

IMPLEMENTATION EXECUTIVE
26 FEBRUARY 2009

WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LEISURE AND RECREATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Executive Summary

This report is a request from West Wiltshire District Council for the Implementation Executive formally to adopt the Leisure and Recreation Development Plan Document (DPD) in order to remedy the deficiencies in leisure and recreation planning policies in the current District Local Plan.

This adoption is essentially a “tidying up” operation to update an existing District Local Plan which has been made necessary by the timing of Local Government Reorganisation in Wiltshire.

The DPD can be found at:
www.westwiltshire.gov.uk/leisure_and_recreation_dpd_final

Proposal

That the Implementation Executive adopt the West Wiltshire District Council Leisure and Recreation Development Plan Document as spatial planning policy for the West Wiltshire District area.

Reason for Proposal

West Wiltshire District Council has prepared a Leisure and Recreation DPD, which has passed through all its statutory stages. The District Council has resolved to adopt the document but it is necessary for it to be endorsed by the Implementation Executive before it can become planning policy for the District.

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WEST WILTSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LEISURE AND RECREATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Purpose of Report

1. To request the formal adoption of the West Wiltshire District Council Leisure and Recreation Development Plan Document (DPD) as spatial planning policy for the West Wiltshire District area. This adoption is essentially a “tidying up” operation to update an existing District Local Plan which has been made necessary by the timing of Local Government Reorganisation in Wiltshire.

Background

2. West Wiltshire District Council has prepared a DPD under the new statutory planning procedure in order to remedy the deficiency in leisure and recreation planning policies in the current District Local Plan. This is the West Wiltshire District Plan First Alteration, 2004. The process was set in motion in 2003 by the Planning Inspector who conducted the Public Inquiry into the West Wiltshire District Plan (First Alteration). He recommended that the Council should carry out a needs assessment and audit of open space, sports and recreation facilities in the district as the basis for future planning policies.
3. A Leisure and Recreation Needs Assessment for West Wiltshire was duly carried out for the Council by Kit Campbell Associates and was published in 2007. The Assessment conforms fully with the provisions of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17), ‘Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation’.
4. Although the new DPD was initiated to remedy shortcomings in the existing West Wiltshire District Local Plan, its timing has required it to be prepared in accordance with the new Development Plan Regulations, which came into effect following the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Along with the current District Local Plans, it will eventually be superseded by the Local Development Framework, currently in preparation on behalf of the new Wiltshire Council. The adoption of the DPD is already provided for in the Local Development Scheme for Wiltshire Council, which was approved by the Implementation Executive on 10 December 2008.
5. Following the Public Examination of the DPD in July 2008, the Planning Inspector issued his report. This finds that, subject to a number of changes which have since been put in place by the District Council, the DPD is “sound” in planning terms. The changes made by the Inspector are binding.

Main Considerations for the Implementation Executive

6. The main elements of the DPD are:
 - A set of new development plan policies, which are based on a recent assessment of need;

- Standards of leisure and recreation provision which will need to be met by future development and which will inform new planning obligations;
 - Specific proposals for public leisure and recreation development to serve Trowbridge, Melksham and Westbury. While these supersede the previous proposals by West Wiltshire District Council contained in the 2004 District Local Plan, they will still be subject to review by Wiltshire Council; and
 - A strategy for the review of existing open space and recreation provision in West Wiltshire. While this will also be superseded by Wiltshire Council's own review, it will nevertheless provide an important template for the consideration of spatial planning policy in the immediate future.
7. The spatial planning policies contained in the DPD conform to Government Guidance, especially as set out in PPG17. These have been thoroughly tested in a Public Examination by a Planning Inspector. While the policies relate solely to the area of West Wiltshire District, they do not unduly fetter the discretion of Wiltshire Council when reviewing its own future leisure and recreation provision. The DPD will, in time, be superseded by a revised set of spatial planning policies for the whole of Wiltshire, but in the meantime it makes good an existing policy deficiency.
8. The need for the formal adoption of the DPD by the Implementation Executive is essentially an accident of history. West Wiltshire District Council resolved to adopt the DPD at its meeting on 21 January 2009, the first scheduled meeting of the full Council since the receipt of the Inspector's report on 29 October 2008. However, under the 2008 Local Government (Structural Changes) (Transitional Arrangements) Regulations which govern the period leading up to the inauguration of Wiltshire Council on 1 April 2009, new policy for any part of Wiltshire can only be adopted by the Implementation Executive. West Wiltshire District Council has therefore formally resolved to request the Implementation Executive to adopt the DPD.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

9. The DPD is a spatial planning document and has been the subject of a full statutory Sustainability Appraisal. Any environmental impacts have been taken fully into account.

Equality and Diversity Impact of the Proposal

10. As a Development Plan Document, the West Wiltshire Leisure and Recreation DPD has been the subject of a full Equalities Impact Assessment. This, like the Sustainability Appraisal is necessary for the document to be found sound by the Planning Inspector.

Risk Assessment

11. Failure to adopt the DPD at this stage would result in significant gaps in the spatial planning policies for West Wiltshire. It would also prevent the Council

from ensuring that new residential and commercial developments make appropriate provision for new public leisure and recreation facilities.

Financial Implications

12. The only direct financial implications are the costs of advertising the adoption of the DPD. These will be met from existing West Wiltshire District Council budget provision.

Legal Implications

13. These are contained in paragraph 8 of the report.

Conclusion

14. The Implementation Executive is requested to adopt the DPD.
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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report: None