

West Wiltshire District Council

Cabinet 8 February 2006

Announcements from the Leader

SW provincial employers meeting

On Friday 20 January I attended a South West Provincial Council meeting. The most significant discussion which took place during both the Employers side meeting and at the later joint meeting with the Trade Union side was about pensions.

It was clear from the discussion that the Trade Union side is stepping up their campaign, particularly in relation to the proposed changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme from October 2006 and as part of this many of you may have been lobbied by Unison recently.

To ensure all members are aware of the matter and the Employers' position, please look out for information in this weeks MIS.

Revenue & Benefits Performance Standards Framework self-assessment

The Department for Works and Pensions require every council to complete and submit a full self-assessment demonstrating the level of performance being achieved by the benefits service. This then feeds into the Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

The first assessment was carried out in December 2003, when the outcome reflected that West Wiltshire's benefits service offered a 'fair' level of performance, with 'fair towards good' capacity to improve.

The Framework was reviewed and reworked in 2005, based on the four themes of claims administration, security, user focus and resources management. Revenues & Benefits have now completed this self-assessment, which has shown that the benefits team is offering customers a good service.

Congratulations to everyone involved in this, as it shows that they are continuing to make good progress in key areas. The findings will now be subject to a final inspection as part of our annual audit process.

Avoncliffe Car Park

The issue appears to be more complicated than was first presented to Cabinet and so it has been decided that more work needs to be done before a final decision can be taken. As we are currently undertaking a Car Parking Review it seems that Avoncliffe Car Park can be placed under the auspices of the Review where officers will be consulting and discussing the situation with local business and the Parish Council