

## REPORT TO THE COUNCIL

Report No. 14

Date of Meeting	5 December 2006
Title of Report	Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities
Link to Corporate Priorities	All
Public Report	Yes

### Summary of Report

To provide Council with a summary of the main points arising from the Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities, published by the Government on 26 October 2006.

### Officer Recommendations

**That the contents of this report be noted.**

**That Council consider the contents of this report at the appropriate time in the meeting to inform debate and determine a way forward for this authority.**

Other than those implications agreed with the relevant Officers and referred to below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Community & Environmental Implications	Human Resources Implications	Equality & Diversity Implications
NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE	NONE

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Government White Paper: “Strong and Prosperous Communities” was published by the Government on 26 October 2006. Appendix 1 to this report sets out a briefing note that summarises the main points within the White Paper.

## 2. Options and Options Appraisal

- 2.1 This is an information report and whilst the White Paper contains options and opportunities, no specific options are being proposed by officers at this stage.

## 3. Background Information

- 3.1 The White Paper “Strong and Prosperous Communities” promotes community and neighbourhood engagement. It sets out a number of ways that local authorities can further develop their arrangements to improve community engagement, including:
- developing the role of overview and scrutiny in relation to external bodies.
  - providing new requirements to engage with Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements
  - setting out changes to the performance management and inspection regime, so that it is focused more clearly on outcomes for the community
  - changes for council leadership
- 3.2 The White Paper is in two volumes, with the main proposals for change in volume one, and volume two containing thematic chapters on: Community safety, Health and well-being, Vulnerable people, Children, young people and families, Economic development, housing and planning, Climate change, and the Third Sector. The full White Paper can be found on the Department of Communities and Local Government’s website: [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)
- 3.3 The White Paper also sets out a time-limited opportunity for all Councils to consider proposing new unitary councils and for two-tier areas to apply to be ‘pathfinders’ for new forms of two-tier working to improve joint working and customer service. Proposals for either unitary councils or two-tier pathfinders need to be submitted to the Government by 25 January 2007. Details of this opportunity are set out in the briefing note attached as Appendix 1, which also includes copies of resolutions made by Wiltshire County Council and West Wiltshire District Council.
- 3.4 Members may like to use the contents of this report to inform any debate that takes place at this Council meeting, concerning the Local Government White Paper.

## Implications and Risk Analysis

This is an information report and there are no direct implications or risks to explore at this stage. Any implications arising from decisions at Council will be explored in future reports.

<b>Appendices:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Appendix 1. Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities</b></li> </ul>
<b>Background Documents Used in the Preparation of this Report:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities (October 2006)</b></li> </ul>

## Previous Decisions Connected with this Report

Report	Committee & Date	Minute Reference
None		