

**Wiltshire Council**

**Council**

**8 November 2011**

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**Subject: Councillor Briefing Note**

**Wiltshire Council - Supporting settlement regeneration activities**

The Council is supporting regeneration projects in a number of Wiltshire towns and also through the preparation of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. In addition to Core Policy 23 which supports economic regeneration activities that will enhance the vitality of principal settlements and market towns, there are also specific policies in the emerging Core Strategy that relate to individual settlements. For example, Core Policy 4 relates specifically to Chippenham and is focussed on the redevelopment and regeneration of central areas of opportunity. Examples of where the Council are directly supporting settlement regeneration projects are detailed below. In addition to the three Vision Programmes, examples of the work that can be supported is as follows:

Amesbury 2012

The Council has been supporting an Economic Regeneration Group set up by Amesbury Town Council under the banner of Amesbury 2012. The Group brings together civic, business and community interests to improve the levels of pedestrian footfall in Amesbury Town Centre and develop the identity of Amesbury as a visitor destination. Key initiatives include:

- A benchmarking exercise to understand the economic performance of the town which has been funded by the Council through the South Wiltshire Economic Partnership and is being conducted by Action For Market Towns
- A new street market
- Work to secure new uses for the vacant Co-op store
- New signage welcoming visitors to the town
- Work to uncover the hidden history of Amesbury and raise awareness of the heritage of the town – this is considered to be a key strength that can be built upon to attract visitors to the town in the future. This is already attracting national interest with a recent feature in The Independent.

Warminster Town Plan Preparation

Warminster Town Council have been leading work to prepare a town plan over the past couple of years and a draft plan has recently been published for consultation. The town plan is focused on supporting town centre regeneration and a potential redevelopment site has been identified in the central area of the town. Wiltshire Council have been supporting this process by providing technical assistance and helping to ensure the work is fit for purpose. The town plan work is highly

compatible with the emerging localism agenda and has involved truly collaborative working with the community to inform the preparation of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Lessons learned through this process are helping to inform future neighbourhood planning work in Wiltshire.

### Westbury Vision and Scoping Study

Westbury Town Council has recently prepared a Vision and Scoping Study, which has been informed by public consultation and has identified some key priorities for development in the town. The work has benefited from learning gained through developing the Warminster Town Plan and demonstrates the success of the emerging methodology. The work has been driven by a town council led steering group and this has been supported by Wiltshire Council. Specific assistance has been provided by; preparing the original brief, assisting with the procurement, project management, and providing technical assistance. The work has been used to inform the Wiltshire Core Strategy thus helping to ensure the evidence is community led. The Mid Wiltshire Economic Partnership also supported this study by approving £5000 of Wiltshire Council funding to support this project.

### Calne

Following the success of work in Warminster and Westbury, similar support is more recently being provided to Calne Town Council. The town council have allocated funding to prepare a town plan and have recently appointed consultants to prepare a vision and scoping study. Wiltshire Council are providing technical support, for example by assisting with recent procurement.

### Front Runner Neighbourhood Plans

Wiltshire Council has secured funding from Communities and Local Government (CLG) for a pilot, known as Front Runner, Neighbourhood Plans. These will consist of three Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) and one Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO). The plans will cover the following areas:

1. Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area
2. Malmesbury Town Council, St Pauls Without and Brokenborough Parish Councils
3. Sherston Parish Council
4. Boreham Rd, Warminster

The first two of these will include consideration of regeneration opportunities in Wootton Bassett, Cricklade and Malmesbury, in particular, but will also look at more rural areas. The NDPs could identify specific sites or policies needed to support regeneration. Spatial Planning Officers are providing support to each of these projects, which are to be led by the community through recently established Neighbourhood Forums.

The Core Strategy sets a policy framework to allow communities to develop NDPs elsewhere in Wiltshire. These could provide an appropriate way for communities to address town centre regeneration projects.

The neighbourhood planning work is benefiting from learning gained through earlier town planning work. It is anticipated that in the future these processes will be combined with spatial planners helping to identify the most effective and cost effective way to plan for local communities.

### Other Projects

Further information on the regeneration of Chippenham, Salisbury and Trowbridge can be found in Appendix 6.

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