

Bidding process

Bids should be completed on the attached pro-forma application form (see **Appendix 3**) and submitted by Friday 17 September 2021 to the highways officer serving the relevant Area Board Community Area Transport Group. The bids will then be scored in accordance with **Appendix 2**.

It is anticipated that a provisional decision on the awarding of funding will be made in October 2021 by the Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding.

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT SCHEME ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

OBJECTIVES	FACTOR	DESCRIPTION	SCORE
SAFETY	Accidents	Number of pedestrian/cycle accidents over proposed length of scheme (last 3 years); 2 points per accident up to a maximum of ten points for five or more accidents	(0 – 10)
	Threat and Intimidation	Traffic volumes: < 300v/hr = 0pts, 300-600v/hr = 2pts, > 600 v/hr = 3pts Traffic speeds: 0-5mph asl* = 0pts, 5-10mph asl* = 2pts, > 10mph asl* = 3pts % HGVs: < 1% = 0pts, 1-5% = 1pt, > 5% = 2pts % through traffic: < 10% = 0pts, 10-50% = 1pt, > 50% = 2pts Existing facilities: 1 point deducted for each existing facility	(0 - 10)
ACCESSIBILITY	Population Benefiting	Number of people potentially benefiting from a scheme: 0-10 = 1pt, 10-100 = 2pts, 100-200 = 3pts, 200-500 = 4pts, 500-1000 = 5pts, 1000-2000 = 6pts, 2000-4000 = 7pts, 4000-8000 = 8pts, > 8000 = 10pts	(0 – 10)
	School Travel	Would a scheme offer improved facilities or a safer environment for children walking/cycling to school(s)? Yes = 5pts; No = 0pts Does the school have a 'live' School Travel Plan? Yes = 5pts; No = 0pts	(0 – 10)
	Amenity Links	To what level would a scheme serve local amenities: 2 points each for a food shop, leisure centre, community centre, public house and Post Office	(0 – 10)
ECONOMY	Economic Considerations	Would a scheme improve pedestrian/cycle access to an urban commercial/retail area? Yes = 5pts; No = 0pts Would a scheme improve the pedestrian/shopping environment in an urban commercial/retail area? Yes = 5pts; No = 0pts	(0 – 10)
INTEGRATION	Network Linkages	Would a scheme improve existing networks? Link on a town cycle network = 5 pts (Link on a recreational cycle/walk route = 2pts) Improved pedestrian link = 5 pts Improved disabled access = 5pts Link to a bus/rail station = 5pts (link to bus stop = 2pts)	(0 – 20)
ENVIRONMENT	Environmental Considerations	Could the scheme help achieve modal shift and reduce car use? Yes = 5pts; No = 0pts Is the scheme in an Air Quality Management Area? Yes = 5pts; No = 0pts	(0 – 10)

* asl = Above speed limit

APPENDIX 2

Cost/Benefit

Scheme Name	Total Cost of Scheme (£000s)	Contribution (from CATG or other party) (£000s)	Cost to WC (£000s)	Benefit Score (from Scheme Assessment Framework)	Cost to Benefit Ratio
	A	B	A-B	0-90	A-B/Benefit Score
Example Scheme X	60	30	30	50	0.60
Example Scheme Y	60	0	60	50	1.20

0 = no risk
1 = low risk
2 = medium risk
3 = high risk

Deliverability

Technical	From a technical standpoint, what is the level of confidence in our ability to implement the proposal? Are there any likely departures from standards involved in developing or implementing the proposal? Is there sufficient land to implement a scheme that meets standards?	x
Legal/Procedural	Are there any statutory procedures that are likely to prove a barrier to delivery? What is the level of confidence that they can be dealt with?	x
Operational	Are there any aspects of the proposals which would result in the Council incurring significant additional costs over its projected life?	x
Financial:	Evidence from past transport projects illustrates that there is a systematic tendency for project appraisers to be overly optimistic when estimating costs. This assessment should appraise the likelihood of the project being delivered within the estimated cost.	x
Public	Has the proposal been made public? If so, how acceptable is the proposal? Are there likely to be objections from particular sections of the community or from particular areas?	x
Deliverability Score		$\sum x \div 5$

Overall Score = Cost/Benefit x Deliverability

Application for Substantive Highways Scheme Funding

This form should be completed and submitted to the highways officer serving your Area Board's Community Area Transport Group by Friday 17th September 2021 and copied to Spencer Drinkwater in the Sustainable Transport Group

Applicant Details:

Name:	
Area Board:	
Email:	
Tel:	

Description and Location of Proposed Scheme:

Scheme name	
Town/village:	
Road name/area of town/village:	
Brief description of scheme:	

Scheme Costs and Funding Sought:

Estimated total cost of Scheme	£
Contribution from CATG's Discretionary Highways Budget	£
Contributions from third parties (e.g. town/parish councils)	£
Funding sought from Substantive Highway Scheme Fund	£

.....
Signature of Area Board Chair/Community Area Manager:

.....
Date:

Management of Council business and publicity during the pre-election period

Briefing Note No. 21-13

Service : Legal and Governance
Further Enquiries to: Perry Holmes (Director Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer)
Date Prepared: July 2021

1. This note provides general guidance for members and officers on the management of council business and publicity in the run-up to the Police and Crime Commissioner elections on 19 August 2021. It supplements the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors and the Media Relations Protocol, included at Part 12 and Protocol 7 of the Constitution respectively. **The pre-election period began on 15 July and runs until 19 August 2021.**
2. The starting point is section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986, which expressly prohibits local authority publicity of a party political nature. The Council must not publish (or assist others to publish) material which, in whole or in part, appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party. Publicity is defined in section 6(4) of the 1986 Act as 'any communication, in whatever form, addressed to the public at large or a section of the public.'
3. This is reinforced by the Council's Code of Conduct for Members which states: '*You must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes) and you must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.*'
4. The Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity 2011 (included as Appendix 1 to the Council's Media Relations Protocol) sets out seven key principles local authorities should apply when making decisions on publicity. Publicity by local authorities should be:
 - Lawful
 - Cost effective
 - Objective
 - Even-handed
 - Appropriate
 - Consistent with the council's equality and diversity responsibilities

- Issued with care during periods of heightened sensitivity

5. Paragraphs 33 - 35 of the 2011 Code state:

33. Local authorities should pay particular regard to the legislation governing publicity during the period of heightened sensitivity before elections. It may be necessary to suspend the hosting of material produced by third parties, or to close public forums during this period to avoid breaching any legal restrictions.

34. During the period between the notice of an election and the election itself, local authorities should not publish any publicity on controversial issues or report views or proposals in such a way that identifies them with any individual members or groups of members. Publicity relating to individuals involved directly in the election should not be published by local authorities during this period unless expressly authorised by or under statute. It is permissible for local authorities to publish factual information which identifies the names, wards and parties of candidates at elections.

35. In general local authorities should not issue any publicity which seeks to influence voters.

6. The Council's approach is consistent with this guidance, and particular care will be taken during the period of heightened sensitivity leading up to the Police and Crime Commissioner elections on 19 August 2021.
7. Generally, with regard to decision making within the Council the position remains that it is 'business as usual' unless there are very good reasons why this should not be the case. In most cases the pre-election period will have no impact on normal council business, including the determination of planning applications. Proposals or issues which may be controversial and likely to arise during the critical period should be identified and a common sense view taken in each case as to how the matter is to be handled. In cases where time is not critical it may be sensible to defer the matter until after the election. In other cases, this will not be possible because of statutory, contractual or other constraints.
8. Councillors should note that the display of election campaign material on council land and property, including highway land, is not permitted and action will be taken to remove any offending material.
9. The LGA has produced a short-guide on publicity in the pre-election period, available at: <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/short-guide-publicity-during-pre-election-period>

10. Further advice may be obtained from:

Perry Holmes – Director of Legal and Governance/Monitoring Officer
email perry.holmes@wiltshire.gov.uk

And on the handling of publicity:

Ceri Tocock – Head of Communications
email communications@wiltshire.gov.uk

Bus Back Better update – informal bus survey

Briefing Note No. 21-14

Service: Communities & Neighbourhood Services

Date Prepared: 23 July 2021

Further enquiries to: Jason.salter@wiltshire.gov.uk

We wanted to update you on the Government's national bus strategy and the work we're doing in Wiltshire to improve local bus services.

To recap, on 15 March this year the government published its Bus Back Better vision, which underpins a national bus strategy for England and outlines ambitious reform of how bus services are planned and delivered.

The strategy will deliver better bus services for passengers across England, through ambitious and far-reaching reform of how services are planned and delivered. It will make buses:

- more frequent
- more reliable
- easier to understand and use
- better co-ordinated
- cheaper

The strategy is seen as an important part of the levelling-up agenda and recognises that where commercial bus companies and local transport authorities work closely together buses are the easiest, cheapest and quickest way to improve transport. Some £3bn has been set aside in this parliament to be spent on increasing bus usage nationally through the national bus strategy. In addition, and as a prelude to this, in March 2020, Government granted Wiltshire £671,000 as revenue support to help to improve the provision of local bus services.

Thank you to those of you that took the time out to respond to Briefing Note no. 21-08 by providing your suggestions for new services or changes and/or additions to existing services in your communities by using the money awarded. We will look through and consider all the responses that have been sent and keep you updated on the plans.

The Government's strategy complements our aim to encourage more people to travel by bus to help support our carbon neutral objectives, and to reach and connect more people who live in rural communities who don't have a viable way to get around.

The council has already been successful in getting some money from the £3bn fund, with a successful bid of £1.2m to improve demand responsive transport in the Pewsey Vale area. This will be in operation next year after a public consultation, which will help establish the most appropriate way for the service to be provided.

We are holding an informal consultation with the public and businesses to help shape our work as we look to produce a Bus Service Improvement Plan later this autumn. Our local bus services plan is a requirement in order to be part of the Bus Back Better strategy.

Alongside all the existing information we have on services and usage, this non-statutory survey, that will run until 23 August 2021, will give us an even better understanding of how bus services are used and how usage has been affected by the pandemic. The survey shouldn't take longer than five minutes to complete and we are keen to hear from non-bus users, as well as those who currently use them, as this will provide a much more wide-ranging picture of the current situation and people's circumstances. The survey can be found at <https://surveys.wiltshire.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=162679536235>, and we'll make hard copies

available as well.

The Government's strategy and associated funding is an exciting opportunity to improve bus services throughout England, and our focus is to successfully make improvements in the county that will benefit all those that use bus services, which in turn may attract new users, too. We recognise how important public transport is, particularly in a vast rural county like Wiltshire, and when done right it's the lifeblood of many a community.

We would appreciate your support in spreading the word about our survey and encouraging people and representatives of businesses and organisations within your communities to take part.

If you have any questions about this ongoing project, then please don't hesitate to get in touch.

We will keep you updated.

Climate Strategy and Natural Environment Plan - Consultation

Briefing Note No. 21-15

Service : Climate team and Landscape & Design team
Further Enquiries to: climate@wiltshire.gov.uk / LandscapeAndDesign@wiltshire.gov.uk
Date Prepared: 25 August 2021

We are giving residents, businesses and local groups in the county the opportunity to have their say on our draft Climate Strategy, which will help to shape the next five years of the council's action on climate change.

From Wednesday 1 September to 11.59pm on Sunday 17 October, people can comment on the draft strategy, which covers seven delivery themes: transport; built environment; waste; green economy; energy generation, storage and distribution; natural environment, food and farming; and carbon neutral council.

At the same time, we will also be consulting on 'Our Natural Environment Plan' - A Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Strategy for Wiltshire, which looks at the future for Wiltshire's natural environmental assets focussing on the need to address climate change adaptation and mitigation, halt and reverse biodiversity loss and contribute to the health and wellbeing of Wiltshire's residents.

'Blue infrastructure' means water courses such as rivers, lakes, canals, ponds and wetlands, while 'green infrastructure' covers plant life such as fields, forests, hedgerows and parks, and the GBI Strategy will set a clear vision, goals and principle to guide delivery through partnership working. Having a strong GBI will help mitigate against the effects of climate change through nature-based solutions such as, increased water retention in the land to reduce the risk of flooding, maintain and improve biodiversity, and help to provide improved access to the countryside.

A member briefing will be held at 10am on 9 September 2021 to run through both strategies and give members an opportunity to ask questions.

Our approach

A climate strategy discussion document and green and blue infrastructure strategy overview were presented to Council in February 2021 (see item 107 [here](#)). Significant stakeholder engagement has taken place for both strategies and the Global Warming and Climate Emergency Task Group has been involved in the process.

The climate strategy document has deliberately been kept simple and succinct to encourage a wide readership. The UK Climate Change Committee estimates that local authorities can influence one third of emissions in their area. This makes public engagement and buy-in from organisations and businesses critical to tackling the other two thirds – as well as advocating for strong government action. This high level strategy sets out our objectives and areas of focus while remaining flexible. As the world around us evolves in terms of knowledge, legislation and policy, technology and the market, we will adapt to take advantage of these opportunities. Detailed delivery plans will be developed, and in recognition that we are facing an emergency, we are already taking action on a number of fronts.

This strategy is built on the currently available evidence base, recognising that there are gaps in understanding and more work will need to be undertaken over time. Technical studies will be commissioned as required to address these gaps.

How the public can get involved

The next step is to consult publicly on both strategies, raising awareness of what the council is doing on this agenda and encouraging communities to do their bit. People can share their views on both draft strategies by taking the online surveys during the engagement period, and there will also be a series of joint online and in-person events covering both strategies that people can join to find out more and ask questions. To join these events, people must sign up online in advance. The full schedule of engagement events is as follows:

- 9 September, 6pm, online launch event with Claire Perry O'Neill
- 15 September, 10.30am to 11.30am, first engagement webinar
- 30 September, 7pm to 8pm, second engagement webinar.

Libraries drop-in sessions:

- 14 September, 10am to 12 noon, Salisbury Library
- 23 September, 10am to 12 noon, Devizes Library
- 27 September, 10am to 12 noon, Chippenham Library
- 7 October, 10am to 12 noon, Trowbridge Library.

For more information about the Climate Strategy see: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/climate.

For more information about the GBI Strategy see: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-bio-green-blue-infrastructure where both the full document and a summary version are available to download.

You can sign up for the online events [here](#).

Your role

To support the consultation and raise awareness of what the council is doing, please do:

- complete the online surveys
- share social media content during the consultation period
- encourage residents to respond to the consultation
- encourage communities to consider a project under the [Together for Our Planet scheme](#)
- encourage your town and parish councils to display a poster on their notice boards. A copy of the poster has been sent out to every town and parish council and it is available to download from our web page should additional copies be required.
- encourage your town and parish councils to discuss the strategies and complete the online surveys if they have a meeting that falls during the consultation period. All parish clerks were given prior notice of this consultation (and dates) via their Community Engagement Manager back in late June/early July.

Next steps

Both strategies will be reviewed during autumn 2021 in light of consultation feedback and any relevant changes in national policy (a raft of announcements are expected in the run up to [COP26](#) in Glasgow). The final strategies are expected to be adopted by Council in February 2022.

The GBI strategy will inform the development of new policies in the emerging Local Plan and other council documents such as the Local Transport Plan and set the framework for a new Local Nature Recovery Strategy that will identify biodiversity net gain sites (a new requirement in the Environment Bill).

Taxi Tariff Changes

Briefing Note No. 21-16

Service : Enforcement, Highways Operations
Further Enquiries to: Tom Ince
Date Prepared: 16/09/2021
Direct Line: (01380 826334)

Proposed Changes - Taxi Tariff Schedule for Hackney Carriages

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this briefing note is to brief Members on the latest position in relation to implementing a new schedule of tariffs and fees for hackney carriages in Wiltshire. This information was shared with the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 13 September 2021. Approval has already been provided for the business area to implement the proposal.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 It was agreed at an extraordinary meeting of Wiltshire Council's Licensing Committee on 27 January 2020 to undertake a public consultation into proposals on a new fees and tariffs schedule for Hackney Carriages in Wiltshire.

The consultation commenced on 6 February 2020 and finished on 20 February 2020. The details of the proposal were published on the council's consultation portal for individuals and drivers to feed back on. As part of the consultation, all licensed hackney carriage drivers were provided with a copy of the proposals and a driver feedback form, and were asked to share their views.

- 2.2 After evaluating the feedback and level of response, the approved action was to implement Option 2, with a number of amendments. The below details the approved outcome:
- 2.3 For vehicles up to four seats:
- An additional 30p to be added to all flag rates (standing charge)
 - Tariff 3 to be amended to only apply on public holidays.
 - Tariff 2 to be implemented from 22:00 instead of the current 22:30 and apply every day apart from public holidays.
 - Tariff 1 to end at 21:59 instead of 22:29.

For vehicles with more than four seats carrying more than four passengers:

- Tariff 5 to be amended to only apply on public holidays.
- Tariff 4 to be implemented from 22:00 instead of the current 22:30 and apply all day every day apart from public holidays.
- Tariff 2 to end at 21:59 instead of 22:29.

The impact of the changes are that it will make for cheaper late-night fares after 02.30am, addressing the issues raised in relation to the late-night economy. The change to charge tariff 2 and 4 from 22:00 will mean that travel between 22:00 and 22:29 is now slightly more expensive.

- 2.4 In January 2020 the Licensing Committee delegated implementation of the new tariffs to the Taxi Licensing Team. The advertising spend required to advertise the proposed change was unbudgeted for in 2020/21 so implementation was delayed until 2021/2022.
- 2.5 COVID-19 has impacted all industries/sectors and the taxi industry has not been immune to this, experiencing a significant reduction in business. Changes to the tariff would incur a small cost of approximately £20 to adjust every vehicle meter.
- 2.6 It was felt that given the hardship experienced by drivers and vehicle owners since March 2020, to implement this change during the peak of the pandemic would not be supportive of the industry. As the economy begins to recover and return to more normal conditions, the impact of the tariff changes on vehicle owners and drivers would be more sustainable.
- 2.7 The new tariff of fees will be implemented on 4 January 2022, subject to the normal statutory consultation processes. It is a legal requirement to advertise the proposed changes for 28 days.
- 2.8 The existing tariff of fees (which came into force on 8 May 2015) are attached as **Appendix 1** and the proposed tariff of fees which are planned to come into force on 4 January 2022 are attached as **Appendix 2**.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 Implementation of the proposed changes to the schedule of fees and tariffs for Hackney Carriages (as set out in Appendix 2) will take place on 4 January 2022, subject to the proposals being advertised and standard consultation processes.

Briefing note produced by Tom Ince (Principal Compliance Officer)

Email: tom.ince@wiltshire.gov.uk

Wiltshire Council hackney carriage, maximum table of fares (North, South, East & West Zones)

For journeys starting	Vehicles up to four seats	Vehicles with more than four seats carrying more than four passengers
6 am – 10:29 pm	Tariff 1	Tariff 2
10:30pm – 02:29 am and Sundays, Bank Holidays, Public Holidays and Easter Sunday and after 8pm Christmas Eve & New Years Eve	Tariff 2	Tariff 4
2:30 am – 5:59 am and all day on 25 December, 26 December and 1 January	Tariff 3	Tariff 5

	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4	Tariff 5
Journeys up to 176 yards, 1/10 Mile	£3.20	£4.50	£5	£4.50	£6
Subsequent 176 yards, 1/10 Mile	20p	30p	40p	45p	60p
Waiting time per minute	20p	30p	40p	45p	60p
Minimum fouling charge	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100

Hackney Carriages are regulated by Wiltshire Council.

In case of a complaint regarding this vehicle or its driver, please

Contact : Fleet, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge BA14 8JN

e-mail : fleet.licensing@wiltshire.gov.uk. **Telephone No 01225 770271**

8 May 2015

04 January 2022

Wiltshire Council hackney carriage, maximum table of fares (North, South, East & West Zones)

For journeys starting	Vehicles up to four seats	Vehicles with more than four seats carrying more than four passengers
7 am – 9:59 pm	Tariff 1	Tariff 2
10:00pm – 06:59 am and all day Sundays, and after 8pm Christmas Eve & New Years Eve	Tariff 2	Tariff 4
All day on 25 December, 26 December and 1 January & Public Holidays	Tariff 3	Tariff 5

	Tariff 1	Tariff 2	Tariff 3	Tariff 4	Tariff 5
Journeys up to 176 yards, 1/10 mile	£3.50	£4.80	£5.30	£4.80	£6.30
Subsequent 176 yards, 1/10 Mile	20p	30p	40p	45p	60p
Waiting time per minute	20p	30p	40p	45p	60p
Minimum fouling charge	£100	£100	£100	£100	£100

Hackney Carriages are regulated by Wiltshire Council.

In case of a complaint regarding this vehicle or its driver, please contact

Fleet, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

Email: Fleet.Licensing@wiltshire.gov.uk, Telephone 01225 770271



Fire at Woodborough CE VA Primary School

Briefing Note No. 21-17

Service : *Education and Skills*
Further Enquiries to: Helean Hughes
Date Prepared: 20/09/2021
Direct Line: (01225 718695)

The fire was noticed by the night cleaning staff at approximately 6.30pm/6.45pm on Friday 17 September 2021 and they immediately raised the alarm. The first fire appliance arrived on site at about 7.20pm. At the height of the fire the fire brigade had 8 fire engines, a platform and a water browser on site. They were accompanied by 2 police vehicles and staff from emergency services. At about 11.45pm there was only 1 fire engine left on site spraying water onto a cupboard that was still smouldering.

The extent of the damage does mean that parts of the building will be out of operation for some time and the school will be closed today (Monday 20th September) and tomorrow. The cause of the fire is being investigated by the fire officer and a report will be available in due course.

It has been confirmed however that the fire started in the roof, so a large section of the roof has been destroyed. Two classrooms have been completely gutted as well as the staff room and the staff planning room which is where paper, books and other materials were kept for lessons. The fire doors by the Victorian part of the building were very effective and kept the fire at bay ensuring there is no fire or smoke damage to the rest of the building. The Council's Building Control team is happy that the damaged part of the building is not a dangerous structure.

The building has been handed back to the school and the multi-academy trust (MAT) will be responsible for undertaking the repairs. The damaged area of the school can be zoned off from the rest of the site. Building Control has confirmed that part of the building is safe to use as appropriate escape routes remain available.

Work is being undertaken this week to repair the electrics, heating, water etc in the remaining parts of the school and this will determine how long the school will be out of action. Humidifiers may be used to dry out the walls and carpets.

The school will need to carry out a risk assessment for the remaining area to ensure the building is safe to be used.

Impact on learning

Staff will be on site today at which point they will be updated on the situation and the health and safety issues. Today and tomorrow they will help set up temporary classrooms and pull together lesson materials and planning with the intention of commencing remote

learning From Wednesday. The school has access to digital devices that can be loaned to families if required. There will be no remote learning today or tomorrow. Free-school meal arrangements are in place and vulnerable pupils are being monitored.

Years 3 and 4 are on a residential trip this week and given this has already been planned the school are still planning for this trip to go ahead.

Depending on how well the works and risk assessments progress, it is hoped the school will reopen to pupils w/c 27 September.

If the works are not able to be completed within a week then the school will continue liaising with Wiltshire Council about temporary accommodation offsite.

The school will continue to keep parents, pupils and staff updated through their existing channels.

Community support

The school has been inundated with offers of support including offers of venues to hold classes and offers of equipment. The pupils have drawn pictures which they have left by the school's fence to cheer everyone up.

The PTA have started a crowdfunding page: [Fundraiser by Sarah Willis : Woodborough School PTA Official Fundraising Page \(gofundme.com\)](#)

Wiltshire Council support

Woodborough CE VA Primary School is an academy, but due to the nature of the incident Wiltshire Council has been offering its full support. This has included:

- The Emergency Planning team immediately visiting the site Friday night to assess the extent of the fire and the implications of the damage it has caused. They continued to liaise with the fire officer and the school throughout the evening and on Saturday.
- The Building Control team visited the site Saturday morning to assess the safety of the building's structure and whether any part of the building unaffected by the fire will be safe to use. They will visit the site again today.
- The Education team have also been working closely with the school to support the staff and to consider options to ensure pupils can continue with their learning in a safe environment.
- The Communications team have supported the school and the council with media enquiries and interviews over the weekend.
- The Social Care and SEND teams are following up with any pupils known to them to ensure they receive the support they need at this time.
- The Vale Community Campus offered a free swim session on Sunday for Woodborough School pupils and 55 people attended. One of the full-time lifeguards at the campus is also a retained fireman and he was the first fireman at the scene Friday night.

Next steps

The school will be speaking to their insurers on Monday, although they did email them over the weekend.

The Education team will remain in regular contact with the school to see how the repairs are coming along and further support that may be required

Community Governance Review

Briefing Note No. 21-18

Service: Democratic Services
Further Enquiries to: Lisa Moore
Date Prepared: 27 September 2021
Contact: CGR@wiltshire.gov.uk

This note sets out the background to the Community Governance Review Process, and that Wiltshire Council shall be undertaking a Community Governance Review in certain areas beginning on 22 September 2021.

A [webpage](#) has been established for provision of information relating to the review, and for receipt of any initial comments or submission of additional proposals.

What are Community Governance Reviews?

1. A Community Governance Review (CGR) is a process to provide opportunity to review and make changes to governance arrangements to town and parish councils. This is to ensure that they continue to be reflective of the identity and interest of local communities, and that they are as efficient and effective in their governance as can be.

What can a Community Governance Review change?

2. A Community Governance Review can make a number of changes to parish changes to parish areas and parish electoral arrangements including:
 - the alteration to, merger or grouping of, creation or abolition of parishes;
 - the naming of parishes and adoption of alternative styles for new parishes (the naming process can also be undertaken under S75 of the LGA 1972);
 - parish council size. e.g. number of councillors to be elected, and warding arrangements;
 - any other electoral arrangements.
3. A Community Governance Review is not responsible for the number of boundary of Unitary Divisions of Wiltshire Council. That is a process known as an Electoral Review and is conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). In certain circumstances a Community Governance Review may request minor alteration to a Unitary Division as a consequence of other changes, but this must be agreed by the LGBCE.

Who carries out a Community Governance Review?

4. Principal councils (district councils or unitary councils) have the power to carry out community governance reviews and put in place or make changes to local community (parish) governance arrangements
5. Wiltshire Council has established an [Electoral Review Committee](#) to oversee Community Governance Reviews, including setting the scope of any review, its methodology and its timescales. The committee will make recommendations relating to any review to Full Council, who make the decision.

Why and when is a Community Governance Review carried out?

6. As principal authority Wiltshire Council may schedule a review in response to a reasonable request from an individual, group or parish when it considers it practicable to do so, except those that are the result of a petition containing sufficient signatures which must be reviewed once the petition has been verified. Wiltshire Council may also suggest a review when it considers it appropriate to do so.
7. The Electoral Review Committee is responsible for deciding when it is practicable to review requests which have been received.
8. Reasons for a Community Governance Review can include, but are not limited to:
 - Changes in population
 - Housing growth
 - Anomalous boundaries
9. In 2019 Wiltshire Council contacted town and parish councils requesting expressions of interest for any changes to governance from parishes. A number of areas were then reviewed in 2019/20.
10. At its [meeting](#) on 21 September 2021 the Electoral Review Committee approved the terms of reference for a Community Governance Review to be commenced on 22 September 2021, to include the following areas:
 - Beechingstoke, Marden, Patney, Woodborough, Stanton St Bernard, North Newnton
 - Calne Without, Calne, Heddington, Cherhill, Compton Bassett, Hilmarton and Bremhill
 - Malmesbury and St Paul Malmesbury Without
11. Other areas which have submitted a request will be reviewed at a later date.

How does a Community Governance Review work?

12. Community Governance Reviews are carried out in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and taking into account statutory guidance. Links to those resources are included on the webpage for the reviews.

13. The indicative timetable for the review, in accordance with the terms of reference, is set out below:

Stage	Action	Dates
Pre-Review	Liaising with parish councils on suggested areas for consideration for review and receipt of initial submissions.	May-August 2021
Stage one	Commencement of CGR - Terms of Reference published.	September 2021
	Schemes uploaded to public portal for any initial comments, to be updated with any relevant additional information. To include any further schemes received which fall within the scope of the Review.	September 2021 – 12 October
Stage two	Consideration of submissions received in relation to proposed schemes. Local briefings and meetings as appropriate with unitary councillors and/or parish representatives.	13 October 2021 – 31 December 2021
	Pre-consultation surveying.	1 November 2021 – 20 December 2021
	Draft Recommendations prepared.	December 2021 – February 2022
Stage three	Draft Recommendations consultation.	8 February 2022 – 5 April 2022 (8 weeks)
	Consideration of submissions received. Final Recommendations prepared.	April/May 2022
Stage four	Final Recommendations considered by Full Council.	June/July 2022
Decision	Liaising with parish councils on suggested areas for consideration for review and receipt of initial submissions.	May-August 2021

14. The committee will have the authority to adjust the timetable and other details if appropriate during the review.

15. A Community Governance Review will include periods of information gathering on any proposals, the Electoral Review Committee making recommendations, and reasonable periods for public consultation on those proposals and recommendations with those who would be affected.

16. After consultation(s) the Electoral Review Committee will submit its final recommendations to Full Council.

On what grounds will a Community Governance Review be decided?

17. Any decision relating to parish arrangements must ensure that those arrangements:

- Reflect the identity and interests of local communities
- Ensure effective and convenient local governance

18. Any other factors, such as council tax precept levels, cannot be considered.

Next step CGR

19. At this stage of the review all schemes which have been received in relation to the areas under review will be uploaded. These will be accessible from the webpage linked to above.

20. Individuals, groups and parishes will be able to submit initial comments against those Schemes or suggest alternative Schemes within the areas listed in the Terms of Reference, through the contact details above.

21. Following consideration of any comments, and other information gathering, the Electoral Review Committee will prepare draft recommendations for each area and consult upon its recommended outcome.

Update on leisure centres transferring to Wiltshire Council

Briefing Note No. 21-19

Service: Communities and Neighbourhood
Further Enquiries to: Louise Cary
Date Prepared: 28 September 2021
Contact: louise.cary@wiltshire.gov.uk

Following on from briefing note No. 21-07, we wanted to update you on the leisure insourcing project, which will see the 10 leisure centres currently managed by Places Leisure move over to Wiltshire Council.

The main part of the project is reaching its conclusion, with the transfer formally due to take place on Friday 1 October. This will mean that from this date the council will manage 20 leisure centres in total.

The majority of Places Leisure staff working at the 10 centres, around 420, will become Wiltshire Council employees from this date.

Given the last 18 months or so, and the challenges this will have placed on people's physical and mental health, leisure services are needed now more than ever.

We want to provide a consistent service across the county, which will help to support and improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of our communities. When the transfer is complete there will be many benefits coming to customers in the future, including a broader range of memberships and more concessionary rates on offer.

We are aiming to keep the offer to customers as close as possible to the service they have been receiving from Places Leisure. Some changes are necessary, and we are writing to all current Places Leisure members personally to update them on their membership arrangements, and ensure they are transferred to the equivalent council scheme wherever possible. This is a complex process, and good progress has been made.

We have a dedicated webpage full of useful information and detailed FAQs, so should you receive any queries from residents directly, we would appreciate you sharing the link with them as any questions they may have should be answered on there. The webpage can be found at <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/leisure/leisure-centre-insourcing>.

A reminder that the leisure centres be transferring from Places Leisure to Wiltshire Council management are:

- Bradford on Avon Swimming Pool
- Castle Place Leisure Centre, Trowbridge
- Lime Kiln Leisure Centre, Royal Wootton Bassett
- Leighton Recreation Centre, Westbury
- Melksham Blue Pool

- The Activity Zone, Malmesbury
- The Olympiad, Chippenham
- Trowbridge Sports Centre
- Warminster Sports Centre
- Westbury Swimming Pool

Although the formal transfer takes place on 1 October, there will still be work ahead of us beyond that date, so we'll ensure to keep you updated on any key developments as and when required.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch by emailing the Programme Lead at louise.cary@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Find out more about the Wiltshire Community Environmental Toolkit Briefing Note No. 21-20

Service: Landscape and Design
Further Enquiries to: Lynn Trigwell
Date Prepared: 21/10/21

As the consultation on Our Natural Environment Plan, the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy, has just closed, we have had lots of interest from local communities – and town and parish councils – who have asked what they can do to improve habitats and the natural environment in their area.

To assist with this, we have worked with Natural England to create the Wiltshire Community Environmental Toolkit, which is packed with information, ideas and resources to enable communities to make a difference in their local areas to create habitats that are rich in biodiversity. Projects could also create new opportunities for people to get involved in their local community, get active and connect with nature, as well as help to fight climate change.

The toolkit features a comprehensive five-step guide that could help your communities to find potential grant funding and deliver projects that have huge benefits for your local environment.

The recent news about [tree planting in Bradford on Avon](#) is an excellent example of partnership working between Wiltshire Council and Bradford on Avon Town Council to gain grant funding from a third party to fund the project. The town council engaged with the local community and landowners to create a fully costed plan that we submitted to the Forestry Commission to secure the funding.

This should be seen as a blueprint for any future community bids for grant funding – normally projects need to be fully prepared, scoped and costed and ‘ready to go’ with landowner consent and have a level of community support before we can bid for any funding, as they are much more likely to be successful this way.

To find out more and to encourage your communities to get involved, please [download and share the Wiltshire Community Environmental Toolkit](#), as it will enable local groups to identify and bring forward projects. Hard copies of the toolkit will be available to view at libraries from 25 October.

You can also contact the Landscape and Design team for a hard copy, more information and for advice and support when applying for grant funding. To contact them, please email paul.robertson@wiltshire.gov.uk or lynn.trigwell@wiltshire.gov.uk.

Planning Policy for Renewable Energy

Briefing Note No. 21 - 21

Service : Spatial Planning
Further Enquiries to: Georgina Clampitt-Dix or Geoff Winslow
Date Prepared: October 2021
Direct Line: (01225) 713472 or (01225) 713414

BRIEFING NOTE ON PLANNING POLICY FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The UK is currently in a state of energy transition away from fossil fuels towards renewable sources. The process of decarbonisation will not only involve a shift in technology used to power society, but also an unprecedented increase in electricity demand, as sectors such as transport and heating move towards cleaner forms of energy. The [Committee on Climate Change](#) (CCC) estimates we will need to quadruple the supply of low-carbon electricity by 2050.
- 1.2 As Wiltshire works towards meeting [national commitments](#) and [local ambitions](#) for meeting climate change targets, there has been a rise in the number of standalone renewable energy installations, particularly solar farms, which are particularly efficient in sunny, southern locations.
- 1.3 According to the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), monthly deployment of all solar photovoltaic capacity in the United Kingdom is [increasing](#). The Renewable Energy Planning Database, [June 2021](#) demonstrates that Wiltshire (excluding Swindon Borough Council) holds 11% of the operational ground mounted solar and battery installations in the south west region, compared to Cornwall's 22%.
- 1.4 Wiltshire does hold the majority of operational solar and battery installations over 25 MW in the south west region, at 33%. This rises to 47% when installations that are under construction or have had planning permission granted are also accounted for.
- 1.5 This briefing note outlines the national and local policy on renewable energy.

2 What's the national policy position?

- 2.1 Local planning authorities are responsible for renewable and low carbon energy development of 50 megawatts or less installed capacity (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). Chapter 14 of the [National Planning Policy Framework NPPF](#) introduces the premise that the planning system should "support the transition to a low

carbon future in a changing climate” and states that it should “support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure”.

- 2.2 Further guidance for Plans is given under the ‘Planning for climate change’ section of the chapter, specifically paragraph 155:

“To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

- a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);*
- b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development;*
- c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.”*

- 2.3 The importance of Local Authorities supporting ‘community-led initiatives’ is also stated in paragraph 156:

“Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.”

- 2.4 [The Planning Policy Guidance \(PPG\)](#) on renewable and low carbon energy offers further guidance about how local authorities can develop a positive strategy to promote the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. It also reiterates that both Local and Neighbourhood Plans are key to delivering development that has the backing of local communities.

- 2.5 The PPG offers additional specific planning considerations for hydropower, active solar technology, solar farms, and wind turbines.

- 2.6 It is important to note that while the starting point for renewable energy applications will always be the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, every planning application is dealt with on individual merits and considered individually.

3 What does the Wiltshire Core Strategy say?

- 3.1 The [Wiltshire Core Strategy](#) (WCS) forms part of the current development plan for the area and does contain planning policies that relate to standalone renewable energy installations in addition to policies that relate to landscape and heritage matters.

- 3.2 [Core Policy 42](#) of the WCS supports and encourages standalone renewable energy installations, subject to resolving site constraints and assessing impacts. Paragraph 6.39, which accompanies the policy states:

- 3.3 *“Core policies 51 and 59 which relate to landscape and the World Heritage Site, should be considered alongside this policy. The size, location and design of renewable energy schemes should be informed by a landscape character assessment, alongside other key environmental issues as set out in Core Policy 42.”*

4 How will the Local Plan Review seek to plan for renewable energy?

- 4.1 The WCS (and saved policies from district local plans), which form a substantive part of the development plan for our area, are under review. This review is termed the 'Local Plan Review'.
- 4.2 The Local Plan Review provides the council with the opportunity to amend and enhance policies to assist in both the local ambition and national commitment to reach carbon neutrality in 2030 and 2050 respectively.
- 4.3 The issue of whether the existing policy on standalone renewable energy installations needs to be amended in any way (including the relative balance between brownfield and greenfield provision) is one that will be properly addressed through the forthcoming Wiltshire Local Plan.
- 4.4 A set of [recommendations](#) which relate to the council's planning workstream were put forward by the Global Warming and Climate Change Task Group. These recommendations demonstrate the appetite of the group to see policies which encourage more renewable energy installations. For example, one recommendation for local plan policies states:
- "Encourages proposals and applications for renewable energy developments, including large-scale freestanding installations, renewable energy storage and improvements to the distribution network that support a decarbonised, distributed grid and smart local energy systems."*
- 4.5 It is also important to note that the Local Plan Review will need to acknowledge and support the emerging [climate strategy](#), which includes 'energy generation, storage and distribution' as one of its six delivery themes.
- 4.6 The Local Plan Review and the policies within it will need to be thoroughly tested through viability assessment and ultimately examined by an appointed Planning Inspector to ensure they are sound and legally compliant.

5 What evidence are we gathering to support a plan-led approach to renewable energy installations?

- 5.1 Policies in the Local Plan Review must be supported by a robust evidence base and as part of this a number of studies are being commissioned. One such study will be a renewable energy opportunity study which will be undertaken by experts in the field to identify opportunities and constraints for renewable energy installations across Wiltshire. This will build on the current, albeit dated evidence in the form of a '[Sustainable Energy Planning Study](#)', which was published in 2011. Although useful as background information, changes in legislation, guidance, and improvements in scientific knowledge and technological advance means an updated evidence base through new studies is vital.
- 5.2 An updated study will assist in ensuring future proposals are in the most suitable places, in terms of both efficiency of certain technologies, and avoiding impacting sensitive areas. Ultimately, the evidence will guide the policies within the emerging Local Plan Review which should ensure the most suitable sites are brought forward.

6 How can neighbourhood plans address community-led renewable energy schemes and communities be involved in proposals?

- 6.1 The [PPG](#) states "Community initiatives are likely to play an increasingly important role and should be encouraged as a way of providing positive local benefit from renewable energy development".

- 6.2 Neighbourhood plans are an opportunity for communities to plan for community led renewable energy developments which they have a say in. This way communities not only decide where and what type of renewable installation they have in their community but can also reap the benefits of the installation for example, local ownership allows for revenues to be re-invested to benefit the local community and reduces the reliance on finite fossil fuels (ensuring greater fuel security). Further information can be found in the Centre for Sustainable Energy's [Neighbourhood Planning in a Climate Emergency](#) document.
- 6.3 The council also strongly encourages pre-application consultation with local communities before any submission of applications for major developments of this nature, and this is now commonly done by prospective developers.
- 7 Acknowledging local context and community concerns over renewable energy schemes**
- 7.1 It is extremely important that community concerns over the installation of commercial scale renewable energy are considered. It is understood that there is apprehension within communities who are faced with proposals from solar, wind and battery storage schemes. This is particularly true for solar schemes in northern Wiltshire where a number of schemes have been promoted and installed. As previously stated, every proposal is assessed on its own merits, taking local factors into account, and will be refused where there are clear policy reasons to do so. Within the current policy context, factors such as heritage and landscape are carefully considered. Cumulative impacts also need to be considered to understand the full effect of a proposal, and to ensure when an application is accepted, the benefits do indeed outweigh the negative impacts.
- 7.2 A review of appeals has been conducted to demonstrate how various issues such as landscape and cumulative impact are approached. This can be found in Appendix 1
- 8 Useful links to further information.**
- [BEIS Renewable Energy Planning Database quarterly extract](#)
[BEIS Solar Photovoltaics Deployment](#)
[Net Zero – The UK's contribution to stopping global warming](#) (CCC, 2019)
[Neighbourhood Planning in a Climate Emergency](#) (CSE, 2020)
[Community Energy State of the Sector Report](#) (Community Energy England, 2021)
[Plymouth Energy Community](#)

APPENDIX 1: BRIEFING NOTE - PLANNING POLICY FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY POLICY

Appeal	Result	Summary
Cumulative impacts		
Llettyr Morfil Farm, U/S-Y878, Felindre, Swansea Hearing: 10/05/2016	Allowed	Renewable energy benefit of solar farm substantially outweighs harm. A 5MW solar farm in open countryside in south Wales was allowed for its renewable energy benefits, despite concerns regarding cumulative impacts from other electricity infrastructure and solar farms in the area. The main issues, the inspector held, were the visual impact of the 8.8-hectare photovoltaic solar farm, particularly cumulative impact, and the renewable energy benefits of the scheme. The inspector noted that whilst the proposal was in open countryside, there were considerable developments for electricity generation infrastructure in the area, namely sub-stations, pylons, and other solar farms. He considered that the proposed 18,350 panels would only be visible from one viewpoint some 2.5 km away due to extensive areas of woodland and tree screening and that adjoining footpaths could be screened by existing or reinforced hedgerows. He gave considerable weight to the production of 5MW of electricity to be generated by the farm and concluded this benefit outweighed the limited environmental harms. However, in referring to the temporary nature of the development, he conditioned the approval with regards to restorative conditions, landscaping and construction and pollution management plans.
Down Farm, Thornbury, Holsworthy, Devon Written reps: 06/08/2014	Refused	79m single wind turbine below ridge in inland, elevated, and undulating landscape, remote and tranquil. However noting recent approvals, possible cumulative impacts discussed with public concern 'of wind farming by stealth' which Inspector considered to be the main test to be applied for if approved, wind turbines would cumulatively dominate every view of landscape which is on the verge of moving from 'occasional wind energy' to next category. Notes renewable energy and £6000 annual contribution to local community for lifetime of scheme benefits. However, contrary to LVIA landscape sensitivity assessment, that there was insufficient capacity in the landscape, and another substantial turbine would tip balance so the landscape would be perceived as dominated by turbines.
Greenbelt/Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or other definitions of landscape value		
94 Harmer Green Lane, Digswell, Welwyn Hertfordshire AL6 0EP Written reps: 26/02/2020	Allowed	Green belt solar farm allowed. A sixty-seven panel 20 kw solar farm in the Hertfordshire green belt received the go-ahead after an inspector decided the location of the inappropriate development within a hollow made it acceptable. The inspector recorded national policy in NPPF paragraph 147 that very special circumstances need to be demonstrated if renewable energy projects are to proceed in the green belt. She found that, although modest in scale, the appeal scheme would make a valuable contribution towards cutting greenhouse gas emissions, and this attracted substantial weight in her decision. She also noted further national policy advice that renewable energy projects should be located where impacts are, or can be made, acceptable. She considered that the location of the array within a natural hollow in a meadow, together with the existing landscaping and proposed hedgerow planting and land regrading to form a surrounding bund would diminish the effect of uniform rows of solar panels in the landscape and make the temporary and reversible development acceptable. In the inspector's judgement, the environmental benefits of the solar farm and the fact that its impacts could be made acceptable, were sufficient to outweigh the harm to the green belt and she concluded very special circumstances justified the development.
Grovehurst The Coach House,	Refused	Domestic solar panels would not justify green belt harm. Sixty solar panels for domestic use have been refused in open countryside in the Kent green belt and in an area of outstanding natural beauty as inappropriate development causing

Pembury Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells Written reps: 29/01/2020		<p>loss of openness and harm to the appearance and character of the area and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), with limited wider environmental benefits deemed to justify the scheme.</p> <p>The inspector referred to paragraph 147 of the NPPF in relation to renewable energy projects in the green belt generally being inappropriate development and only justified where wider environmental benefits were obtained. In this case the proposal was to serve a single dwelling providing 80 per cent of their energy needs. Firstly, the inspector noted the appeal site comprised an open grassed area adjoining a property and the 60 panels would be up to 2.6 metres high which she felt were not insubstantial. She considered the proposal would have a harmful effect on the spatial openness of the green belt in this regard. In terms of their visual effect, the inspector held the engineered and industrial form of the panels would be harmful to the open rural landscape at the site and be visible from public viewpoints. She concluded there would be spatial and visual loss of openness from the proposal and therefore significant harm arising. The inspector additionally found harm to the appearance and character of the area and the scenic beauty of the AONB by virtue of the large synthetic panels covering a notable area of attractive open land. In reaching this conclusion the inspector dismissed the appellants' argument that the site was within his residential curtilage and similar to other solar panels approved locally. She held the site had more in common with the open countryside than residential curtilage. Ultimately, the inspector found that the benefits of the renewable energy scheme for a single property were limited and did not outweigh the harms to the green belt and other harms identified.</p>
Land east of High Green, Longney, Gloucestershire Written reps: 26/09/19	Allowed	<p>20MW Solar park on 48ha of agricultural land in open countryside Noted an extant (2019) approval by Council for a similar scheme a material consideration. However proposal differed in that the western field array of panels was reduced in an easterly direction by about 100m and that the western edge of the panels would be contained by a new 10m wide woodland buffer to supplement existing hedge. Discussion whether any harm was outweighed by the benefits from the renewable energy generated. Proposed panels to be erected in rows between 2m and 6m apart to avoid overshadowing and at an angle where the height of the top of the panels would be up to 3m above ground. Found no significant harm to landscape or AONB with panels only visible from distant footpath views; close to views mitigated by a roadside hedge. Concluded the additional area of panels would not harm the local rural landscape subject to a 10m wide woodland buffer, similar to the permitted scheme, to mitigate any visual harm.</p>
Stonecourt Manor, Cuckfield Road, Staplefield Written reps: 24/01/2020	Allowed	<p>Ground mounted solar PV system. The site is a field that is just outside of a village and Conservation Area. Views of the proposal would be limited by hedgerows, as well as by the topography of the site. Although the proposal would be visible from some views, it would be discreet. The discreetness of the positioning would mean that it would not impose itself on the heritage asset. The proposal would also contribute towards renewable energy production.</p>
Land off Old Bowden Way, Milborne Port, Somerset Written reps: 18/08/16	Allowed	<p>3 MW Solar farm in a scarp land landscape noting Peripheral Landscape Study described the site as being within an area that lay within a shallow valley. Varied public views of the site would be available with particular concerns over the effect and the proximity of the proposal on views from a Millennium viewing point with views over a wide area. However, particularly as the site had now been reduced in size than originally proposed, considered the proposal would be readily encompassed within the landscape and the extensive views available noting views from the point, whilst undeniably attractive, were already affected by various man-made features within the landscape. Substantial weight given to the environmental habitat and economic benefits, including farm diversification, of the proposal and decided outweighed harmful impacts.</p>

Heritage assets and historic sites		
Land at Higher Farm, Fifehead Magdalen, Dorset, SP8 5RT. Written reps:23/07/20	Dismissed	<p>Dorset solar farm harms valued landscape. The combined adverse effects of a twenty-hectare solar farm in the Dorset countryside on landscape character and heritage assets was found by an inspector to outweigh the benefit of renewable energy powering over 4,000 homes annually.</p> <p>The farmland site formed part of the countryside setting of a number of listed buildings and conservation areas. After weighing the less than substantial harm to heritage assets against the public benefits of assisting in tackling climate change, tree, and hedgerow planting to improve wildlife habitats and the landscape, and economic benefits to the construction industry and rural economy, the inspector concluded the heritage balance just tipped in favour of granting planning permission. In assessing the effects on the attractive rural character and appearance of the area, the inspector recognised that the appeal site did not form part of a designated landscape and impacts would be localised. Nonetheless he concluded the site formed part of a river valley landscape that exhibited demonstrable physical attributes, as assessed through the council's LVIA, and amounted to a 'valued landscape' in which the utilitarian development would erode rural and pastoral character in conflict with local plan policy and government objectives for valued landscapes. Weighing this adverse effect in combination with harm to the significance of heritage assets, the inspector concluded the benefits of the proposal were insufficient to merit planning permission and he dismissed the appeal.</p>
Hangmans Hall Farm, Twenty Acre Lane, Sutton Cheney, Nuneaton Hearing: 04/05/21	Dismissed	<p>Solar park rejected on battlefield setting impact. Harm to the setting of a historic battlefield and countryside character justifies refusal of a 35MW solar park in Leicestershire, an inspector has decided.</p> <p>Permission was sought for ground-mounted solar arrays across ten open fields totalling 62 hectares for a 30-year operational period. The inspector considered that the proposed arrays and associated structures would be at odds with the areas prevailing rural character not only in simple visual terms but also in relation to how the site linked into the natural, cultural, and perceptual elements of the wider area, especially given its proximity to the site of the Battle of Bosworth. The main parties agreed that, at best, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the registered battlefield through adverse changes in its setting. This view was shared by Historic England, which considered that the site lay in a highly sensitive location within the setting. The inspector found that the relevant harm arising would principally be the scheme's impact on views from and to the battlefield, the erosion of shared landscape characteristics between the appeal site and the battlefield and changes in the way observers would interpret the events surrounding the battle through the local landscape. He took into account the scheme's public benefits, including generation of renewable energy to power around 10,500 homes, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, provision of a heritage trail and education facility, landscape and ecological enhancements and economic benefits. However, he did not find these positive aspects sufficient to outweigh less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset through changes to its setting. He was also concerned about lack of a field evaluation of the site when there was some evidence that a Roman road had run through it. He concluded the proposal was contrary to the development plan as a whole, the NPPF and the overarching national policy statement on energy. Despite dismissing the appeal, he awarded partial costs against the local authority for raising new evidence at the hearing regarding interpretation of geophysical surveys, causing unnecessary expense for the appellants.</p>

Covid-19 Update

Briefing Note No. 21-22

Service : Public Health
Further Enquiries to: Terence Herbert (Chief Executive)
Date Prepared: 25 October 2021
Direct Line: Perry.Holmes@wiltshire.gov.uk

1. We wrote to staff on Friday 22 October 2021 with the up to date impact of Covid-19 within Wiltshire and the steps we are taking as an employer to respond to the worsening situation. Here is a summary for you.
2. Covid-19 Case rates are continuing to rise across all age ranges. The 7 day case rate across the working age ranges in Wiltshire is currently in excess of 630 per 100k , and the number of Covid cases requiring hospital care across the county has again risen this week.
3. As a work place our Health and Safety team have undertaken thorough risk assessments with the advice of the Public Health team to minimise the risk of viral transmission and to keep our work force as safe as possible, to ensure service provision is not disrupted. Some staff and councillors are at greater risk of the impact of Covid-19 or have family members in that category.
4. We have therefore taken the decision to pause all non-essential workplace access arrangements and our workspace pilots with immediate effect for four weeks.
5. There are formal Council meetings during that period and so for those councillors who are attending County Hall or one of or other buildings, we would like to remind you of the measures that are in place to protect you and our staff and from catching coronavirus and being unable to work or carry out their functions and/or becoming seriously ill:
 - Wear face coverings when in public places in our buildings, when moving about the workplace or when in meeting rooms with poor ventilation continue to wear a face mask unless the meeting room enables all present to maintain a 2 metre social distance;
 - Maintain social distancing as much as possible;
Maintain good hand hygiene;
 - Please do not attend the office if you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms of Covid-19.
6. As leaders in our community and our organisation we are grateful for the modelling of behaviour from councillors that will help to mitigate the risk to us all and our families, as

we learn to live with Covid-19, that was referenced this week by the Health Secretary, Sajid Javid.

7. It is notable across the country an increasing number of individuals are not wearing masks, however the situation in terms of rising case rates and system pressures locally means that whilst this may feel like an additional annoyance, it is really essential at this time to layer all of our preventative measures together to keep our own county as safe as possible.
8. There is additional information below on this topic which further explains our decision.

Additional information

9. We are following the advice of our Director of Public Health and the Government Public Health guidance Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) and requesting staff and councillors (unless exempt) to wear masks in communal areas of our buildings and meeting venues where social distancing cannot be guaranteed
10. We believe that it is a reasonable and balanced response that takes into account the particular nuances of the disease in Wiltshire to reduce the risk of transmission from one person to another. We are aware that other Councils and organisations take a different approach. That of course is a matter for them, and as each setting is unique this is always based on a bespoke risk assessment of the workforce and buildings. Our assessment of the risk has not changed and so our advice remains unchanged.
11. Feedback from staff over the past few weeks has highlighted a very real concern that they are being put at risk in the office environment where individuals are not abiding by the guidance as set out.
12. We will keep the situation under review and liaise closely with the Director of Public Health on this and other related issues.
13. Public Health England (PHE) convened an expert Respiratory Evidence Panel in February 2021 to critically assess the evidence behind SARS-CoV-2 transmission to inform their guidance and recommendations. The Panel comprised a group of infectious disease, hygiene, virology, microbiology, respiratory infection, engineering, occupational safety, and infection prevention and control (IPC) experts. The Panel assessed review-level evidence (searches up to 28 April 2021) to consider the potential effectiveness of face coverings in mitigating transmission of SARS-CoV-2, including consideration of:
 1. The role of airborne transmission in relation to SARS-CoV-2;
 2. The transmissibility of new SARS-CoV-2 variants;
 3. The effectiveness of face coverings (including efficacy of different types of face coverings and respirators and factors that may impact on this) (1).
14. The evidence suggests that all types of face coverings are, to some extent, effective in reducing transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in both healthcare and public, community settings. This is through a combination of source control and protection to the wearer.

Democratic Meetings

Briefing Note No. 21-23

Service : Legal and Governance
Further Enquiries to: Perry Holmes (Monitoring Officer)
Date Prepared: 25 October 2021
Direct Line: Perry.Holmes@wiltshire.gov.uk

Purpose

1. To update Members on the return to in-person meetings for Democratic meetings, following previous updates in Briefing Note 2021-10.

Background

2. Regulations permitting online meetings during the Covid-19 pandemic expired on 6 May 2021. The High Court issued a judgement on 28 April 2021, ruling that Parliament would need to approve legislation to allow local authority meetings under the 1972 Act to continue to take place remotely once the Regulations expired. This judgement was despite the Secretary of State's support for the case and significant evidence of councils being unable to deliver their usual democratic process during the pandemic without the assistance of the Regulations.
3. Government restrictions were removed in July and August 2021. However, due to the ongoing rate of Covid-19 cases the council has continued to operate restrictions and Covid-19 precautions as advised by Public Health.

Practical considerations

4. Based on Public Health advice the decision has been taken to pause the current arrangements for access to the workplace given the present rate of Covid-19 cases for a four week period. To avoid the risk of disease transmission, for the formal council in-person meetings that will still have to take place over that period, councillor and officers should still operate under Covid-19 mitigation measures such as mask wearing, social distancing and the use of hand sanitiser, with impacts on the overall capacity for many venues.
5. Holding in-person meetings therefore still presents practical and financial implications for the council's larger meetings, particularly those that take place outside of council hubs. It will not be possible to deliver all meetings with the usual frequency and in the usual location, as many community venues continue to not take bookings or are being used for other purposes, such as vaccination centres.
6. Since May 2021 decision making meetings such as Planning Committees and others constituted under the Local Government Act 1972 have taken place in person, where

alternative decision-making options have not been available. In such instances, these may have been held in different venues, public attendance may have been limited, and Covid-19 precautions were in place.

7. An additional practical consideration is that under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 85, If a member fails throughout six consecutive months to attend any meetings of the council or of its committees or sub-committees of which she/he is a member, he or she shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the Council before the expiry of that period, cease to be a Member of the Council. As the regulations permitting online meetings are no longer in effect, attendance at in person meetings to which the Member is assigned is required. As Members approach the six-month period, Officers will advise Members which meetings they would need to attend to avoid the operation of Section 85.

November-December 2021

8. Subject to any government announcements or updated Public Health advice in Wiltshire, the following approach to democratic meetings is therefore being implemented. All in-person meetings would continue to operate appropriate Covid-19 precautions.

Cabinet

9. Cabinet will continue to meet in person as has been the case since July 2021.

Area Boards

10. As Area Boards operate executive powers delegated from the Leader, all executive Area Board decisions can also be made by the Leader. Area Boards have been discussing grant applications and other matters with their community as normal, before forming a recommendation at an online meeting. The decisions were then formally made by the Leader through a single-member decision process.
11. The Leader is content to continue that arrangement for those Area Boards that wish to continue to meet online. Therefore, Area Board Members will be asked if they wish their meetings to operate online, in-person, or on an ad hoc basis. The Proper Officer will schedule the meetings accordingly, subject to the availability of suitable venues, without refreshments, and taking account of Public Health advice.

Overview and Scrutiny

12. Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings will take place in-person at appropriate venues at County Hall.

Planning and other committees

13. Planning committees, Audit & Governance, Standards, Police and Crime Panel, Pension Fund and other decision-making committees and their Sub-Committees, will take place in person at appropriate venues.

Informal meetings

14. Meetings that are not open to the public, such as informal agenda-setting meetings, working groups, meeting with officers, and briefings, will continue to take place online wherever possible.

Next steps

15. Members will be advised whether meetings are taking place in-person or online via their calendar invites and the meeting agenda. The date, time and location of meetings may vary from the planned timetable on occasion, due to venue unavailability.
16. Meeting room capacities have been reassessed in light of the latest Public Health advice, but Members are encouraged to advise the Democratic Services Officer if they wish to attend a meeting of which they are **not** a Member, so that the venue's maximum capacity can be considered.

Town and parish councils

17. Town and parish councils will need to consider their own arrangements for holding meetings safely and efficiently. Guidance for local councils on the safe use of council buildings can be found at: <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings/covid-19-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-council-buildings>

Conclusion

18. The approach to meetings will be kept under review in response to any government announcements or Public Health advice for Wiltshire.

Stone Circle

Briefing Note No. 21-24

Service : Legal and Governance
Further Enquiries to: Perry Holmes (Monitoring Officer)
Date Prepared: 28 October 2021
Direct Line: Perry.Holmes@wiltshire.gov.uk

Purpose

1. To provide Members with a briefing on issues of liability arising from the Stone Circle companies

Background

2. The Stone Circle companies were formed in 2019 and with two principle aims. Firstly, to provide homes to residents whose financial circumstance enabled them to afford rents somewhere between council house levels and the private sector, with rental levels offered at above the local housing allowance as well as allowing access to the homes outside the Council's allocation policy. Secondly, to create homes for sale through developing council owned land. A third aim which has not been developed fully yet was around the provision of energy to the community.
3. The Council took specialist legal advice on the implications for creating trading companies, from Bevan Britten and in accordance with the law, Cabinet considered a business case before approving the setting up of the companies.
4. Cabinet, in line with best practice, asked for a governance review of the Stone Circle companies in February 2021 which was reported in turn to Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and Audit & Governance Committee in September. 19 October, Council was asked to delegate to the Monitoring Officer the work to create a sub-Committee of Cabinet a Shareholder Group which was one of the recommendations of the review.
5. At full Council, a member asked for information about the overall liability of the Council in the event the Stone Circle companies failed financially and also the liability for individual Directors. The Monitoring Officer undertook to provide a briefing note on the issues to all Members.

Council liability

6. The Council is the sole shareholder of the Stone Circle companies. The companies have been set up as companies limited by shares. That means that the liability of shareholders (the Council) is limited to the initial share contribution made.

7. The Council has however also entered into arrangements to loan the companies funds to purchase properties for rent. It is also proposed that the Council may lend the companies funds to develop Council owned land for housing which is then sold. So there is additional liability to the Council if the companies default on those loans.
8. A significant mitigating factor for loan default or the general insolvency of the companies is that the rental properties would revert to the Council in the event of company failure, less any tax liability. The Council is protecting its position by taking what is known as a charge on the properties. The capital value of those properties, which are expected to increase in value during the currency of the loan agreements, could be realised through a sale by the Council to offset any liability.
9. Detailed financial appraisals are and will be produced by the companies profiling the debt they have taken on, the rental income projected and actually received, the sales projected and the actual sales achieved and therefore profits generated. Some of this information will be commercially sensitive but can be shared as exempt information (part 2) with the Shareholder Group and say the Financial Planning Task Group. This will enable oversight of the financial viability of the companies who also have a duty to report their accounts on Companies House each year.
10. The Council can also produce "shareholder side" financial appraisals which shows the level of investment made in the companies and the expected and actual returns.

Directors' liability

11. The current make-up of the Stone Circle companies' boards includes Councillor directors. The governance review recommendations, which were approved by Cabinet, proposed a move to industry specialist non-Executive Directors on the boards plus Officer directors, and the transition away from Councillor directors on the boards. This is linked to the proposal which was approved by Cabinet to create a sub-Committee called the Shareholder Group to carry out the shareholder holding to account activity.
12. The advice about director's liability needs to be seen in that context. The overriding legal duty for directors is to act in the best interests of the company. Ensuring compliance with that duty is usually sufficient to protect directors from any personal liability. The Council has given an indemnity backed by an insurance policy to the current Councillor directors, and the same provision would be made for Officer directors.
13. There is personal liability for directors of companies in limited circumstances. Broadly those situations arise when a director is not acting in the best interests of the company or in breach of some other duty.
14. We ensure that all council appointed directors are aware of their duties and the risk of personal liability. The new governance arrangements are designed to further mitigate that risk.

Community Governance Review

Briefing Note No. 21-25

Service: Democratic Services
Further Enquiries to: Lisa Alexander
Date Prepared: 12 November 2021
Contact: CGR@wiltshire.gov.uk

This note sets out details of a public survey being undertaken as part of the Community Governance Review as set out in Briefing Note 21-18

Further details can be found on the following [webpage](#)

What are Community Governance Reviews?

1. A Community Governance Review (CGR) is a process which provides the opportunity to review and make changes to town and parish council governance arrangements. This ensures that they continue to be reflective of the identity and interest of local communities, and are as efficient and effective in their governance as possible.

What can a Community Governance Review change?

2. A Community Governance Review can make a number of changes to parish areas and parish electoral arrangements including:
 - the alteration to, merger or grouping of, creation or abolition of parishes;
 - the naming of parishes and adoption of alternative styles for new parishes (the naming process can also be undertaken under S75 of the LGA 1972);
 - parish council size. e.g. number of councillors to be elected, and warding arrangements;
 - any other electoral arrangements.
3. A Community Governance Review is not responsible for the number of boundaries of Unitary Divisions in the Wiltshire Council area. That is a process known as an Electoral Review and is conducted by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE). In certain circumstances a Community Governance Review may request minor alterations to a Unitary Division as a consequence of other changes, but this must be agreed by the LGBCE.

Areas included in the review

4. At its [meeting](#) on 21 September 2021, the Electoral Review Committee approved the terms of reference for a Community Governance Review to be commenced on 22 September 2021, to include the following areas:
- Beechingstoke, Marden, Patney, Woodborough, Stanton St Bernard, North Newnton, Wilsford;
 - Calne Without, Calne, Heddington, Cherhill, Compton Bassett, Hilmarton and Bremhill;
 - Malmesbury and St Paul Malmesbury Without.

Public Surveys

5. As part of its information gathering process, the Electoral Review Committee is conducting an online survey on the proposals that have been received.
6. The surveys for each area can be accessed from the main webpage and the following links:
- [Beechingstoke and surrounding parishes:](#)
 - [Malmesbury and St Paul Malmesbury Without:](#)
 - [Calne Without new parish proposal and surrounding parishes \(including Calne Town\);](#)
 - [Charlton and Wilsford.](#)
7. Due to the ongoing pandemic and local public health guidance, a number of online sessions will be held to present information on currently received proposals and to receive public feedback.
- Beechingstoke online meeting – 23 November 2021 – 1800 – [Access link](#)
 - Calne Without online meeting – 2 December 2021 – 1800 – [Access link](#)
 - Malmesbury online meeting – 14 December 2021 – 1800 – [Access link](#)
8. Any residents or interested parties are encouraged to attend the online sessions and respond to the surveys.
9. Following consideration of any comments, and other information gathering, the Electoral Review Committee will prepare draft recommendations for each area. It will then undertake a formal consultation on those recommendations in 2022.

Parish Name Change

10. There is also an ongoing survey on a proposal to change the name of Biddestone Parish Council:
- [Biddestone survey](#)

Christmas waste and recycling collections and HRC opening times 2021

Briefing Note No. 21-26

Service: Waste
Further Enquiries to: Martin Litherland
Date Prepared: 16/11/21

Waste and recycling collection dates **will not** change over the Christmas and New Year period, as waste collection crews will be working as normal on Bank Holidays Monday 27, Tuesday 28 December 2021, and Monday 3 January 2022.

Garden waste collections **will stop** for two weeks over this period as normal. The last collections will take place on Friday 24 December and they will restart on Monday 10 January 2022.

Residents can check their waste, recycling and garden waste collection online at wiltshire.gov.uk/WasteCollectionDays

Household recycling centre (HRC) opening times and dates will change over the Christmas and New Year period and residents are advised to check online before visiting an HRC at wiltshire.gov.uk/household-recycling-centres

HRCs that normally open on Fridays will be open on Christmas Eve, 24 December from 10am but will close at 1pm. All HRCs will be closed on Saturday 25, Sunday 26 December and Saturday 1 January 2022. Other than on these dates, the centres will open as normal on their specified opening days.

Christmas recycling messages:

At Christmas time many of us generate more waste than usual. We would like everyone to do their bit by recycling as much of their waste as possible. Our kerbside recycling collection service helps make this easy to do.

In addition to the everyday items people tend to recycle in their blue lidded bin and black box, people can add items including wrapping paper, providing it scrunches into a ball*; cardboard packaging, plastic sweet tubs (up to 5 litres), mince pie foil cases, drinks cans, glass bottles, and Christmas cards without glitter. Local charity shops may be happy to receive donations of unwanted Christmas presents.

It is important that people do not place batteries or electrical items into any of their bins. These items can cause fires in collection vehicles or at waste

processing and sorting facilities. These should be disposed of at HRCs instead.

Households with extra **recyclable materials** such as cans, cardboard and paper can place these in suitable alternative containers alongside their bin for collection. Flatten cardboard and wash and squash plastic bottles and cartons and put the lids back on as this will help make more room in your blue-lidded bin.

Collection of real Christmas trees:

People who pay to have their garden waste collected can put their real Christmas tree, alongside their garden waste bin on their first collection in January. We will collect your tree for composting, or they can support local charities by paying a small donation to have your tree collected via the Just Helping scheme at <https://charityxmastreecollection.com/>.

For information about local recycling centres, recycling Christmas trees, collection days and advice on how to reduce waste and recycle as much as possible during the festive period visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/rubbish-and-recycling.

*The scrunch test is when you try to squeeze paper into a ball. If it stays in a ball, it is most likely the wrapping paper is made of paper only. If it does not, it is likely the paper contains other materials, which means we cannot collect it for recycling.

COVID-19 update

Briefing Note No. 21-27

Service: Public health, adult care, education & skills, economic development

Date prepared: 23 December 2021

Contact: communications@wiltshire.gov.uk

We wanted to provide you with an update on the ongoing impact of COVID-19 and the impact of the Omicron variant.

Clearly this is a fast-moving situation, but we thought it would be useful for you to know the latest information so that you're in a position to respond to any enquiries from members of your community that may come your way.

At the time of writing no additional restrictions post-Christmas have been announced in addition to Plan B, but alongside key local partners we are keeping a close eye on any developments.

Vaccine/booster programme

The ongoing vaccine and booster programme is making positive progress and as a council we are doing what we can to provide support to this. The programme is run locally by the Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire NHS Clinical Commissioning Group and we are in regular daily contact with them and other partners to support where we can. People who have booked COVID-19 booster vaccinations as well as first and second doses for after 3 January are being asked to cancel appointments and rebook earlier slots to beat the new year rush.

There are currently plenty of appointments available for vaccinations across the Bath, Swindon and Wiltshire region up until the end of Christmas Eve and from Monday 27 December through to Friday 31 December, with some appointments also offered during weekends.

People can book booster appointments to take place three months after receiving a last dose using the national booking service or by calling 119. Appointments can also be pre-booked if it's been two months since receiving a second dose – the appointment dates offered will be from three months after a second dose.

The national booking service has now also opened for 12–15-year-olds to get their second COVID-19 jab as part of the national mission to get people protected against the new Omicron variant.

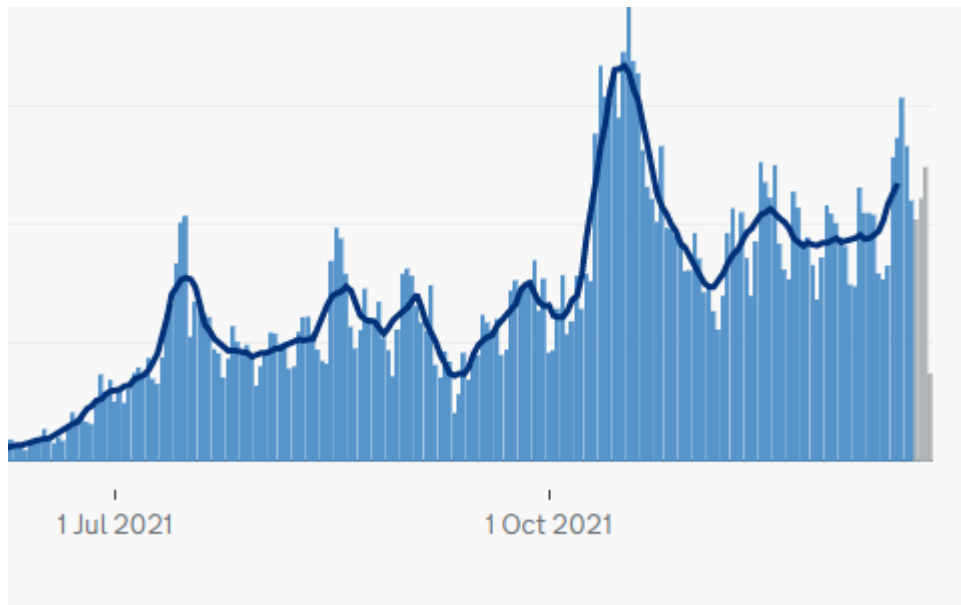
All eligible 12-15s will be able to book their all-important second jab online if they had their first dose more than twelve weeks ago, in line with updated guidance from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) published on 29 November.

Public Health

Local case rates of COVID-19 continue to rise rapidly, and we expect this to continue, so the advice remains for people to be cautious as they go about their Christmas plans.

Previously the case rise was mainly driven by school age children, but the current highest rates are now in the 20–49-year-olds.

The snapshot below is taken from the [cases in Wiltshire government dashboard](#) and shows the sharp increase in new cases



We are in regular contact with colleagues across the local and regional health and care sector to ensure that health systems are coping with the additional pressure brought on by Omicron and the winter challenges and acting quickly should any mitigation plans need to be implemented.

In the meantime, we're asking people to:

- Make sure rooms have fresh air circulating by opening windows if meeting people indoors
- Wash hands regularly for 20 seconds with warm water and soap
- Wear face coverings where required
- Receive your first, second and booster COVID-19 vaccine
- Take regular lateral flow tests, particularly if planning to meet groups of people outside your household
- Take a lateral flow test for seven days if you have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and you're not displaying any symptoms
- Self-isolate immediately and get a PCR test when displaying any COVID-19 symptoms
- Think carefully about how many people they meet up with and if possible to reduce this to keep loved ones safe

The government has confirmed that from Wednesday 22 December all isolation periods for positive cases, in England, can leave self-isolation after seven days if they:

- Take two LFD tests on subsequent days, at least a full 24 hours apart, with the first test on at least the sixth full day of their self-isolation (not counting the 'onset day') and the last on day seven.
- Obtain negative results on both these days and **do not have a high temperature**
- Positive cases who started their self-isolation prior to the 22 December will be able to undertake LFD tests on consecutive days from day six, a full 24 hours apart, and

if these tests are negative will be able to leave isolation.

Business

The government announced on 21 December that there will be additional support for hospitality and leisure businesses with one-off grants of up to £6,000 per premises for eligible businesses, plus more than £100 million discretionary funding will be made available for local authorities to support other businesses

We are awaiting more information on this new funding, including the full guidance on eligible businesses and the process for distributing the grant payments, so if any relevant businesses get in touch please let them know. We have issued a newsletter to local businesses to inform them of this too.

Our officers are also working hard to process grants we will be issuing to hospitality and leisure businesses in January. These will automatically be paid to businesses who previously benefitted from a Restart or Discretionary Restart Grant, subject to eligibility checks. There is no need for businesses to reapply or contact us regarding these grants and we will update businesses with more information in the new year – including how new hospitality and leisure businesses can apply.

Please encourage people to sign up for our business newsletter for latest updates.

www.wiltshire.gov.uk/business-advice-support-covid19-grants.

Schools

As a council we are in regular contact with all our early years providers, schools and colleges, providing advice and support. We have regular webinars for headteachers and produce a weekly schools' newsletter in school term time.

Adult care

We are putting out a call for people considering a career in care to join us in a new service which helps people gain independence after a hospital stay.

Wiltshire Support At Home provides short to mid-term care to people needing additional support when they leave hospital - it also works with NHS Rapid Response to help prevent unnecessary admissions.

The service is a valuable bridge to independence and crucially helps free up hospital beds which is increasingly important as hospitals experience renewed pressures this winter.

WSAH staff help people with personal care, food preparation, daily living activities and access to local resources and facilities as they start to take the steps towards becoming independent again. The service is jointly funded with the Bath & North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BSW CCG). They will be part of a training and mentoring programme with flexible hours and career progression opportunities.

Since its creation this autumn a number of staff have been signed up but more are needed to help people needing to stay in hospital when they can recover with support at home.

People wanting to find out more about the roles available in the new service can have a [look at the role description](#) or contact recruitment@wiltshire.gov.uk

You can listen to Cllr Davies talking about the new service here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-_MTqW-HexI

A great deal of support goes on for adult care. Examples include:

- We run monthly webinars and also thematic ones for all care providers. Thematic ones have included how to encourage staff who are refusing to take up the vaccination
- Our POST team continues to provide daily support for providers – they undertake

welfare checks on homes with outbreaks, support providers in any issues e.g., if they have concerns about their staffing levels, negotiating with agencies, interpreting new legislation into plain English

- A Public Health infection prevention and control specialist nurse and commissioning staff will visit any care home that wants face to face guidance about infection prevention and control
- We distributed funding for Infection Prevention Control and Testing grants and are currently distributing them for workforce recruitment and retention. We were successful with a bid to the CCG to support this at the amount of £500k-bringing much needed funding to providers
- We have allocated £500k to support hardships for care home providers as a result of infection prevention and control measures
- We send fortnightly newsletters with the CCG to all providers giving the latest changes in legislation, support that they can access

Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub

People who are self-isolating due to a positive test who don't have friends and family to help can contact The Wiltshire Wellbeing Hub.

The multi-agency hub has provided support, guidance and signposting by teaming with volunteer groups, voluntary and community sector and the food industry to play a key role in providing access to essential goods and facilities for those in need.

The hub can:

- Put people in touch with community groups who can help collect and deliver essential supplies such as shopping or medication. Information on local groups is [available here](#).
- Signpost to sources of financial support and food banks
- Provide support for those experiencing loneliness
- Help speak to the right people who can provide information on available schemes including [Claiming financial support under the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The hub is available on 0300 003 4576 for people to call or email wellbeinghub@wiltshire.gov.uk . On working days the hub is open from 8:30am to 5:20pm Monday to Thursday and from 8:30 to 4:20pm on Fridays. For urgent needs outside of working hours and for the festive period of 24 – 28 December and 1 – 3 January people can call the Emergency Duty Service on 0300 456 0100.

The hub will be open for normal business hours on 29,30 and 31 December.

Useful links:

- [Latest Government guidelines](#)
- [Book a vaccine or booster](#)
- [Order COVID-19 rapid lateral flow tests](#)
- [Book a COVID-19 PCR test](#)
- [Additional support for businesses](#)
- [Wiltshire COVID-19 cases – government dashboard](#)