

Cabinet

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Report

Subject : Priorities of the Council October 2007 – March 2009

Report to : The Cabinet

Date : Wednesday 10 October 2007

Author : David Crook, Acting Chief Executive

Leader of the Cabinet: Councillor Paul Sample

1. Purpose of Report:

1.1. To agree the priorities and any additional resources required for projects prior to the creation of a new Council for Wiltshire.

2. Background:

2.1 Following the election in May 2007, the Cabinet indicated their wish to develop a set of revised political priorities for the Council.

2.2 Work was progressing on these through the joint administration, prior to the announcement of the creation of a unitary Council in Wiltshire.

2.3 Given the government's intention the Cabinet has given its support to:

2.3.1 Join Kennet District Council and West Wiltshire District Council in mounting a judicial review, but at the same time:

2.3.2 Work proactively with Wiltshire County Council on the new unitary authority in order to safeguard the interests of the people of Salisbury and South Wiltshire and the staff

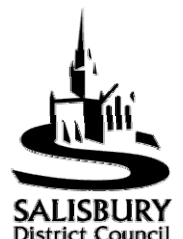
2.3.3 Agree a set of practical priorities for the Council for the next 18 months.

2.4 The Cabinet has indicated that should the judicial review lead to the continuation of Salisbury District Council then the priorities would be reviewed again.

2.5 This report focuses on the practical priorities and is based on the outcome of the three Cabinet away days held in July, August and September 2007. Officers have now considered the resource implications of the proposed priorities and in preparing this paper have been mindful of the significant work that will also be needed to be undertaken to support the creation of the new unitary authority.



Awarded in:
Housing Services
Waste and Recycling Services



3. Review of Major Projects and Recommended Priorities:

- 3.1 Appendix 1 outlines the major projects and includes recommendations on whether to proceed based on the implications of local government review, aspirations for the people of the district and any resource implications.

- 3.2 Whilst the recommended priorities are estimated to be achievable, Cabinet are likely to need to reconsider the projects at a later date should staffing resources become unacceptably low as a result of either staff turnover or the need for staff to work on issues related to the transition to a Unitary Council

4. Recommendations:

- 4.1 Cabinet is requested to:
 - 4.1.1 Confirm the recommendations contained within Appendix 1.
 - 4.1.2 Agree in principle the resource and subsequent financial implications that need to be factored into a budget strategy paper to be developed in October.
 - 4.1.3 Monitor the progress of the projects on a quarterly basis (more frequently should staffing levels within units reduce to a level which could jeopardise the status of the projects).

5. Implications:

- 5.1 Financial

- 5.2 Legal

- 5.3 Personnel

- 5.4 Community Safety

- 5.5 Environmental

- 5.6 Human Rights

- 5.7 Wards Affected

Priority: Deliver Efficient and Customer Focused Services that Give Local People Value for Money

Project	Brief Description	Portfolio Holder	Lead Officer	Implications	Additional Resources Required	Timescale	Recommendation
1. Office Project (including supporting ICT).	Revised project to extend Bourne Hill to provide a purpose built customer contact centre, additional office accommodation and refurbished listed building.	Cllr A Roberts	JC		Extension of backfilling Property Manager's post @ £25k capital	Revised project plan being finalised	Proceed.
2. Administrative Business Support Review.	Project aimed at rationalising and professionalising support arrangements, including greater use of corporate system	Cllr T Thorpe	HF/MR	Requires internal restructuring and adoption of new ways of working that may be superseded by Unitary.	None	Due to complete Phase One in December 2007.	Stop
3. Shared Service for Building Control.	Joint work between districts to evaluate opportunities to create a joint service for Wiltshire.	Cllr T Thorpe/ Cllr P Clegg	ST	Much preparatory work has already been undertaken on a joint service, which can be utilised to progress the service of the	None at this stage.		Proceed.

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				Unitary Council.			
4. Review future telephone system.	A project to review the current telephony of the council and make improvements for the future.	Cllr T Thorpe	HF/LW	The unitary bid established a unified telephone system as a priority outcome. Similar service delivery and efficiency requirements need to be lead by the unitary.	None. Saving on capital of £240k in 2007/8	Nov 2007.	Complete review and improvements to management information and close down the remainder of the project.
5. Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).	The council has previously considered requesting the Audit commission to re-assess our existing categorization of "good", with a view to achieving an "excellent" status.	Cllr T Thorpe	DD	Given the decision on LGR, there would seem little merit in continuing with a voluntary re-categorisation request to the Audit Commission.	N/A	N/A	Cancel project
6. Completion of the integration of all services into	Three year project to transfer customer facing	Cllr A Roberts/ Cllr T Thorpe	HF	Integration of key service areas into Customer Service Unit is either	None	April 2008.	Proceed with reduced scope to complete key services

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Customer Services.	aspects of services into customer services unit nearing completion.			complete or substantially complete except for Housing Services and some low volume services. The key areas nearing completion include Planning and Parking, where training and system work is almost finalised. Completing the remaining key services will enhance local service delivery during transition and provide a strong basis for maintaining local access to service under unitary council.			including Planning. Cancel Housing integration.
7. Provide A-Z of Council services and distribute to every	A-Z booklet would have intended to have included information on	Cllr A Roberts	GG/HF		None.	N/A	Cancel. Keep residents informed about services through the

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household.	services provided by WCC and others.						Citizen – as usual.
8. Implement next phase of the Agresso financial computer system.	Development of the financial management computer system.	Cllr A Roberts	AO	Given LGR it is not appropriate to proceed with developing a finance system which will be superseded by a unitary system.	Return to capital of £50k.	N/A	Cancel

Priority: Work with partners to improve the well being of all local people and their opportunity to enjoy life.

PROJECT	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	PORTFOLIO HOLDER	LEAD OFFICER	IMPLICATIONS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES REQUIRED	TIMESCALE	RECOMMENDATION
9. Define business plan for the Guildhall.	Determine the future use of the Guildhall once the Magistrates Court Service vacates the building.	Cllr B Dalton	RT		Included in Vision Project	6 months to a year.	Subject to Cabinet decision.
10. Promote with WCC a future approach to a	The Council has previously considered options	Cllr B Dalton	RT	All decisions regarding the long term management arrangements for	None in the short term	Timescales will be dictated by Transition	Formal Cabinet recommendation regarding approach will

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cooperative leisure trust for the county.	regarding the long term management arrangements for the Leisure Facilities. Further work was put on hold pending the outcome of the LGR. Now that a decision is known, Cabinet would like discussions opened with the 'Transition Team' to look at establishing management options for faculties in the new authority.			the Leisure Facilities are now in the hands of the new authority. Timescales associated with this work will be predicated by the priority attached to this work by the Transition Board. SDC will need to ensure that Members & officers and are part of the appropriate transition team.		process and priority given to this area of work. Report to next Cabinet on options.	be required.
11. Develop the overall approach to equalities and diversity.	A project to introduce a corporate approach to Equality and Diversity.	Cllr T Thorpe	RT	Implications were considered in September Cabinet report.	None, additional costs for consultants can be contained within existing budgets.	12 months.	Proceed.

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12. Implement revised business plan for Care Connect.	Business Plan aims to develop business growth and income generation of the service. The aim was also to bring together the services of CCTV and CareConnect as one service.	Cllr I Tomes	AR	Officers are pursuing the use of spare office capacity. This also needs to fit with the future of CCTV.	None at this time.	April 2008.	Proceed.
13. Invest in fitness equipment at leisure centres.	Replace the fitness Equipment and modify the Fitness Suite at Five Rivers.	Cllr B Dalton	RT	Considered at September Cabinet	No additional resources required – permission required to procure work and commit to lease agreement.	Immediately	Complete
14. Refurbish Leisure Facilities	Capital investment in the facilities to refurbish internal fabric of the venues.	Cllr B Dalton	RT/DS	Officer time in Housing repairs.	To be determined.	12 months. Costed report to Cabinet by December 07.	Proceed. Prepare costed report on capital cost of refurbishment.
15 Implement play strategy.	Play Strategy has been approved. An	Cllr B Dalton	RT	Officer time and commitment to deliver from	None other than Officer time.	3 years from being awarded the	Proceed.

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	application has been made for three initiatives to the National Lottery totalling £208K Implementation will depend on a successful application.			partner organisations.		grant.	
16. Review existing grant arrangements for the Major Arts Organisations (MAO).	To not proceed with the £50K budget reduction for the MAO currently included in the MTFS. Instead award new three year Service Agreements.	Cllr B Dalton	RT	MTFS revenue implications. Principles associated with inconsistent approach to 3 year funding agreements.	£50K per annum already included in MTFS.	Cabinet report required in October / November.	Proceed.
17. Review sport and recreation strategy.		Cllr B Dalton	RT	It is considered unnecessary to review this long term strategy given LGR.	None.	N/A	Cancel.
18. Review community development strategy.		Cllr B Dalton	RT	It is considered unnecessary to review this long term strategy given LGR.	None.	N/A	Cancel.

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19a Review cultural strategy		Cllr B Dalton	RT	It is considered unnecessary to review this long term strategy given LGR.	None.	N/A	Cancel.
19b. Free swimming sessions for under 16s		Cllr B Dalton	RT		£25k recurring	Immediate	Proceed

Priority: Improve access to affordable homes for local people

PROJECT	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	PORTFOLIO HOLDER	LEAD OFFICER	IMPLICATIONS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES REQUIRED	TIMESCALE	RECOMMENDATION
20. Develop new Housing Business Plan (including restructure and meeting decent homes).	Following the decision of tenants to reject a stock transfer, the Council is required to develop a viable 30 year business plan showing how we will meet the governments Decent Homes target.	Cllr I Tomes	DS	Having already identified long term revenue deficits in the HRA, delays in implementing potential savings will require larger savings being required in the long term.	None.	A further announcement is expected from the government in the autumn. In the meantime some efficiency measures including a restructure could be implemented in the next few months which would have little impact on front line services.	Proceed with Project Board meetings to look at efficiency savings and review the HRA position in light of the Government Green Paper and any subsequent announcements.
21. Implement choice based lettings.	For the council to have introduced a CBL system based on an	Cllr I Tomes	AR	IT system New unitary structure. Future	Capital funding estimated at approximately £50k.	April 2008.	Proceed.

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	agreed County-wide housing allocations policy.			management of CBL.			
22. Complete private sector condition survey.	Update the council's data on the condition of housing in the private sector.	Cllr I Tomes	AR	It is intended that the four districts will together undertake this work. There is a need for the districts to maintain momentum to manage this project.	None.	August 2008.	Proceed.
23. Implement intermediate rent scheme.	Working with a housing association to deliver an innovative housing scheme for locally employed people.	Cllr I Tomes	AR	A site has been purchased but is subject to a planning application.	The HA may seek some capital funding from the council but this has yet to be determined. Nil capital funding at present.	January 2009.	Proceed.
24. Investigate local authority vehicle to build social housing.	The Government has proposed in its recent Green Paper that Local Authorities may be able to	Cllr I Tomes	DS	This could be seen as an opportunity to increase the housing stock and achieve	Some consultancy advice would be required initially to develop the	Will depend on progress of Green Paper.	Proceed.

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	provide additional affordable housing via a special local authority vehicle outside of the HRA.			economies of scale. Will require local authority land to be made available.	idea.		
25a Review feasibility of a small to medium zero-carbon mixed tenure Housing Development on council owned land.	To enable the development of a cutting edge housing development.	Cllr I Tomes/ Cllr P Clegg	ET/AR	Explore the possibility of encouraging an exemplar eco-development ahead of the LDF programme.	Ensure the Principle Planning Officer is replaced. Given current circumstances this will need some restructuring to FP team.	Land transfer with a planning approval by August 2008.	Proceed.
25b Develop the LDF framework to include eco-friendly development on future major housing sites.	To enable the development of a cutting edge housing development.	Cllr I Tomes/ Cllr P Clegg	ET/AR	Encourage eco friendly mixed tenure developments through the emerging LDF.	c£25k capital for planning brief.	As the LDF framework.	Proceed
26. Increase % of affordable	To identify whether the	Cllr I Tomes/ Cllr P Clegg	ET/AR	GOSW to be approached about	Need to ensure,	Liaison between	Proceed. Cabinet report

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housing on development sites to 50%.	council's existing policy can be amended to reflect the requirement for 50%			revising a policy as an exception prior to full LDF review. Could revise SPG to raise level, but need indication of community support from 'Our Place' consultation. A one off 100% affordable development on Council owned land, such as the Engine Shed could provide a more deliverable interim solution prior to policy change.	Principle Planning Officer is replaced. Given current circumstances this will need some restructuring to FP team.	Housing and Planning Ongoing. Need to explore feasibility and political appetite for the one off flagship project. Review of whether to proceed by October 2007.	required and then working group to deliver if members decide to progress.
27. Review feasibility of a handy person scheme.	Provide a service to tenants for minor repairs at cost or subsidized.	Cllr I Tomes	DS	Consultation will be required with tenants to look at likely take up. Decisions will need to be made as to the extent of the service to be provided. Early	1-3 operatives depending on the extent of the service and admin support. HRA funded	9-12 months.	Proceed. Approach Age Concern.

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				indications suggest that some form of subsidy would be required to make it affordable which would put additional pressure on the HRA revenue situation.			
28. Report on sheltered housing subsidy in the light of Audit Commission comments.	Draft report highlights significant weaknesses in the council's approach towards service charges. A review of service charges has been undertaken in parallel with Internal Audit and an action plan is being prepared.	Cllr I Tomes	AR / DS		None.	March 2008.	Proceed.
29. Review feasibility of more flexible	Cleaning services are provided at	Cllr I Tomes	DS	Providing a cleaning service to other blocks	If the cleaning service is to be extended	12 months to implementat	Proceed. Discuss with ward members

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cleaning services on housing estates.	Bemerton Heath and The Friary which are currently costed within the rent pooling arrangements. A service charge could be applied. Other blocks of flats would also benefit from a cleaning service.			without a charge would put additional strain on the HRA. Providing a service to other blocks but not charging those already receiving it would be regarded as unfair. Charging for a service that has previously been "free" may also be regarded as unfair.	additional cleaning services would have to be procured and some supervision may be required depending on the extent of additional services. HRA funded.	ion if agreed.	involved and report back to Project Board.
30. Continue housing modernisation programme.	Cancel the proposed review of the modernisation programme to reduce the standard of the specification to spread resources further.	Cllr I Tomes	DS	Current priorities for planned maintenance will be maintained.	None.	Immediate.	Proceed.
31. Review feasibility of	Tenants have the option of	Cllr I Tomes	DS	Provide information to	None.	Autumn addition of	Proceed.

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water meters for tenants.	water meters being fitted to their homes which in some cases will be cheaper for them.			tenants in Housing Matters.		Housing Matters.	
32. Continue affordable housing programme.	To continue with maximising the development opportunities to deliver affordable housing.	Cllr I Tomes	AR	Sites coming forward. Developers being willing to release sites and to develop. Planning considerations. National Affordable Housing Programme 2008 – 2011.	None.	Ongoing.	Proceed.
33. Review estate office provision at Gainsborough Close/Friary.	Extend opening hours at 2 Estate Offices.	Cllr I Tomes	DS	Will prevent staff savings being made in restructure with regard to Neighbourhood Managers. Tenants at these estates receive further enhanced	None.	3 months.	Proceed.

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				service.			
34. Develop a programme of improvements to landscaping and paving on housing estates in Amesbury.	Provide environmental improvements to run down estates in Amesbury.	Cllr I Tomes	DS	Will require either a change in priorities for the planned maintenance programme which could impact on meeting Decent Homes Standard or additional capital resources.	Up to £500k capital resources. Reprioritisation of HRA capital	12 months.	Proceed if additional capital resources can be found. HRA capital
35. Review homelessness strategy.		Cllr I Tomes	AR	It is considered unnecessary to review this long term strategy given LGR.	None.	N/A	Cancel.
36. Review Housing strategy.		Cllr I Tomes	AR	It is considered unnecessary to review this long term strategy given LGR.	None.	N/A	Cancel.
37. Review older person's strategy.		Cllr I Tomes	AR	It is considered unnecessary to review this long term strategy given LGR.	None.	N/A	Cancel.

Priority: Sustain a cleaner, greener, safer and attractive place to live and work now and for the future.

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38. Work with WCC to open the Petersfinger Park and ride site.		Cllr H McKeown	ET	Financial implications and relationship with Salisbury Wilton Action Plan plus Vision to be clarified.	Difficult to assess at this stage as it would depend on the opening date of the site.	Dependent on funding and strategic decision-making with County.	Proceed. Cabinet report required to clarify issues and timetable.
39. Review the car parking strategy.		Cllr H McKeown	ET	Review is pre-requisite to testing feasibility of Vision projects and needs to take full account of 'Our Place' consultation.	Within existing resources.	Imminent.	Proceed.
40. Consider the future approach to recycling/waste management.	To introduce new waste and recycling collection arrangements to ensure the District can meet its recycling targets in 2010.	Cllr J Robertson	MR	See report on this agenda	Full year cost £450k	40% recycling rate is required by 2010.	Proceed. To be introduced in October 2008.
41. Develop a street scene strategy.	To draw together in one strategy those services, District or County provided,	Cllr J Robertson	MR	A unitary based approach would ensure consistency of approach across	Capacity to deliver this in next 12 months will be influenced by	Dependant on scope of strategy and capacity. City strategy	Cancel.

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	that contribute to the quality of the street scene in the District, ensuring clarity and consistency.			the County. Consequently, to progress a district or city based strategy at this time may prove to lack the necessary holistic perspective and be abortive work.	the decision on waste and recycling collection. Would be anticipated to use internal expertise if available.	likely to take 9 months to include consultation .	
42. Work with the scrutiny panel to implement the results of the climate change review.	To develop a strategy and action plan to manage and mitigate against the effects of climate change in the District.	Cllr J Robertson	MR	A unitary based approach would ensure consistency of approach across the County, in addition to potential economies connected to procuring expertise.	Insufficient capacity currently exists in-house to develop this piece of work alongside other ESU priorities. Cabinet need to determine the extent of climate change review and this will dictate the cost. Dependent on requirements up to £50,000 non recurring.	12 months.	Proceed.
43. Implement	Long-term (20+	Cllr P Edge	GG	Long-term	Members		Proceed.

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the Vision project including a business case that considers options for a delivery vehicle.	years) project to regenerate Salisbury.			implications for the economy and for the wellbeing of the residents of Salisbury and south Wiltshire.	approved £300k capital for the Vision project in September.		
44. Implement the Local Development Framework.		Cllr P Clegg	ET	Statutory requirement therefore no choice but to progress. Critical to realise political priorities especially affordable housing, jobs and sustainable patterns of development. Salisbury and Wilton Action Area Plan is the essential vehicle for delivery of the majority of the Vision.	Need to ensure that the Principle Planning Officer post is filled. Given current circumstances this will need some restructuring to FP team.	As per agreed LDS with GOSW. Ongoing till 2011.	Proceed and accelerate where appropriate.
45. Crematorium	There is currently £25K	Cllr B Dalton	RT	A report was produced and	None. It would become the	The intention	Proceed.

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options analysis.	reserved to appoint a consultant to produce a business plan and comprehensive, all encompassing options analysis.			discussed by Cabinet in Oct 2006. The primary driver relates to the elimination of mercury omissions from Crematoriums by 2012. The Council has a legal obligation to clearly state what it intends to do to resolve the mercury abatement issue and should have done so by the end of last year. If we do not clarify this issue within the very near future Environmental Services will have no option other than to issues notice on the council. There are a number of other issues relating to	responsibility of the new authority implementing the Business Plan.	would be to appoint the consultant and get the work completed by January 08.	

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				the age of the burners, size of car park, age of building and other design issues Mercury abatement is estimated to cost in the region of £650K and their other work over £400K so it would be eminently sensible to look at all the issues in one go.			
46. Improve air quality in the city centre.	To deliver actions in response to deterioration in air quality in Salisbury.	Cllr J Roberts	MR/ET	Dependent upon selected options. Consultation currently ongoing, including feedback on potential actions.	Assume nil at present.	To be determined.	Proceed.
47. Achieve Fair Trade City status for Salisbury.	To bring forward recommendations to Cabinet as requested to consider proposals to principles of	Leader	RT	Arrangements to achieve fair trade status to be defined.	Some staff time.	Within 9 months.	Proceed.

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	Fair-trade and in particular to ensure priority and adequate resource is given to enable Salisbury to gain 'Fair-trade City' Status and, if agreed, to pass a resolution supporting Fair-trade.						
48. Review role and responsibilities of ASB officer	Home Office Funding for the PASBRO ends March 2008.	Cllr B Dalton	RT	Consideration will need to be given to the options open to both the District Council and now that the LGR decision has been made the SWEX at a County level.	Possibility of a financial contribution of up to all the salary and on costs associated with the post £24k non recurring.	3 months.	Proceed.

Priority: Give people opportunities to influence their community and neighbourhood.

PROJECT	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	PORTFOLIO HOLDER	LEAD OFFICER	IMPLICATIONS	ADDITIONAL RESOURCES REQUIRED	TIMESCALE	RECOMMENDATION
49. Instigate the parishing of the City of Salisbury.		Leader	JC	Provides separate governance for City.	Estimated cost if pursued up to £15k non recurring.	Requires Full Council decision.	Proceed. Discussion with WCC on funding
50. Complete the Bemerton Heath Plan.	The Bemerton Ward Plan is nearing completion and will need to be endorsed by CAC.	Cllr B Dalton	RT	None.	Current estimate of £150k capital and £15k non recurring.	Up to 3 months to have the plan validated by CAC.	Proceed. Subject to WCC agreement of ongoing funding.
51. Support the BH Residents Association to open a Community Centre in Bemerton.	The Bemerton Heath Residents Association has had an aspiration to open a Community Centre in Bemerton, a location has now been identified and they need assistance to take the project forward.	Cllr B Dalton	RT	The Council is already working with WCC regarding an extended BHNC that would provide some of the services being identified by BHRA and is awaiting the outcome of a £1m lottery application.	Too early to identify what resources are required, likely to be revenue to enable adequate support to be given to the BHRA as well as ongoing revenue contributions in future years to run the facility. Will have implications	Not worked up sufficiently to give an accurate timescale although the BHRA have been set a date of 31/12/07 to submit an application to gain Developers contributions being held	Further discussions to be had with local cllrs and Deputy Leader to ascertain needs. No further progress beyond that until outcome of the lottery grant is known (end of Sep 07) Any progress with this project is likely to require

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					associated with LGR decision and future commitment to any recurring revenue funding granted.	by CAC.	additional resources either from Cabinet or CAC.
52. Enhance tenant participation.	Improve extent of tenant involvement.	Cllr I Tomes	DS	A work programme to develop this has already been produced.	None.	12 months.	Proceed.
53. Continue employment of Sheltered Scheme tenant participation officer.	Extend employment for a further 12 months.	Cllr I Tomes	AR	None.	Extra cost of £20k from HRA.	Immediate.	Proceed.
54. Preserve green space around Bourne Hill and other areas for future citizens	Explore transfer of assets to a trust to secure future use.	Cllr P Clegg	ET/RT	Reports to Sept Cabinet meeting approved way forward for Bourne Hill.	Some staff implications dependent on extent of transfers identified.	April 2009	Proceed.