

AGENDA

Meeting: Environment Select Committee
Place: Committee Room III, County Hall, Trowbridge
Date: Tuesday 2 March 2010
Time: 10.30 am

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Sharon Smith, of Democratic and Members' Services, County Hall, Trowbridge, direct line (01225) 718378 or email sharonl.smith@wiltshire.gov.uk

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This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Membership:

Cllr Chuck Berry	Cllr Alan Hill
Cllr Rosemary Brown (Vice Chairman)	Cllr Chris Humphries
Cllr Nigel Carter	Cllr Tom James MBE
Cllr Brian Dalton	Cllr Ian McLennan
Cllr Peter Doyle	Cllr Stephen Oldrieve
Cllr Jose Green	Cllr Leo Randall
Cllr Mollie Groom (Chairman)	

Substitutes:

Cllr Chris Caswill	Cllr George Jeans
Cllr Peter Colmer	Cllr Julian Johnson
Cllr Nick Fogg	Cllr Howard Marshall
Cllr Russell Hawker	Cllr Anthony Trotman
Cllr Charles Howard	

PART I

Items to be considered while the meeting is opened to the public

1. **Apologies and Substitutions**

2. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** *(Pages 1 - 8)*

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Environment Select Committee held on 12 January 2010.

3. **Declarations of Interests**

To receive any declarations of personal or prejudicial interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4. **Chairman's Announcements**

5. **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. The Chairman will, however, exercise his discretion in order to ensure that members of the public have the opportunity to contribute.

Members of the public wishing to ask a question should give written notice (including details of any question) to the officer named above by **12:00 noon on Friday 26 February 2009**.

6. **Making Best Use of Existing Housing - Empty Private Sector Home** *(Pages 9 - 20)*

The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), published in December 2009, highlighted the way Wiltshire managed its affordable housing. Within its commentary the Audit Committee stated that "The Council is not making the most of the existing housing in the county" and "Few empty homes had been brought into use".

In response a report is attached from the Head of Private Housing which provides an overview of the measures that are being developed by the Council to encourage owners of empty homes to bring them back into use.

The Committee is asked to comment on the report and to consider any future role of scrutinising this area.

7. **Climate Change Update** (Pages 21 - 36)

A report is attached from the Service Director for Economy & Enterprise which provides an update to members on progress against climate change objectives and the resources available to deliver these objectives as requested following the report presented on 3 November 2009.

The Committee is invited to note and comment on:

- a) progress made against climate change objectives
- b) proposed work programme for 2010/11
- c) resources available to deliver against climate change objectives.

8. **Flood Risk Management** (Pages 37 - 58)

At its meeting on 11 September 2009 the committee considered the proposed arrangements for flood risk management for Wiltshire Council and updated on progress with regard to the Pitt Review recommendations.

The attached report from the Corporate Director for Transport, Environment & Leisure provides the current position with regard flooding risk management and response arrangements within Wiltshire.

The Committee is invited to note the report and comment as appropriate.

9. **Gypsy & Traveller Strategy - Progress Report** (Pages 59 - 72)

The Committee considered at its last meeting on 12 January 2010 a progress report from the Project Team responsible for developing the Gypsy and Traveller Strategy. A draft copy of the strategy is attached for consideration.

The Committee will also recall that Cllr Jose Green was appointed as a scrutiny representative on the board and will provide an update on her work in this role.

The Committee is asked to note the report and comment as appropriate In advance of the submission of the final strategy to Cabinet in April.

10. **Waste Strategy**

The recommendations to emerge following the recent review of Waste have been forwarded to the Cabinet member for response however, the Cabinet issued a press release on 16 February to defer the planned consultation into possible changes to Wiltshire's waste and recycling until after the General Election.

"The consultation was due to start shortly but it became clear that differing national policies emerging from Whitehall have caused confusion and uncertainty regarding future waste and recycling services. It would, therefore, not be appropriate to hold a consultation until the council has a clear steer on the national policy."

The Leader confirmed that in the meantime the waste and recycling services will continue to operate as currently provided.

11. **Forward Work Programme** *(Pages 73 - 74)*

A copy of the draft Forward Work Programme is attached for consideration.

12. **Date of next Meeting**

18 May 2010.

13. **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

PART II

Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

NONE

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 JANUARY 2010 IN COMMITTEE ROOM III, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Chuck Berry, Cllr Rosemary Brown (Vice Chairman), Cllr Nigel Carter, Cllr Brian Dalton, Cllr Peter Doyle, Cllr Jose Green, Cllr Mollie Groom (Chairman), Cllr Alan Hill, Cllr Chris Humphries, Cllr Tom James MBE, Cllr Ian McLennan, Cllr Stephen Oldrieve and Cllr Leo Randall.

Also Present:

Cllr Dick Tonge, Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cllr Toby Sturgis and Cllr Richard Gamble

37. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 3rd November 2009 were approved as a correct record.

The Chairman requested that the Committee noted the PFI update would now take place in March 2010 due to ongoing contractual negotiations.

38. Declarations of Interests

Cllr Nigel Carter declared a personal interest as a practising environmental consultant.

Cllr George Jeans declared a prejudicial interest in Item 6(i) – Car Parking Harmonisation since his Mere place of residence was close to one of the town's free car parks.

39. Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Management and Resources Select Committee had approached the Chairman and requested that the Environment Select Committee consider the provision of grit bins, following complaints from residents during the recent cold snap.

The Chairman informed the Committee that she intended to ask the Director for TEL for an overview of the Council's response to recent extreme weather conditions, included within the update would be the provision of grit bins. Following input from the Cabinet member for Transport it was agreed to consider this in July.

40. Public Participation

Michael Hall, Vice Chair of Mere Parish Council, made a statement in objection to the possible implementation of parking charges in Mere and requested that any consultants commissioned should take into account the parking needs in rural areas.

Cllr George Jeans, Councillor for Mere, made a statement in objection to the possible implementation of parking charges in Mere with a specific note that the two car parks remain free and that the Committee note the car parking survey carried out which received 200 responses in favour of this. Cllr Jeans provided clarification that the subject of car parking charges was raised at the SW Area Board where it was indicated that charges should be resisted in rural areas where possible.

Barbara Hewitt, Chairman of Mere and District Chamber of Trade, made a statement in objection to the possible implementation of parking charges in Mere and highlighted the impact that charges could have on local trade where a reduction of shops in the areas had already occurred. Ms Hewitt also drew attention to the car parking survey which highlighted the local objection to car parking charges in Mere.

41. Scrutiny of Car Parking

(i) Car Parking Harmonisation

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director for Transport, Environment and Leisure which provided an overview of the restructuring of parking services following the merger of the District Council and County Council parking operations as part of the One Council for Wiltshire project in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004.

Cllr Dick Tonge, Cabinet Member - Car Parking, attended the meeting to answer any questions arising from the report.

Councillors raised a number of matters, including the possibility of parish/town councils acquiring car parks within their parish/town and thereby being responsible for any associated costs (i.e. staffing, upkeep of land, etc), proposals on how to reduce staffing costs (such as digital recognition of number plates), the need for clear communication on how car parking funds were spent and an acknowledgement of the differing needs of rural and urban areas.

The Chairman thanked members of the Committee for their contributions.

Resolved:

To note the report.

(ii) Review of Wiltshire Local Transport (LTP) – Parking Plan

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director for Transport, Environment and Leisure, which set out the proposed methodology and timescale for reviewing the Local Transport Plan – Parking Plan.

The review would take account of new national, regional and local policies and would form part of the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) – Wiltshire Core Strategy and Wiltshire LTP3. A draft of which would be consulted on September to November 2010 with the final LTP3 published at the end of March 2011.

Cllr Dick Tonge, Cabinet Member - Car Parking, attended the meeting to answer any questions arising from the report.

Ensuing discussion included a request that the terminology contained within the report should be simplified with an explanation of some of the elements therein; how the banding categories (detailed in paragraph 19 of the report) had been devised and whether these were movable and the extent of involvement from the area boards.

Clarification was provided that the process had not yet been determined regarding the banding categories outlined in paragraph 19 of the report and that the committee felt that area boards should be used for consultation purposes only as it was felt inappropriate for area boards to have full responsibility for parking charges within their respective areas.

Clarification was also provided that Mouchel were to undertake the consultation process as part of pre-existing contractual arrangements. A Copy of the consultant's brief will be circulated to members of the committee.

Cllr Alan Hill moved that paragraph 20 of the report be amended to read:

That the Area Boards should have a chance to consider and be consulted upon regarding car parking charges in their area and to make any recommendations through the Executive.

Upon vote the motion was passed.

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the report with amended paragraph 20 as outlined above;**

and
- 2) **To receive an update on the Wiltshire Local Transport Plan – Parking Plan in May 2010.**

42. Leisure Services Strategy

A report was submitted by the Corporate Director, Transport, Environment and Leisure which provided an overview of the work undertaken to develop the Leisure Facilities Strategy as approved by Cabinet on 24 November 2009. Members of the Committee were invited to raise any issues relating to the report and to consider the future role of the Select Committee in scrutinising the Leisure Facilities Strategy.

Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cabinet member for Leisure, attended the meeting to present the report and to answer any questions arising thereof.

Ensuing discussion included whether the management of leisure sites would be outsourced in all cases and, if so, the benefits such outsourcing would have on the community; alternative methods of securing revenue such as car parking smart cards and the possibility of rewarding those who currently subsidise but do not use leisure facilities.

Cllr Wheeler had liaised with other council portfolio holders to discuss how leisure facilities were handled outside of Wiltshire Council although no decision had been made on the management of sites owned by Wiltshire Council following these discussions.

Clarification was also provided by Cllr Wheeler that, as Cabinet Member for Sports also, joined up thinking was already taking place to ensure sports development fed into leisure (i.e. free swimming).

Resolved:

- 1) **To note the report.**
- 2) **To consider an update on the Leisure Facilities Strategy in advance of approval by Cabinet.**

43. Gypsy and Traveller Project Update

A progress report on the development of a Gypsies and Travellers Strategy was submitted by the Service Director - Housing and Chairman of the Gypsy and Traveller Corporate Project Team, which provided details of some of the ways which the Council currently engaged with the gypsy and traveller communities and set out the project plan for preparing a strategy with supporting processes to deliver a coordinated and effective approach to service provision and interaction with the communities.

The Strategy would be submitted to Cabinet for approval in April 2010.

Toby Sturgis, Cabinet member for the Environment, Graham Hogg, Chair of the Gypsy and Traveller Corporate Project Team, Majur Bhatt, Equality and Diversity Manager and Rachel Goff, Gypsy and Traveller Strategy Project Manager, attended the meeting to answer any questions arising from the report.

Graham Hogg clarified that the report provided details on the existing arrangements held by the Council in relation to engagement with the gypsy and traveller community.

Ensuing discussion included how the current level of provision detailed in paragraph 29 of the report may not have incorporated figures for private sites and may not reflect the true provision, the needs of the gypsy and traveller community (a DVD entitled 'One Square Mile' was highlighted as a valuable tool to gain a better understanding of the community needs - it was suggested that this could be shown at a future Committee), how the strategy should be advantageous for the gypsy and traveller community and also meet the needs of the local community and the standard of managed sites.

A proposal was made that a member of the Committee attend Corporate Project Team board meetings to update the Committee as appropriate.

Resolved:

That the Committee:

- 1. Acknowledges the current status of the project, recognising that a more integrated approach to service delivery for gypsy and traveller communities is required.**
- 2. Acknowledges that successful delivery of the strategy will require significant support and backing across the authority.**
- 3. Recommends that the Corporate Project Team continues it's work to compile a document outlining the pathway towards establishing a strategy and action plan for reporting to Cabinet in April 2010.**

4. **Appoints Cllr Jose Green as a Scrutiny representative on the Gypsies and Travellers Project Board to provide updates to the Committee on any project developments.**
5. **Notes the proposal that the Corporate Project Team for the Gypsy and Traveller Strategy seeks Cabinet approval for the pathway document in April 2010.**

44. Waste Scrutiny Task Group Final Report

A report by the Chairman of the Waste Scrutiny Task Group was presented to the Committee which provided the Group's findings on the harmonisation of waste within Wiltshire. The report included, as an appendix, a minority report submitted by Cllrs Peter Colmer and Rosemary Brown.

Cllr Chris Humphries, Chairman of the Waste Scrutiny Task Group and Cllr Toby Sturgis, Cabinet Member for Waste, were present to answer any questions arising from the report.

Ensuing discussion included the potential financial implications of achieving 60% recycling levels and the need to offer the public kerbside plastic and cardboard collection as a carrot if moving them to alternate weekly collection.

Cllr Sturgis confirmed that Area Boards would be used in the consultation exercise with the public.

Following discussions, Cllr Steve Oldrieve moved to endorse the minority report and, upon vote, the motion was passed.

Resolved:

That the Minority Report is submitted to the Cabinet member for consideration and that the response received will be submitted to the Committee in March 2010.

45. Major Contracts Task Group - Review of Hills Waste

Cllr Peter Doyle, Chairman of the Major Contracts Task Group requested the support of the Committee in his request for the Cabinet Member to ensure that the 16 outstanding contract variations established at the Major Contracts Task Group meeting held on 9 November 2009 were implemented.

Clarification was provided by Cllr Toby Sturgis that the delay in implementation of the contract variations did not affect the operations or cost to the Council.

Resolved:

That the Committee supports the request of the Task Group.

46. Forward Work Programme

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

47. Date of next Meeting

2 March 2010 at County Hall, Trowbridge

48. Urgent Items

No urgent items were raised.

(Duration of meeting: 10:30am – 12:50pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Sharon Smith, of Democratic & Members' Services, direct line (01225) 718378, e-mail sharonl.smith@wiltshire.gov.uk

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WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

2 MARCH 2009

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

MAKING BEST USE OF EXISTING HOUSING – EMPTY PRIVATE SECTOR HOME

Purpose of the Report

To provide an overview to the committee of the measures that are being developed by the council to encourage owners of empty properties to bring them back into use in light of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

Background

The CAA stated that ‘The previous four district councils were not proactive in managing the quality of private sector housing. Performance in bringing empty homes back into use has been weak....’

The previous district council’s considered Empty Homes work as low priority and the observation made by the CAA is recognised as providing an accurate picture.

Main Consideration for the Committee

Reason for Bring Empty Homes Back into Use

The advantages of bringing empty properties back into use include:

1. Increasing the housing supply.
2. Brings about an improvement to the street scene and local environment and therefore residents wellbeing.

Number of Empty Homes

Each year council’s make an annual return of the numbers of empty properties in their area to Government. The information is generally derived from Council Tax records. Examination of these returns suggest that the number of empty homes in Wiltshire is slightly lower than the regional average and lower than the national average (see Appendix 1, Numbers of Empty Properties). The council has recently received the first draft of the Private Sector Stock confirms this and states ‘compared to the national picture there are a smaller proportion of vacant dwellings in Wiltshire.’

Council Tax records show the number of longer terms empties (those vacant over 6 months) in February 2010 is approx 1703.

Wiltshire Approach

Local Government Re-organisation has allowed Wiltshire Council to establish a dedicated Private Sector Housing Team. Prior to reorganization the function had been split in a variety of ways between Environmental Health and Housing. This has provided an opportunity to take a more strategic approach to Private Sector Housing and should improve our performance in our approach and delivery of Empty Homes work.

Progress since Local Government Re-organisation:

1. The provision within the structure of a dedicated part time (18.5hr) Empty Homes Officer (£17,800-19,621 pro rata). A job advert has recently been placed in the local paper so we are hoping that recruitment into this post is imminent. Thus far we have been unable to recruit to the post through the redeployment process plus three round of advertising internally and externally. The resources provided for this function are compared with other council in Appendix 2 Comparison of Council Spend on Empty Homes Officers.
2. Full Councils adoption of the Housing Renewal Strategy in November 2010. The strategy offers owners of empty properties a variety of options including advice and incentives through the provision of an Empty Homes Assistance (See Appendix 3). The assistance will allow the council to offer incentives for owners of empty homes to bring their properties to standard suitable for letting providing the council with nomination rights for five years. In addition the council can negotiate terms on an individual basis. The Strategy also sets the key goals of establishing an empty home strategy and procedure and targets for dealing with empty homes by November 2010.
3. Work is being carried out with council tax to identify long term empty homes. Lists of empty homes have been provided, however, these are in a format which cannot be manipulated and do not give the names and addresses of the owners. As the council operates 4 council tax systems with different reporting mechanism there will be a need to commission bespoke reports and undertake manual extraction of data where the cost of bespoke reports are prohibitively expensive (for example the IT suppliers have quoted £3000 for a suitable report for the East Hub). Once the information is available in the required format then mailings, questionnaires and surveys can be arranged.
4. Arrangement are being made to meet with legal and other departments concerning powers to deal with empty properties which impact different services areas, so that we can agree procedures on how to take this forward. It should be noted that the Law of Property protects the owner's interest in a property or land and as such the council's main tools to encourage reoccupation of empty homes is advice, persuasion, financial help and publicity. There are other options available, some of which can be onerous in terms of staff time and prohibitively expensive for example Compulsory Purchase, Empty Dwelling Management Orders and enforced sale. If the council's objective is to improve the appearance of a location and provide encouragement to owner to do something to their properties then the Town and County Planning Act and Building Act contain options that may be available.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

Not Applicable

Risk Assessment

That there is a risk to the council reputation should adequate measures not be taken by the council to encourage owners of empty properties to bring them back into use. Other risk are considered low.

Financial Implications

None of the costs are expected to increase the cost of the budgets.

Legal Implications

The legal implications will need to be considered on a case by case basis when dealing with empty properties and would need to be in keeping with best practice and legal guidance.

Recommendations

That this report be noted

Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1: Number of Empty Properties

Appendix 2: Comparison of Council's Spend on Empty Homes Officers

Appendix 3: Empty Homes Assistance

Author: James Hudson, Head of Private Sector Housing

Contact Details:01722 434503

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Number of Empty Properties

	Total Nos. of All Empties Properties		% Of Stock All empties		Nos. Private Sector Empty Properties over 6 month		
	April 2007	April 2009	April 2007	April 2009	April 2007	April 2009	Feb 2010
South Hub	1135	1055	2.27	2.08	308	473*	298
West Hub	1406	735	2.5	1.37	442	495	500
North Hub	1492	1346	2.67	2.34	598	548	533
East Hub	1058	844	3.14	2.43	355	371	371**
Wiltshire	5091	3940	2.54	2.0	1703	1887	1702
South West			2.5	2.24			
England			3.1	2.87			

Figures derived from the Housing Statistical return

*The figure provided are incorrect . This was due to coding changes to made on the council tax system which removed the 50% discount for long tem empty properties and replaced it with 90% charge.

** Estimate as figures not available

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Comparison of Council's Spend on Empty Homes Officers

<u>Name of Authority</u>	<u>Job Name</u>	<u>Hours fro Empty Homes Duties</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Total Salaries Mid point</u>	<u>Population 2001 Census</u>	<u>Expenditure per 1000 Popluation</u>
Wiltshire Council	Empty Homes Officer	18.5 hours Part-time	£17,802 - £19,621 pro rata (18.5 hours per week)	£9811.51	455,000	£21.56
Mendip District Council	Empty Homes & Landlords' Liaison Officer	Part-time 18.5 hours	£29,765 pro-rata	£14,882	108,270	£137.41
City of Stoke on Trent	Empty Homes Officer x 2	Full-time	£26,276 - £28,636 £26,276 - £28,636	£54,912	240,636	£228.29
Bristol Council	Empty Homes Officer x 2 (generic job description)	Full-time	£28,500 £28,500	£57,000	421,300	£135.29
Exeter City Council (note comes under development)	Empty Homes Officer	Full-time	£19,621 - £21,519 Grade 6	£63,468	123,500	£513.91
	Temp Empty Homes Partnership Officer	Full-time	£28,000-£30,000 estimated			
	Temp P/T Empty Homes Negotiator	25 hours	£19,621 – 21,519 pro-rata			
Plymouth City Council	Empty Homes Manager	Full-time	£34,500 +House-let Leasing officer & Senior Development Officer	£34,500	241,000	£143.15 Manager only

Southampton City Council In development team	Empty Homes Officer	Full-time	£26,276 - £34,549 (Grade 9)	£30,412.5	234,600	£123.96
Swindon Council	Housing Enabling Officer 70% spent on Empty Homes	Full-time	£20,800 - £24,150 ÷ 70%	£15,732.5	180,000	£87.40

Empty Homes Assistance

Purpose

To provide financial encouragement to owners of empty properties to voluntarily bring them back into use.

Applicant Eligibility

The freeholder or leaseholder of an empty property that has been empty for 6 months or longer. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis and the council would need to undertake a cost benefit analysis to consider whether assistance can be provided.

Eligible Works

Works required will be to bring the property up to both the decent homes standard and to reach a good standard for letting.

Empty Home Grant

100% allowance for eligible works up to £20,000 if the property is let at the Local Housing Allowance level.

50% allowance for eligible works up to £10,000 if let at above the Local Housing Allowance level.

Grant Conditions

It is a condition of the empty homes grant that the property owner lets the property for a period of 5 years for grants of £5,000 and under and 10 years for larger grants.

Discretionary Financial Assistance will be made available subject to funds being available and the following conditions:

- 1.1 The applicant is over 18 years of age and applies for assistance on the forms prescribed by the Wiltshire Council.
- 1.2 The applicant holds either a relevant interest in the property as the Owner, leaseholder or under a trust with repairing obligations. That a leaseholder must have a repairing obligation and have at least five years remaining on the lease.
- 1.3 In the case of a grant of £5,000 or less, that the applicant must make a declaration to let the property for the following 5 years at either the local reference rent or below the local reference rent and agree that if higher rents are received then the assistance provided by the council is repaid.
- 1.4 In the case of a grant of over £5,000 that the applicant must make a declaration to let the property for the following 10 years at either the local reference rent or below the local reference rent and agree that if higher rents are received then the assistance provided by the council is repaid
- 1.5 That the council have nomination rights for a five year period.

- 1.6 That the property is suitably insured throughout the grant condition period.
- 1.7 That there are no unreasonably long periods where the property is left vacant.
- 1.8 In the case of a property held jointly then all those listed with the land registry must be included in the application.
- 1.9 That grants can be made for improvements and repairs to flats, houses and bungalows. Grants will not be offered for other temporary structures, caravans or mobile homes unless they have remaining planning consent of at least 10 years.
- 1.10 A reasonable element of the grant or loan can be used to cover the costs of agency fees, planning and building regulation charges, architectural services, specialists surveys, land registry charges and legal costs unless clients choose to pay these costs themselves.
- 1.11 No works to commence before approval.
- 1.12 Only work assessed by the council as reasonable, practicable, necessary and appropriate will be eligible for assistance.
- 1.13 That the life expectancy of any structural items repaired or replaced should be 20 years or more (except in the case of mechanical items where it may be a shorter period).
- 1.14 That eligible work must be carried out within 12 months of the date of approval.
- 1.15 For work up to £10,000 2 quotes are required. For work above £10,000 three quotes are required.
- 1.16 That the work is completed by the contractor whose estimate accompany the application unless expressly agreed and then the council will reimburse the cheapest price.
- 1.17 The payment of Housing Assistance is conditional upon the authority being provided with an acceptable invoice and the work being completed in a professional and satisfactory manner. The payment will be made directly to the contractor on behalf of the landlord.
- 1.18 It is a condition of Landlords Assistance that an energy efficiency survey of the property is undertaken and that such works that the Authority considers practical, cost effective and that will improve the energy efficiency of the property are carried out.
- 1.19 That the landlord advises the council forthwith of any changes of tenancy.
- 1.20 At completion of the works the landlord may be required to belong to the Wiltshire Landlord Accreditation Scheme
- 1.21 Maximum Grant £20,000.
- 1.22 Grants in excess of £5,000 are repayable if the property is sold within 10 years of completion of the works and will be secured as a charge on the property. Such assistance is only available owners with leasehold or freehold interests in the property where there is sufficient equity in the property to repay the advance at the time of the works being approved by the council. The applicant may choose to fund works in excess of £5,000 themselves.
- 1.23 Successive applications for each property are permitted subject to the maximum grant not being exceeded in any 5 year period.
- 1.24 That the property is let for 5 years.

- 1.25 If successive applications are made and the sum of the applications in any 5 years exceeds £5000 then assistance will only be provided with a legal charge for the full amount advanced unless the applicant chooses to fund the excess over £5,000 themselves.
- 1.26 That it is a condition of the grant that the scheme of work must result in the property being brought up to the decent home standard including all category 1 HHSRS Hazards being addressed. The council in some cases will require category 2 hazards to also be addressed.
- 1.27 Works that would not be eligible include:
- a. Work to non habitable or temporary structures such as conservatories, garages, porches unless they present a category 1 HHSRS hazard. In such circumstances a financial case would need to be made to repair rather than demolish.
 - b. Remedial work following damage, neglect or DIY disasters unless they present a category 1 HHSRS hazard.

Empty Homes Repair and Manage Assistance

Provides an option for owners to lease their property to the council or an agent nominated by the council and have it repaired and improved to a standard suitable for letting. The council or a named agent would manage the property for a set period of time using the rent to pay for the repairs and letting costs throughout the period of lease. Each offer of assistance would be negotiated on a case by case basis. A running account would be maintained by the council or named agent. Any surpluses returned to the owner. The property would at the end of the lease period be returned to the landlord in the improved condition ready to sale or let.

The cost of refurbishment should not exceed £20,000. The property would be let at the local reference rent.

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WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

**ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE
2 MARCH 2009**

CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE

Executive Summary

This report provides an update to members on progress against climate change objectives and the resources available to deliver these objectives as requested following the report presented on 3 November 2009.

Proposal

That the Committee notes the information in this report on:

- a) progress made against climate change objectives
- b) proposed work programme for 2010/11
- c) resources available to deliver against climate change objectives

Reason for Proposal

A briefing on carbon trading and resourcing of the climate change team was provided to members of the Select Committee on 3 November 2009. Members requested a progress update to be made available at their meeting of 2 March 2010.

ALISTAIR CUNNINGHAM

Service Director, Economy and Enterprise

CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE

Purpose of Report

1. To update members on:
 - a) progress made against climate change objectives
 - b) proposed work programme for 2010/11
 - c) resources available to deliver against climate change objectives

Background

2. In November 2009, the Committee considered a report on carbon trading and the resources available to the climate change team. Members requested an update at the March 2010 meeting.
3. Since the November meeting of the Committee, the Audit Commission has stated that climate change will be an area of focus for the Comprehensive Area Assessment in 2010.

Progress against Climate Change Objectives

4. The Climate Change Board, chaired by Cllr Toby Sturgis, has approved the following objectives for the climate change team:
 1. Reduce the council's carbon footprint
 2. Work with partners to reduce Wiltshire's carbon footprint
 3. Ensure that Wiltshire is prepared for unavoidable climate change
 4. Prepare the council for carbon trading

Good progress has been made on all four objectives since the Climate Change team was set up in April 2009, as set out below.

Reducing the council's carbon footprint

5. The council has been working with the Carbon Trust since May 2009 to develop a carbon management plan which will be agreed by Cabinet in April 2010. As part of this process, the Climate Change Board has agreed a draft emissions reduction target against NI185 (which measures the council's own carbon footprint). The CO₂ emissions during 2008/09 were approximately 60,000 tonnes. The target is for the council to reduce its carbon footprint by 25% by 2013/2014 and by 50% by 2020.
6. The council has also signed up to the 10:10 campaign which commits it to aim to reduce emissions by 10% during 2010/11 (excluding schools and outsourced services).
7. An action plan has been developed to enable the council to improve its score in the Use of Resources assessment under Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) 3.1 – use of natural resources.

Reducing Wiltshire's carbon footprint

8. The council is working with the Energy Saving Trust through its one to one programme to reduce the whole county's carbon footprint. The work with the Energy Saving Trust will model current and future carbon emissions across the county and help the council determine how best to tackle emissions reduction using this data. The Energy Saving Trust has completed a review of the council's services which directly impact on the county's carbon emissions, either through contact with customers or through planning-type functions. A number of recommendations have come out of the report and have been considered by the multi-disciplinary officer working group 'Act on Carbon' in February 2010. These will form the basis of an interim action plan, which will be refined and developed further during 2010/11. The Energy Saving Trust will support the council to develop its carbon reduction plan for the county over the next 12 months, and will then provide support for implementation for a further 12 months.
9. A two-year partnership project to make 43 Wessex Brigade more sustainable has been agreed and is being taken forward under the Military Civilian Integration Programme
10. The council has commissioned a climate change and renewable energy evidence base study. This is designed to principally fulfil the requirements of the Climate Change Supplement to PPS 1. The study is collecting data on current and future energy use in the county; assessing the supply of low carbon and zero carbon sources of energy; and making policy and target recommendations for incorporating in the Local Development Framework. The consultants Camco are expected to report by end of April 2010.
11. Member training on Planning and Climate Change will take place on the afternoon of 24 March. Officer training has also been arranged relating to Planning and Climate Change for policy and development management planners for the 26 March and 12 April.
12. A project to loan energy display monitors from libraries was launched on 8 February 2010. Over 40 monitors are available for residents to loan using their library card from 7 libraries across the county. The scheme will be reviewed after an initial 4 month pilot period. The demand for the monitors is such that all were loaned out on the day the pilot was launched and there is now a waiting list in many locations.
13. In December, the council submitted a bid to the national Low Carbon Communities Challenge with Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon. The bid was unfortunately unsuccessful, but the council continues to support the community group with their carbon neutral declaration.

Ensuring that Wiltshire is prepared for unavoidable climate change

14. The council has included a target in its Local Area Agreement to develop a climate change adaptation plan with partners by 31 March 2011 (Level 3 / 4 of NI 188). This is a challenging target given that climate change adaptation is a new area of work and that the authority has until recently been at Level 0

against this indicator (see Appendix 1). However, success will help ensure the council is well placed to benefit from any future performance reward grants. An initial consultation document on developing a climate change adaptation plan was circulated in December 2009 and the results are currently being analysed. A report is being prepared to fulfil the requirements of Level 1 of NI188. This will include: a summary of the initial consultation findings; a review of key council documents for how they are already addressing the risks of unavoidable climate change; a profile of the likely future impacts of climate change in Wiltshire; and a detailed project plan for completing NI188 Level 2. The council is on track to meet its interim target of reaching Level 1 by the end of March 2010.

15. The climate change team have been making presentations to Departmental Management Teams about the need to develop a climate change adaptation plan and will be presenting to the LSP Thematic Delivery Partnerships during Spring 2010.
16. A Climate Change Adaptation Steering Group will be formed in April 2010. A workshop, to be run by the Climate Outreach and Information Network (COIN), will be run in May 2010. This will help raise awareness across the council of how unavoidable impacts of climate change will affect the council in the future and gain buy-in from departments for preparing the action plan.

Preparing the council for carbon trading

17. The mandatory Carbon Reduction Commitment (Energy Efficiency Scheme) comes into force on 1 April 2010. Under the CRC the council will therefore be corporately responsible for carbon emissions arising from the consumption of gas and electricity in all its buildings (including schools) and from street lighting (but excluding transport). A league table will be published in October every year starting in 2011 showing the relative performance of all organisations taking part in the scheme nationally, and councils will be compared against large companies such as supermarket chains. Good performance will be achieved through demonstrating a year on year reduction in emissions from April 2011 onwards. For the first year of the scheme (baseline year April 2010 – March 2011), performance will be assessed through the proxy measure of how many Smart meters have been installed (meters that measure gas and electricity supply and send readings automatically back to the supplier). The council's performance in the league table is difficult to predict because it will be relative to what other organisations do. However, the council is committed to doing everything it can to secure a good position in the league table in order to minimise any financial penalties and preserve its reputation.
18. The council is taking part in a Carbon Trading simulation for 2009-10 run by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU). This exercise has enabled the council to get to grips with the complexities of carbon trading and to develop a trading strategy. Wiltshire council was one of only 15 organisations (out of 98 taking part) to successfully bid for all allowances needed to cover forecast emissions for the whole of 2009-10. The council will be taking part in a more sophisticated version of the simulation with LGIU during 2010/11.

19. Through the CRC scheme, at the end of each trading year, we must hold enough allowances to cover our emissions or face fines. If we hold more allowances than we need, we may trade the excess allowances on the scheme's open market. If we do not hold enough, we will have to buy more. Prices on the open market may go up or down and there are therefore financial risks to not being on top of our energy consumption / carbon emissions.
20. The focus for the council during the reporting year 2010/11 will be on putting in place adequate systems to capture data on energy consumption and our carbon emissions from buildings and streetlights. To this end, the council's Property services are procuring Smart meters for all non-schools buildings that meet the council's criteria for Smart metering¹ through the OGC framework contract with British Gas. British Gas will be installing the Smart meters over the next 4 months.
21. Initial conversations have been held with schools finance officers and the Service Director for Schools over the best approach for installing Smart meters in schools, which account for 40% of the council's footprint under the CRC. The proposal is for the council to bear the financial risk in the first year of carbon trading by budgeting corporately for carbon allowances and any risk or reward, to include schools carbon emissions. In return, schools will be requested to lease Smart meters directly from British Gas at a cost of £90-£105 per electricity meter and £77-£110 per gas meter (cost depends on type of meter). The benefits of Smart meters to Wiltshire schools are that:
- they eliminate the need for estimated billing, meaning that schools will only pay for the energy they actually use, thereby saving approximately 2% on bills.
 - they will enable the Energy Team to work with schools to monitor gas and electricity use and identify areas where consumption is unusually high and therefore savings can be made.
 - all data will be logged and accessible online as a teaching aid. Pupils will be able to track the impact of any energy saving behaviour or measures over time.

Proposed work programme for 2010/11

22. The proposed work programme for the Climate Change team in 2010/11 is set out in Appendix 2.
23. A number of initiatives will help meet the council's objectives for both carbon reduction and climate change adaptation; therefore these are included at the end in the 'cross-cutting' objective.

Resources to deliver against climate change objectives

24. The council's budget for 2010/11 has been agreed by Cabinet at the time of writing this report, to include £400,000 revenue funding for the Climate Change team and £500,000 capital for a corporate carbon reduction

¹ Buildings meet the council's criteria for Smart meters if they are: not ear-marked for disposal; are larger than 100m²; spend a minimum of £200 pa on energy; are owned by the council.

programme. Subject to approval by Full Council, it is proposed to spend the budget in the following way:

- **£323,000 for staffing** - 7.6 FTE permanent staff and 1 FTE two year fixed term post (see proposed structure in Appendix 3).
- **£77,000 implementation budget** to obtain ISO 14001 accreditation, for project implementation & match funding for bids, as well as staff training and expenses / supplies and services.
- **£500,000 capital** for a corporate carbon reduction programme.

25. One half time post of Climate Change Community Officer is funded by DCS in addition to the climate change team budget, making a total staff complement of 8.1 FTE.

26. In addition to these resources, the following external funding has been obtained:

- **£52,000** revenue funding from the Carbon Trust to carry out energy efficiency **surveys** of 44 key sites, including schools.
- **£352,000 capital** 0% interest loan from Salix Finance for 3 energy efficiency projects in leisure centres and one to convert 1600 bollards to LED technology.
- a bid to Salix Finance for **£500,000 match funding** for the corporate carbon reduction programme is at application stage. This is likely to be approved and will be used to set up a £1 million 0% interest, revolving fund which can be loaned out for energy efficiency projects in council buildings and schools. Bristol City Council have had considerable success with a similar internal loan fund.

27. Costs for the team's work should be seen in the context of the authority's overall spend on energy and transport of over £13m per year, which the team will be working to reduce. The Value at Stake calculations for the carbon management plan show that compared with business as usual increases in costs, the authority could avoid costs of £16.4m over the next 5 years if it meets its target to reduce emissions by 25% by 2013/14(see Appendix 4).

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

28. The aim of the Climate Change team is to limit carbon emissions from the council and from the county overall, which will have a positive impact on the environment.

Equality and Diversity Impact of the Proposal

29. The work that the council is doing to reduce fuel poverty benefits disadvantaged groups in the community.

Financial Implications

30. Resourcing implications are set out above. Financial implications of the CRC were set out in the November 2009 report.

Legal Implications

31. The Council is legally required to take part in the Carbon Reduction Commitment trading scheme.

Options Considered

32. Doing nothing on climate change is not an option due to the following considerations:
 1. the council's performance on climate change plays a key role in the Comprehensive Area Assessment, Local Area Agreement and Use of Resources (Key Line of Enquiry 3.1);
 2. the council will incur fines and penalties under the Carbon Reduction Commitment if it does not take immediate action to measure and reduce its carbon emissions.
 3. Cumulative costs of up to £16.4m for energy and transport could be avoided by 2013/14 if the council meets its emission reduction targets.

Conclusion

33. While significant progress has been made during 2009/10 on developing a climate change work programme, additional resources are required for 2010/11 to deliver on this challenging and growing agenda. The capital and revenue budgets recently approved by Cabinet will enable the climate change team to deliver during 2010/11 and beyond.

ALISTAIR CUNNINGHAM

Service Director, Economy and Enterprise

Ariane Crampton

Head of Climate Change

Background Papers

1. Updates to Environment Select Committee 1 September 2009 and 3 November 2009
2. Draft Carbon Management Plan for Wiltshire Council February 2010
3. Briefing to the Wiltshire Environmental Alliance on NI186, December 2009
4. Energy Saving Trust report & recommendations for Wiltshire Council, Jan 10
5. CRC user guide January 2010:
http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/what_we_do/lc_uk/crc/user_guidance/
6. Wiltshire Climate Change Adaptation Plan – initial consultation, December 09

7. LGA/Defra/UKCIP booklet for Members on climate change adaptation Jan 10:
<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/publications/publication-display.do?id=7759710>
8. Briefing on Salix Finance for the Climate Change Board, Nov 2009

Appendices

1. Summary of the requirements of national indicator 188 – Adapting to Unavoidable Climate Change
2. Outline work programme for the Climate Change team 2010/11
3. Proposed Climate Change Team structure from 1 April 2010
4. Value at Stake graph from carbon management plan

Appendix 1

Summary of the requirements of national indicator 188 – Adapting to Unavoidable Climate Change

Level	Description/ Requirement
0	Getting Started
0.1	Initial Project Planning
0.2	Engagement of Community, Service Users and Key LSP Partners
0.3	Scoping Project Resources
0.4	Identifying a Baseline
0.5	Supplementary Aim - Developing a Vision
1	Public Commitment and Impacts Assessment - Assembling an Evidence Base
1.1	Include other Expertise, Leadership and Public Commitment
1.2	Understanding Current Vulnerability
1.3	Identifying Some Significant Potential Impacts from Future Weather and Climate
1.4	Sharing the Load and Ongoing Project Planning
1.5	Supplementary Aim - Monitoring Future Impacts
1.6	Supplementary Aim - Weather and Climate Database
2	Comprehensive Risk Assessment
2.1	Comprehensive Assessment of Potential Impacts
2.2	The Risk-Based Assessment Revealing Priority Issues
2.3	Identify Priority Actions
2.4	Implement Priority Actions
2.5	Integrate LSP Partners
2.6	Supplementary Aim - Monitor New Business
2.7	Supplementary Aim - Monitor Effectiveness of Early Adaptation Measures
3	Comprehensive Action Plan (and prioritised action plan in priority areas)
3.1	Developing a Comprehensive Adaptation Action Plan
3.2	Embedding Climate Risks into Decision Making
3.3	Implementing Adaptation Responses
3.4	Supporting LSP and Partner Organisations
4	Implementation, Monitoring and Continuous Review
4.1	Monitoring Implementation of Plan
4.2	Monitoring Performance of Adaptation Actions
4.3	Review and Updating of Plans

Appendix 2

Outline work programme for the Climate Change team

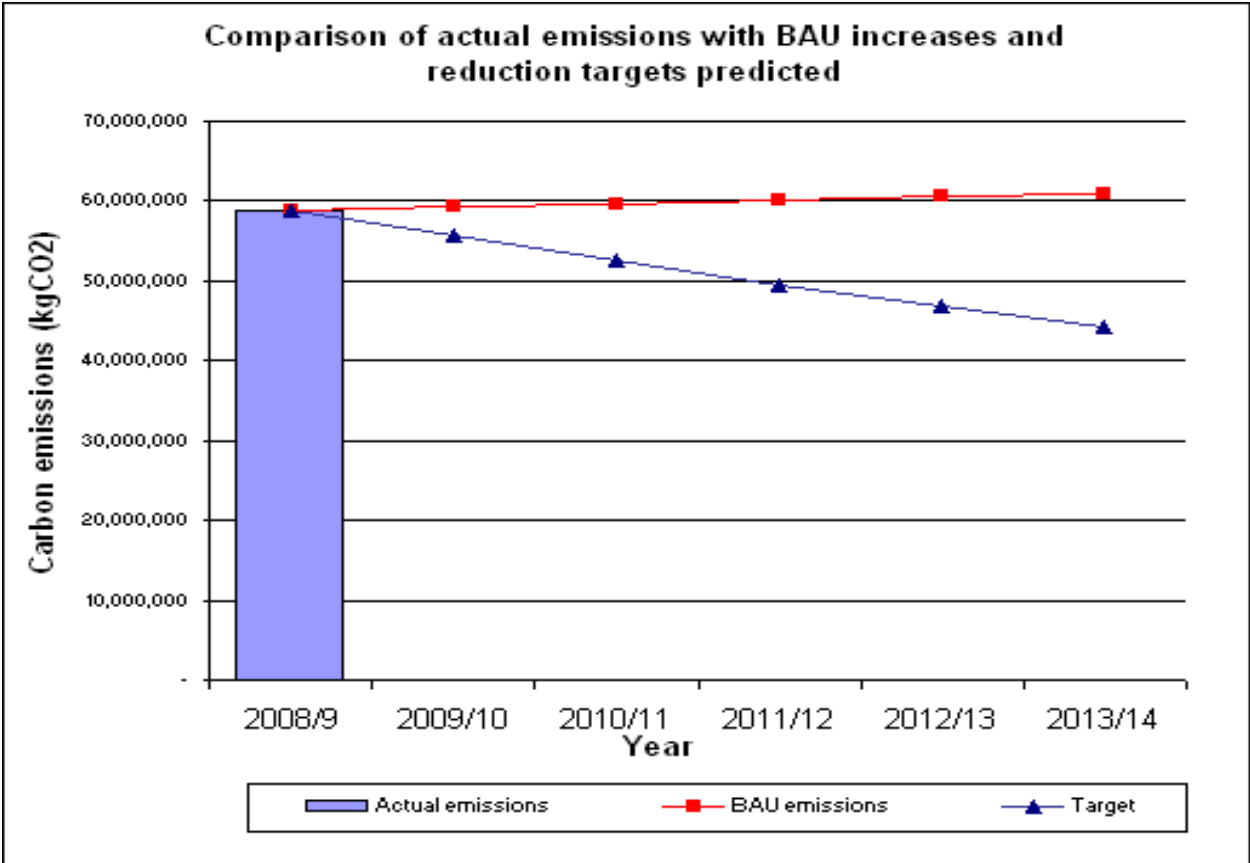
Objective	Task	Timescale
Policy & Strategy	Develop a framework climate change strategy for the council, including key legislative drivers and evidence base.	June 2010
	Revise the council's environmental policy	May 2010
Reducing the council's carbon footprint	Finalise carbon management plan – 5 year carbon reduction plan which aligns with workplace transformation, leisure centre review, etc	Cabinet - 20 April 10
	Set up Salix revolving fund and implement projects, incl in schools	March 10
	Identification of new projects through energy efficiency surveys, transport projects etc	On-going
	Use of Resources KLOE 3.1 – implement action plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff engagement • Standard brief for new build and refurbishments • Reduce council's own waste • Env'tal impact considered in all reports to committee (guidance developed) • Green procurement strategy 	March 11
	Develop an EMS for former TEL services	March 11
	Improve data quality for council's carbon footprint	April 10
	Staff campaign	From March 10
Reducing Wiltshire's carbon footprint	Develop carbon reduction plan for the county	Dec 10
	Identify opportunities for renewables in Wiltshire (Camco study)	March 10
	Partnership for Renewables – stage 1 desktop study	May 10
Prepare for unavoidable Climate Change	Level 0/1 against NI 188	End Mar 10
	Comprehensive Risk Assessment & Local Climate Impacts Profile – Level 2	End July 10
	Adaptation action plan – Level 3	End Mar 11
Preparing for CRC	Smart meters in all non school properties meeting the criteria set out on page 4 (see footnote)	March 11
	Smart meters in schools	March 11
	Registration for CRC	Sept 10
	Take part in LGIU carbon trading simulation	Until March 2011
	Carbon trading strategy agreed	Jan 11

Objective	Task	Timescale
Cross-cutting: Partnership working	Embedding carbon reduction and climate change adaptation in Wiltshire Family of Partnerships	On-going
	Work with businesses on carbon reduction/resource efficiency and CC adaptation	From Oct 10
	Work with Area Boards and Community Partnerships to develop climate change projects and develop capacity at a local level for dealing with unavoidable climate change	On-going
	Partnership project to green the Army (with 43 Wessex Brigade)	April 12
	Develop networks and projects to take advantage of EU funding opportunities	On-going
	Support the Wiltshire Environmental Alliance	On-going

Appendix 4

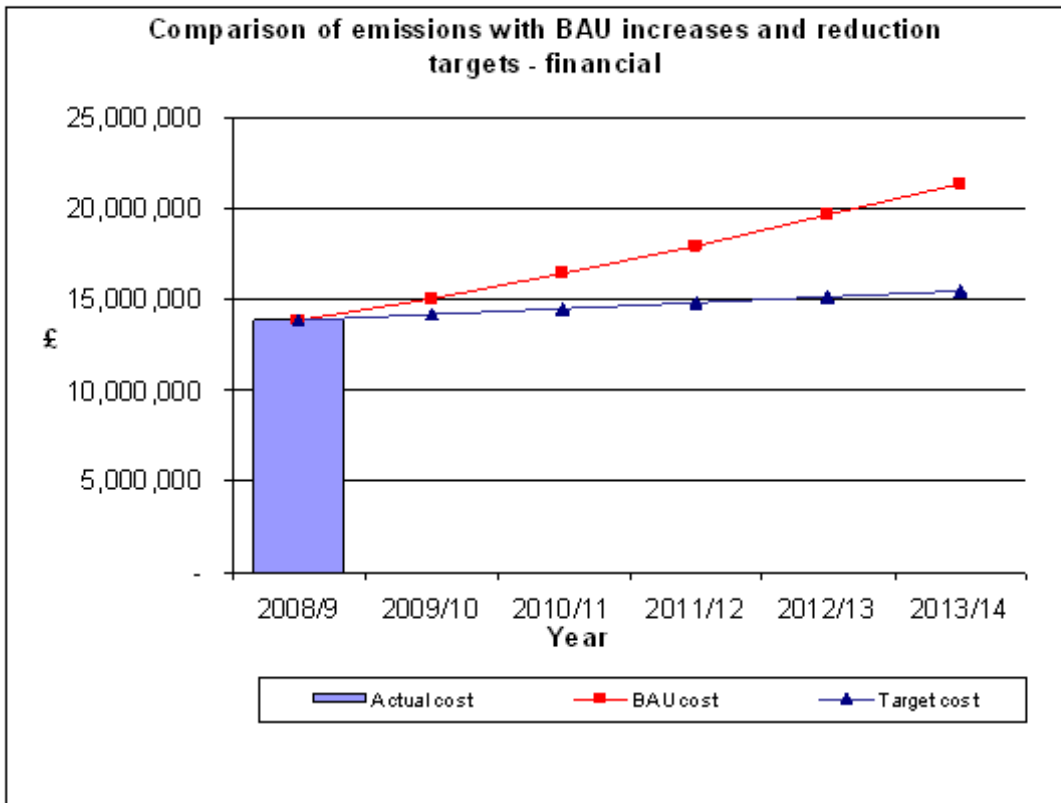
Comparison of business as usual scenario and reduced emissions scenario

Baseline CO₂ emissions for 2008/2009 are 58,874 tonnes with an energy cost of £13.8m



Graph 1: Comparison of business as usual emissions and CO₂ reduction targets.

This graph shows the predicted growth in CO₂ emissions under the 'Business as Usual' scenario from 58, 874 tonnes to 60,964 tonnes. Under the reduced emissions scenario emissions are predicted to be 44,156 tonnes CO₂ by the end of the plan period.



Graph 2: Comparison of business as usual financial increase with reduction targets

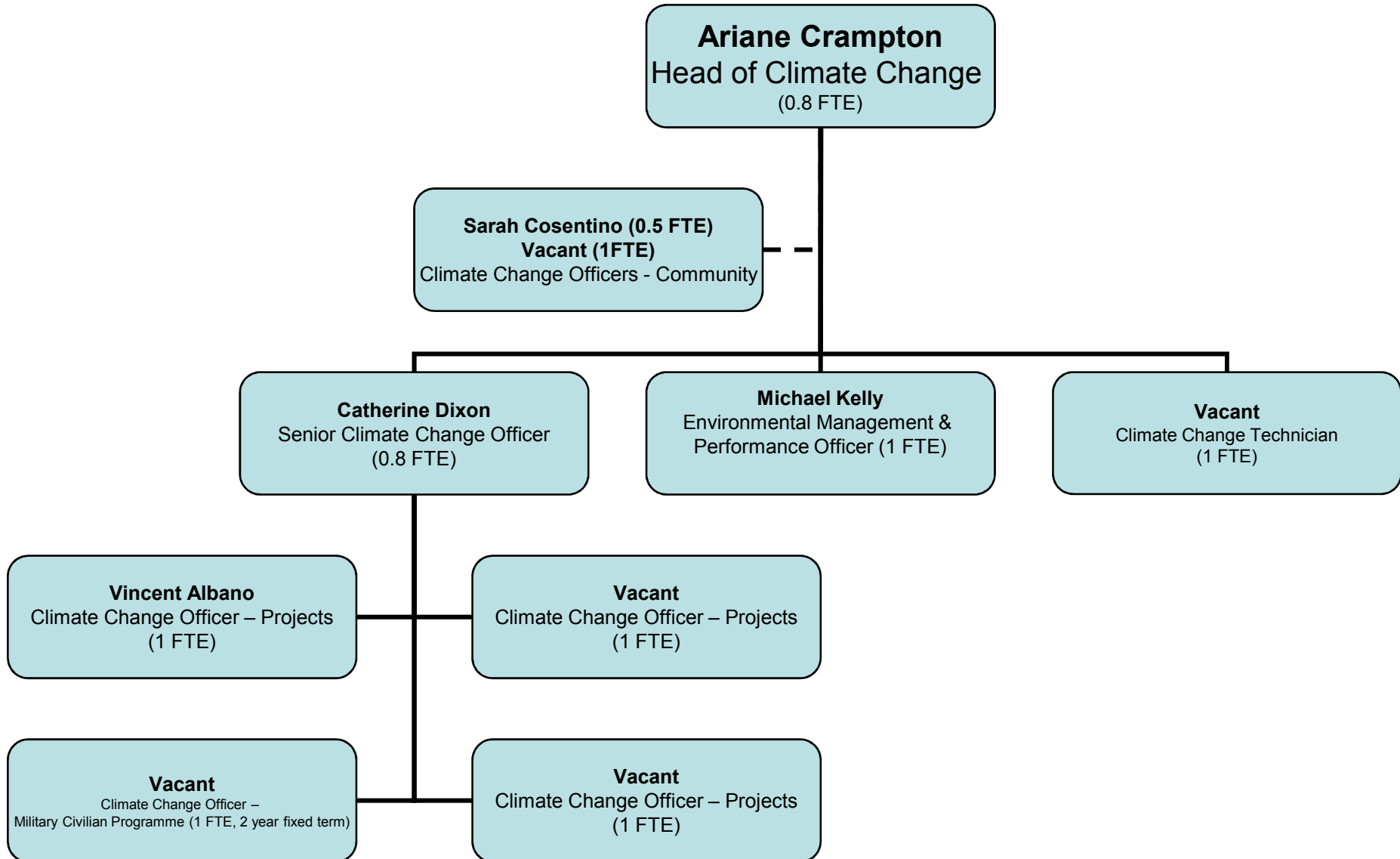
This graph shows the predicted growth in the Council's energy and transport bill under the 'Business as Usual' scenario from £13.8m to £21.3m. Under the reduced emissions scenario, the council's energy and transport bill is predicted to be approximately £15.5m (assuming an 8.4% increase in costs – DECC source).

The first five-year phase of Wiltshire Council's carbon management plan aims to reduce CO₂ emissions by 25% by 2015, equating to 44,000 tCO₂ saved and a cumulative total of £16.4m avoided on energy and transport costs.

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Proposed Climate Change Team Structure

(From April 2010)



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WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE 2 MARCH 2010

FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Purpose of Report

1. To inform the committee of the current position with regard to flooding risk management and response arrangements within Wiltshire.

Background

2. A report on the proposals for Flood Risk Management was submitted to the Committee on 11 September 2009. The report outlined the proposed arrangements for flood risk management for Wiltshire Council and provided an update on progress with regard to the Pitt Review recommendations.
3. The report was noted and the Committee requested that an update report be presented to the March 2010 meeting.

Main Considerations for the Council

Work in Progress

Pitt Review

4. Details of the current situation regarding progress made on the recommendations of the Pitt Review are set out at **Appendix 1**.
5. A significant amount of work is being carried out to collate the information required to enable Wiltshire Council to prepare for and plan its response to flooding events.
6. The Local Resilience Forum Flood Plan prepared by the Council's Emergency Planning Unit (EPU) has gone out to partner agencies for consultation and will be presented to the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Executive Group for approval in the near future.
7. A draft plan for Wiltshire Council is being prepared. This plan will replace the plan written by Wiltshire County Council in conjunction with the four district councils. It will incorporate roles and responsibilities for services within the Council and also establish protocols for offering assistance and advice to the public.

Operational Flood Working Groups

8. Since the report to the meeting in September, the North Operational Flood Working Group (OFWG) has met three times and the South OFWG has met once. Items discussed at these meetings included:
 - Sharing of work schedules
 - Wilts & Berkshire Canal Scheme
 - Funding bids
 - Engaging Town and Parish Councils to attend meetings
 - Areas of concern
 - Flood Fair
 - Publicity

- Flood defence and levy funding
- Catchment flood management plans
- Flood mapping plans

Flood Risk Management Group

9. Due to the reorganisation of the Departments of Transport, Environment and Leisure (TEL) and Economic Development, Planning and Housing (EDPH) within the Council the arrangements for this Group are still being finalised. This forum will meet when a Weather and Drainage Manager has been recruited.

Surface Water Management Plans

10. The Flood and Water Management Bill will place a duty on local authorities to prepare surface water management plans. Wiltshire Council's Highways, Land Drainage and Emergency Planning teams are gathering information on known areas where surface water flooding has occurred within Wiltshire in the last three years.
11. Detail of river flooding information is available in the Environment Agency Flood Warning plan for Wiltshire.
12. Other information being gathered includes:
 - Flood mapping provided by the Environment Agency (EA)
 - Information from Parish and Town Councils
 - Incidents attended by the Fire & Rescue Service
13. The EA intends to make all their records of surface water events available to local authorities via a web site.
14. A letter with an accompanying questionnaire has been prepared to send to Parish and Town Councils requesting local information on flooding issues. A copy of the questionnaire is included as **Appendix 2**.
15. The Fire & Rescue Service have been requested to provide details of all flooding incidents they have attended in the last three years.

Flood Fair

16. As part of the process to engage communities in resilience planning, it is intended to hold a Flood Fair for up to 160 participants.
17. Speakers attending will be from the EA, National Flood Forum, Met Office, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service and Wiltshire Council Emergency Planning.
18. The Water Authorities and members of the Operational Flood Working Group (OFWG) will also be invited to attend and put up displays during the event.

Flood Wardens

19. The Environment Agency Wessex Region established a network of flood wardens in the south of the county in 2003. This is not a national EA initiative and wardens are not in place throughout the county. Flood wardens are the point of contact for the parishes for flooding matters and are trained by the EA on how to form a local flood working group and prepare a flood plan.

20. Discussions have taken place with the EA with the intention of establishing flood wardens throughout the county. The EA have agreed to continue conducting the training and the Emergency Planning Unit (EPU) will administer the flood warden scheme. It is hoped that some of the Community Emergency Volunteers currently registered with the EPU will volunteer for this new role.
21. A training and publicity programme is required to roll this initiative out throughout the county and will be considered after the Flood Fair has taken place. One of the objectives of the Flood Fair is to recruit eight Flood Wardens in response to a request for volunteers.

Grant Applications

22. DEFRA has allocated five million pounds of grant funding for local flood alleviation work nationally. Applications have been made for specific areas within Wiltshire. Details of the application process for funding and applications to date are shown at **Appendix 3**.

Drainage Works

23. The Council is carrying out an extensive programme of drainage improvement works at locations with known drainage problems. The 2009/10 budget of £500,000 for land drainage is significantly larger than that expended on land drainage issues in previous years.
24. Wiltshire Council is an acknowledged leader in the field of highways drainage management, and together with Gloucestershire County Council and Swindon Borough Council is sharing this expertise with other authorities in the south west and nationally.
25. The programme of highway drainage surveys and repairs has continued in 2009/10 and has been linked to the land drainage works programme to provide a combined approach to addressing drainage problems.
26. Working with other organisations, including the EA, Highways Agency and Network Rail, through the OFWGs offers the opportunity to co-ordinate the works of all agencies to reduce flood risk.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

27. Flooding can have serious environmental consequences. Those designing and building schemes to reduce flood risk will need to take into account the potential environmental impacts of those works, and seek to achieve environmental improvements where possible.

Risk Assessment

28. Flooding represents a potentially serious risk to public safety and to property, and it is important that appropriate steps are taken to reduce risks and respond effectively to incidents.

Financial Implications

29. It is anticipated that complying with the recommendations of the Pitt Review and the Flooding and Water Management Bill will result in the Authority incurring significant additional costs. The Council highlighted the need for additional resources in its response to the Government's consultation on the draft Flood and Water Management Bill.

Legal Implications

30. The Council has statutory duties as local land drainage authority, and in connection with the drainage aspects of planning and highways.

GEORGE BATTEN

Corporate Director for Transport, Environment & Leisure

Report Author

John Edwards

Deputy County Emergency Planning Officer

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report:

DEFRA Government Grants for local authorities for household level flood risk mitigation guidance

The Government's Response to Sir Michael Pitt's Review of the summer 2007 Floods Progress Report December 2009

RESPONSE TO PITT REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Pitt Recommendation	Government Response Update June 09	Wiltshire Council Response/Status
<p>7: There should be a presumption against building in high flood risk areas, in accordance with PPS25, including giving consideration to all sources of flood risk, and ensuring that developers make a full contribution to the costs both of building and maintaining any necessary defences.</p>	<p>Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS25), published in December 2006, sets out the national planning policy in respect of new development and flood risk.</p>	<p>Practice guidance to support PPS25 was published in June 2008.</p>
<p>8: The operation and effectiveness of PPS25 and the Environment Agency's (EA) powers to challenge development should be kept under review and strengthened if and when necessary.</p>	<p>The Government carried out an initial review and evaluation of the implementation of PPS25 to establish its efficacy in incorporating flood risk considerations into planning. The review found that where the EA had initially objected to planning applications on flood risk grounds, the final planning decision was in line with Agency advice in nearly 97% of cases in 2007/08. This is an improvement over the two preceding years. In 9 out of 10 cases where the Agency has sustained a flood risk objection, the final outcome was in line with Agency advice.</p>	<p>Local planning authorities, directed through the Chief Planning Officer, have been asked to continue to monitor PPS25 and offer feedback on how well PPS25 is working. They are also asked to note any significant barriers to the delivery of its policies.</p>
<p>9: Householders should no longer be able to lay impermeable surfaces as of right on front gardens and the Government should consult on extending this to back gardens and business premises.</p>	<p>Changes were made to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.</p>	<p>As from 1 October 2008, householders in England can lay permeable surfaces without planning permission. Impermeable surfaces, where the surface area exceeds five square metres, require specific approval from the local planning authority.</p>
<p>10: The automatic right to connect</p>	<p>Removal of the automatic right to connect</p>	

Pitt Recommendation	Government Response Update June 09	Wiltshire Council Response/Status
surface water drainage of new developments to the sewerage system should be removed.	surface water drainage of new developments to the sewerage system is contained in the draft Flood and Water Management Bill.	
11: Building Regulations should be revised to ensure that all new or refurbished buildings in high flood-risk areas are flood-resistant or resilient.	Government is looking at how the Building Regulations might be amended so new or refurbished buildings in high flood risk areas are made more flood resistant or resilient. We continue to examine appropriate options for consultation this summer.	Changes to building regulations after consultation are expected in 2010 and 2011.
12: All local authorities should extend eligibility for home improvement grants and loans to include flood resistance and resilience products for properties in high flood-risk areas.	The first tranche of applications for home improvement grants and loans, which include flood resistance and resilience products, were assessed by the EA. An announcement was made in August 2009 of successful applications.	Further applications were made in December 2009. Details are given at Appendix 3 .
13: Local authorities, in discharging their responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 to promote business continuity, should encourage the take-up of property flood resistance and resilience by businesses.	The National Risk Register (published in August 2008) also emphasised the risks posed by flooding.	Guidance is published on the Wiltshire Council website. Two attempts to hold seminars for local businesses resulted in a take up by 7 companies. A Flood Fair is planned and this item will be covered in the Emergency Planning Briefing. Highways have prepared further information on flooding to be put onto the council website.
14: Local authorities should lead on the management of local flood risk, with the support of the relevant organisations.	The draft Flood and Water Management Bill (published 21 April 09) sets out the roles and responsibilities for local authorities to recommendations 14 to 18. The Government proposes in its draft Bill to create a "Lead Local Flood Authority" which will be required to:	Flood Groups established in North and South Wiltshire. Links are in place with the EA community Flood Wardens. Flood warden scheme to be extended throughout the county.
15: Local authorities should positively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop, maintain and apply a strategy 	Flood groups have been set up in the north of

Pitt Recommendation	Government Response Update June 09	Wiltshire Council Response/Status
tackle local problems of flooding by working with all relevant parties, establishing ownership and legal responsibility.	<p>for local flood risk management, which will include risks from surface runoff, groundwater and ordinary watercourses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfil the requirements of the EU Floods Directive in relation to these sources of flood risk, including a requirement to draw up management plans for those areas where risk is significant. 	the county in areas subject to recent flooding. The Groups involve Parish Councils, EA and others. Groups need to be set up in other areas of the county, especially those at most risk of flooding.
16: Local authorities should collate and map the main flood risk management and drainage assets (over and underground), including a record of their ownership and condition.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate flooding incidents to understand the cause and ensure that appropriate bodies play their role in effective management of the flooding and recovery. 	<p>Surveying of highway drainage assets has been underway for some years. Information on flood risk areas and drainage assets has been collected in connection with the move to One Council. Only limited information is available on drainage assets, and surveying could take many years to complete.</p> <p>Awaiting further national guidance.</p>
17: All relevant organisations should have a duty to share information and cooperate with local authorities and the EA to facilitate the management of flood risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain a register of structures which may affect a flood risk with a record of information about each of the structures, including details of ownership and state of repair. 	<p>The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 imposes a duty for all Category 1 and 2 Responders to share information. It is anticipated that the Flood & Water Bill will include this requirement. Government Office for the South West (GOSW) has been approached to consider regional action with Category 2 responders.</p>
18: Local Surface Water Management Plans, as set out under PPS25 and coordinated by local authorities, should provide the basis for managing all local flood risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve and adopt sustainable drainage systems that meet national standards for new development. <p>In relation to recommendation 17 and 18 six local authorities were chosen to receive support in producing surface water management plans. Local authorities were testing draft surface water management plan guidance which was published in March 2009. The pilots also tested arrangements for co-operation and sharing information between partners to the plan. Funding for an additional 77 SWMPs was announced in August 2009.</p>	<p>The Flood Risk Management Group to lead. Further clarification of roles and responsibilities for carrying out this work is expected in the Flood and Water Management Bill.</p>
19: Local authorities should assess and, if appropriate, enhance their	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has been working	Concern on ability to resource. Awaiting further national guidance

Pitt Recommendation	Government Response Update June 09	Wiltshire Council Response/Status
technical capabilities to deliver a wide range of responsibilities in relation to local flood risk management.	with local authorities (LAs) to understand its current capacity and technical capability, including holding four workshops with local authorities earlier this year. DEFRA has launched a scoping study to look at broad options for improving LA capacity, and is considering what more can be done to enhance LA flood risk management skills. In addition, DEFRA announced on 8 June funding for 27 places for local authority participants in the existing Environment Agency Foundation Degree programme and other local flood risk management training. This will help ensure that local communities have the expertise they need to help protect themselves from flooding.	Funding issues associated with taking on the additional responsibilities outlined in the draft Bill. Council flood and drainage budgets are currently stretched and without significant additional revenue and capital funding the Council will find it difficult to undertake the full scope of what is proposed.
24: The Government should develop a scheme which allows and encourages local communities to invest in flood risk management measures.	Full proposals on Sustainable Drainage Systems, including unitary and county local authorities to take on ownership and maintenance for them are contained in the draft Flood and Water Management Bill, which was issued for consultation 21 April 2009.	The Flood Risk Management Group to consider this recommendation. Concern expressed about resource implications.
26: The Government should develop a single set of guidance for local authorities and the public on the use and usefulness of sandbags and other alternatives, rather than leaving the matter wholly to local discretion.	The EA has developed a single set of guidance on the use and usefulness of sandbags, which has been published on the EA website and will be distributed to Local Resilience Forums in July (this is swine flu dependent and outwith EA control). Additional guidance on self-help protection for householders, businesses and building contractors expected in the Autumn.	Sandbags are not considered the best option. 5000 Aqua sacs have been purchased and are held by the Highways Service. A policy decision on whether Wiltshire Council will issue sandbags to the public is required and will be an agenda item for the Flood Risk Management Group.
28: The forthcoming flooding legislation should be a single unifying Act that addresses all sources of	The Government published its draft Flood and Water Management Bill on 21 April 2009. This covers all sources of flooding,	The general principles of the bill are welcomed. Concern was expressed about the resource

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flooding, clarifies responsibilities and facilitates flood risk management.	clarifies responsibilities and facilitates flood risk management. As currently drafted the Bill would not lead to a “single unifying Act” but the intention is that the resulting legislation that is introduced to Parliament will build on this – including taking account of the responses to consultation on the draft Bill and other issues – to lead to a “single unifying Act”.	implications for the Council. The Flood and Water Management Bill went before Parliament on 19 November 2009. Due to constraints on parliamentary time the Bill will only address the most pressing unifying legislation as recommended in the Pitt Review.
38: Local authorities should establish mutual aid agreements in accordance with the guidance currently being prepared by the Local Government Association and the Cabinet Office.	To encourage Local Authorities to establish mutual aid agreements, a working group comprising Local Government Association, Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and Cabinet Office developed guidance, ‘Mutual Aid – A short guide for local authorities’, which was published in December 2008.	Existing arrangements require more formal approach. Service level agreements or Memorandum of Understanding are required.
41: Upper tier local authorities should be the lead responders in relation to multi-agency planning for severe weather emergencies at the local level and for triggering multi-agency arrangements in response to severe weather warnings and local impact assessments.	Ongoing local implementation supported by the revision of the “Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance” which states that county and unitary local authorities should be lead responders for multi-agency severe weather emergency planning. Consultation on the revised guidance closed in April 2009, with final updates planned for this summer.	Emergency Planning is currently leading on the development of the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) multi-agency flood plan, however, the Joint LRF Incident Procedures Guide stipulates that any organisation can trigger multi-agency arrangements in response to any emergency and the Flood Group proposes this should remain the approach taken.
42: Where a Gold Command is established for severe weather events, the police, unless agreed otherwise locally, should convene and lead the multi-agency response.		Standard response as covered in the Joint Incident Procedures Guide.
43: Gold Commands should be established at an early stage on a precautionary basis where there is a risk of serious flooding.	The amended “Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance” will make it clear that Gold Commands should be established at an early stage on a precautionary basis where there is a risk of serious flooding.	There are currently no clear triggers for early formation of gold. The LRF Flood Plan includes trigger levels for each agency to convene a Silver level teleconference. A decision whether a Gold command meeting

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	(Evidence from recent events showed that responders have done this).	should be called is likely to be made at that time.
<p>44: Category 1 and 2 responders should assess the effectiveness of their emergency response facilities, including flexible accommodation, IT and communications systems, and undertake any necessary improvement works.</p>	<p>Ongoing local implementation, supported by Government guidance. The Government issued Parts 1 and 2 of Expectation and Indicators of Good Practice Set for Category 1 and 2 Responders in December 2008. Part 3 was issued in summer 2009. A Civil Protection Self Assessment Tool for responders was issued September 2009 and a peer review tool for Local Resilience Forums was piloted in late 2009. The "Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance" will be updated to include these issues.</p>	<p>A Business Continuity Programme rolled out through the council was completed in January 2010. Implications for the council in respect of information collected through service Business Impact Assessments is reported separately to the Corporate Leadership Team. Items for discussion will include requirements for property, IT and communications in the event of a disruption to any Wiltshire Council facility.</p>
<p>49: A national flooding exercise should take place at the earliest opportunity in order to test the new arrangements which central government departments are putting into place to deal with flooding and infrastructure emergencies.</p>	<p>The national flooding exercise, Exercise Watermark, is planned for March 2011. This exercise will test new national arrangements from central government departments to deal with flooding and infrastructure emergencies. Good progress is being made on developing the strategic objectives and scope of the exercise.</p>	<p>A Wiltshire and Swindon LRF exercise is scheduled for 13 May 2010. This exercise is to validate the LRF Flood plan. It is envisaged that Wiltshire and Swindon LRF will participate in the national exercise in 2011.</p>
<p>63: Flood risk should be made part of the mandatory search requirements when people buy property, and should form part of Home Information Packs.</p>	<p>Flood risk has become part of the new property information questionnaire from 6 April 2009.</p>	
<p>64: Local Resilience Forums should continue to develop plans for door-knocking, coordinated by local authorities, to enhance flood warnings before flooding and to provide</p>	<p>Ongoing local implementation, which is supported by existing emergency preparedness guidance that includes door-knocking as one of the methods of warning people. Responders will need to assess the</p>	<p>The LRF Warning and Informing and Educating sub groups are reviewing protocols. Warning and Informing protocols are already in place. Door knocking is not always appropriate but alternative means of alerting the public are in</p>

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information and assess welfare needs once flooding has receded.	situation taking into account health and safety and resource implications.	place.
66: Local authority contact centres should take the lead in dealing with general enquiries from the public during and after major flooding, redirecting calls to other organisations when appropriate.	Ongoing local implementation, supported by the revisions to “Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance” which will make it clear that local authority contact centres should take the lead in dealing with general enquiries during and after major flooding. Evidence from recent events has indicated that local authorities have taken forward this recommendation. The Government does not consider there is a need for further specific guidance on this issue.	Floodline already deal with enquiries from the public. The Emergencies page on the Wiltshire Council website directs people to the EA site. Customer Care operators have taken part in the most recent incident room exercise and it is planned to develop their role in the future. The EA is consulting on proposals to extend the Floodline service.
68: Council leaders and chief executives should play a prominent role in public reassurance and advice through the local media during a flooding emergency, as part of a coordinated effort overseen by Gold Commands.	Ongoing local implementation. Many council leaders and chief executives are now well versed in providing public reassurance and advice, working with both local and national media. To strengthen local implementation, the Government will include guidance on this as part of the update of “Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance”.	This is already covered as part of the Strategic LRF response structure in the Warning and Informing Strategy. The importance of producing early press releases must be bedded in to the strategic response.
69: The public should make up a flood kit – including personal documents, insurance policy, emergency contact numbers (including local council, emergency services and Floodline), torch, battery or wind-up radio, mobile phone, rubber gloves, wet wipes or antibacterial hand gel, first aid kit and blankets.	Key Government departments and agencies will meet this summer to agree methods for encouraging the public to take action to make up a flood kit – including personal documents, insurance policy, emergency contact numbers.	A Householders Guide was prepared in 2003 and a significant number have been distributed since. Some of the suggestions are included. The EA also has an extensive range of advice available on its website and in leaflet/booklet format. There are links on the council website to EA and National Flood Forum sites.
70: The Government should establish a programme to support and encourage individuals and	To establish a baseline on community and individual self-reliance during flood emergencies, three national workshops	These proposals could be taken forward through Area Boards.

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communities to be better prepared and more self-reliant during emergencies, allowing the authorities to focus on those areas and people in greatest need.	were held in winter 2008/09. The Government's proposals on its contribution to community resilience will be published this autumn.	Further information on flooding is being placed on the Council website. A programme of publicity events is planned starting with a Flood Fair.
72: Local response and recovery coordinating groups should ensure that health and wellbeing support is readily available to those affected by flooding based on the advice developed by the Department of Health.	Government has drafted psycho-social advice to guide local work supporting health and wellbeing. Website links to provide access will be developed as part of Recommendation 71. All parties will be made aware of the guidance and the links to it on the Health Protection Agency (HPA) website.	Recovery plan under development.
74: The monitoring of the impact of flooding on the health and wellbeing of people, and actions to mitigate and manage the effects, should form a systematic part of the work of Recovery Co-ordinating Groups.	The Government is on schedule to issue its guidance on psycho-social need of those affected by disasters and major incidents such as flooding on 30 June and we are on track to liaise with Recovery Co-ordinating Groups so that they can embed improved health and well-being arrangements in their procedures.	Recovery plan under development.
76: Local authorities should coordinate a systematic programme of community engagement in their area during the recovery phase.	The National Recovery Guidance (published by Government in October 2007) provides information for local authorities to use when considering how to engage communities in recovery. In addition, the Compact between the third sector and the Government is currently being reviewed. As part of this, the Government will work with the Commission for the Compact to ensure that the revised Compact forms a sound basis for implementing this recommendation, by putting in place provision for third sector engagement, cost recovery and volunteer involvement.	Councillors and local parish and town councillors have a key role. Area Boards and Community Emergency Volunteers could work to fulfil this role.

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<p>77: National and local Recovery Co-ordinating Groups should be established from the outset of major emergencies and in due course there should be formal handover from the crisis machinery.</p>	<p>The National Recovery Guidance reinforces the principle of local Recovery Co-ordinating Groups and their role in agreeing aims and objectives at the outset, for which there is ongoing local implementation. At a national level, the same concepts are captured in the revised 'Central Government Arrangements for Responding to an Emergency – Concept of Operation' (this is due to be published later in the year, but a working document is already in operation). The principles will also be captured in the updated "Emergency Response and Recovery" guidance due for publication this summer.</p>	<p>The Recovery Group established during an incident will carry out this action. The recovery plan when completed should outline this procedure.</p>
<p>78: Aims and objectives for the recovery phase should be agreed at the outset by Recovery Coordinating Groups to provide focus and enable orderly transition into mainstream programmes when multi-agency coordination of recovery is no longer required.</p>	<p>The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability (CIPFA) has issued revised guidance on Local Authority Accounting Panel (LAAP) Bulletin 77 – Local Authority Reserves and Balances which highlights the need to consider financial risk management in the budgeting process, including assessing internal and external risks (specifically including flooding), and reflects the fact that local authorities should continue to make arrangements to bear the cost of recovery for all but the most exceptional emergencies. This was published on the CIPFA website on 19 November 2008 and distributed to all local government bodies in the United Kingdom.</p>	<p>Recovery plan when completed will cover this requirement.</p>
<p>83: Local authorities should continue to make arrangements to bear the cost of recovery for all but the most exceptional emergencies, and should revisit their reserves and insurance arrangements in light of last summer's floods.</p>	<p>The Government has already updated the National Recovery Guidance. This supports local Recovery Co-ordination</p>	<p>Without significant additional revenue and capital funding the Council will find it difficult to undertake the full scope of what is proposed.</p>
<p>85: Local Recovery Co-ordination Groups should make early recommendations to elected local</p>	<p>The Government has already updated the National Recovery Guidance. This supports local Recovery Co-ordination</p>	<p>Recovery plan under development.</p>

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authority members about longer-term regeneration and economic development opportunities.	Groups in making early recommendations to elected local authority members about longer-term regeneration and economic development opportunities.	
90: All upper tier local authorities should establish Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review work by public sector bodies and essential service providers in order to manage flood risk, underpinned by a legal requirement to cooperate and share information.	The Government is consulting (alongside the draft Flood and Water Management Bill) on issues relating to Overview and Scrutiny of local authority flood risk management activity which might be included in the resulting legislation.	The Flood Risk Management Group will report to the Environment Select Committee. It is suggested that an annual report be prepared in June.
91: Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee should prepare an annual summary of actions taken locally to manage flood risk and implement this review, and these reports should be public and reviewed by Government Offices and the EA.		
92: Local Resilience Forums should evaluate and share lessons from both the response and recovery phases to inform their planning for future emergencies.	Ongoing local implementation. The National Recovery Guidance already encourages Local Resilience Forums to evaluate and share lessons from the recovery phase of emergencies, and includes over 70 case studies covering a wide range of emergencies, including flooding. The revised "Emergency Response and Recovery Guidance" will also make it clear	Standard response covered in the Joint Incident Procedures Guide.

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	that local responders should evaluate and share lessons from both the response and recovery phases to inform their future planning. Evidence from recent events show that local responders are already doing this.	

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DEFRA Government Grants to Local Authorities for Household Level Flood Risk Mitigation

Introduction

The Government's *Making Space for Water* strategy and Sir Michael Pitt's review of the floods in the summer of 2007 recognised the need to use a portfolio of measures to manage flood risk and to include in this portfolio the use of property-level mitigation measures.

Local authorities have been offered the opportunity to vary many aspects of the scheme to fit it with local circumstances and with the characteristics of particular communities.

The scheme aims to create examples of the collective application of property-level measures in order that these might demonstrate the strengths of this way of managing flood risk. It also aims to encourage the supply of expert, independent flood risk mitigation surveys and to stimulate the market for flood protection and resilience products. It should also prove a useful way of engaging with local at-risk communities and helping them understand their risk and the ways to mitigate it.

Overview of the aims of the scheme

The objective of the scheme is to promote the use of household-level flood protection and resilience measures in cases where flooding occurs frequently and other flood management solutions are not economically, environmentally or technically viable. The scheme aims to protect groups of homes so that they demonstrate the benefits of protection and to encourage other communities and individuals also to protect their homes. It also aims to help local communities engage with and understand their flood risk.

With initial funding of £5 million over two years, the scheme seeks to stimulate the supply of independent, professional and property-specific flood risk mitigation surveys and to encourage the development of new and innovative protection and resilience measures.

Timetable and Funding

Local authorities have been invited to apply for funding in two rounds. £2m in funding was available for the first round, with applications due by 17 March 2009. A further £3m was made available for applications received by a second deadline in the autumn of 2009.

Eligibility and selection

Local authorities can apply for funding for any area that they believe would benefit from flood protection and that meet the eligibility criteria.

The following criteria should be satisfied for all areas that are to be included in the scheme:

A. Property types

- The main use of the properties in question must be residential
- except in the case of properties whose protection would be integral to the successful protection of attached residential properties.

B. Type and frequency of flooding

1. Fluvial and coastal flooding

- Floodwater must have entered buildings above ground floor level at least once since the beginning of 1998; and
- The area in which the properties are located must have an annual chance of flooding of at least 1 in 20 (i.e. 5%).

2. Sewer flooding

- Sewer flooding is the responsibility of the water companies. It is therefore not the aim of this scheme to protect against this form of flooding.

3. Surface water flooding and groundwater flooding

- Floodwater must have entered buildings above ground floor level at least once since the beginning of 1998; and
- Buildings must have been flooded at least twice since the start of 1988.

C. Prospect of a Community Scheme

There must be little or no prospect of the area concerned benefiting from a community scheme within the foreseeable future. When selecting areas for participation in the grant scheme, preference will be given to those locations that cannot be defended with a community scheme rather than those that anticipate having a viable scheme funded in the future.

The principle criterion listed above is that areas should have been flooded frequently, for the idea of household flood protection tends to be received more enthusiastically in communities with experience of regular flooding.

Eligibility and selection

Local authorities can apply for funding for any area that they believe would benefit from flood protection and that meets the eligibility criteria described below. Given that the primary criterion is that areas will have been flooded one or more times in recent years, it is probable that such areas will already be known to local authorities.

Wiltshire Applications

Stage One Allocations

The Environment Secretary announced the results of the 'pathfinder' round for the scheme with 166 applications asking for £22 million. Defra allocated £2.5 million to a total of 562 homes countrywide.

Kennet District Council had applied for grants to cover schemes in Easterton and Urchfont. Both applications were unsuccessful.

Stage Two Allocations

Information is being compiled on a flooding database and some information was used to formulate the bids made in the 2nd tranche of applications.

Applications for funding from round two were submitted by Wiltshire Council in December 2009 as set out in the table below:

COMMUNITY	PROPERTIES AFFECTED	AMOUNT REQUESTED	FLOODING RECORD
Dauntsey	46 Residential	£345,000	Twice in 10 years
Easterton	10 Residential + 1	£82,500	Three times in 12 years
Ham	6 Residential	£45,000	Twice in 6 years
Purton	41 Residential	£307,500	Last flooded 2007
Shalbourne	22 Residential	£165,000	Twice in 5 years
Warminster	2 Residential	£15,000	Twice in 8 years
Crudwell	22 residential	£157,500	Four times in 6 years
Cricklade	9 residential	£67,500	Twice in 07 and 08

We are awaiting notification of the success of any of these bids.

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WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE (ESC)

3rd March 2010

PROGRESS REPORT – GYPSY & TRAVELLER STRATEGY

Executive Summary

The Gypsy and Traveller strategy project group was formed in September 2009. Work is now underway to create a strategy and supporting processes to deliver a coordinated and effective approach to service provision for and interaction with Gypsy & Traveller communities.

This report informs the Environmental Select Committee of the progress of this project, and presents the aims and objectives of strategy. Approval of and commitment to the new approach will be sought from Cabinet in April 2010.

The project group proposes that;

*The overall aim of Gypsy and Traveller strategy is that by 2015, service provision and engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities will **be strengthened, coordinated and in line with our aims to create strong and resilient communities**, with the needs of those communities balanced against the needs of the settled population.*

This report details some of the actions that the project group propose to take in order to achieve this overall aim.

Proposal

It is proposed that the ESC;

1. Note the progress of the Gypsy and Traveller strategy project
2. Note the aims and objectives of the strategy
3. Scrutinise the strategy proposal to ensure a good fit with organisational goals and wider partnership objectives
4. Recommend the acceptance and adoption of the strategy to Cabinet in April.

Reason for Proposal

1. To enable Member understanding of the strategy aims and the action plan
2. To secure support and commitment for a change in approach to service delivery and engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities with the emphasis on a more a more coordinated response to the needs of these communities.
3. To secure ESC backing/validation of the change in approach, and of the submission of the strategy to Cabinet

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PROGRESS REPORT – GYPSY & TRAVELLER STRATEGY

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is:
 - To update the Environment Select Committee on the progress of the Gypsy and Traveller strategy project
 - To provide the aims and objectives of the strategy to enable the Environment Select Committee (ESC) to scrutinise and ensure a good fit with organisational goals and wider partnership objectives
 - To update the ESC on the key actions that will be needed to successfully achieve the aims of the strategy, towards the provision of co-ordinated and consistent service provision and engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities, with the needs of those communities balanced against the needs of the settled population.
 - To set out the forward plan for the project in order that the ESC are able to recommend the acceptance and adoption of the strategy to Cabinet in April.

Background

2. The ESC considered a report in January 2010 on the Gypsy and Traveller strategy. The report detailed the current status of the project and the rationale for creating a more integrated approach to service delivery and engagement for Gypsy & Traveller communities. The report also acknowledged the opportunities and associated challenges both to the project team in the successful delivery of a strategy, and to the authority if this work is undertaken without significant support and backing.
3. The ESC recommended that the Corporate Project Team continues its work to compile a document outlining the pathway towards establishing a strategy and action plan for reporting to Cabinet in April 2010.
4. At the January meeting, the ESC resolved to;
 - Acknowledge the current status of the project, recognising that a more integrated approach to service delivery for Gypsy and Traveller communities is required.
 - Acknowledge that successful delivery of the strategy will require significant support and backing across the authority.

- Recommend that the Corporate Project Team continues its work to compile a document outlining the pathway towards establishing a strategy and action plan for reporting to Cabinet in April 2010.
- Appoint Cllr Jose Green as a Scrutiny representative on the Gypsies and Travellers Project Board to provide updates to the Committee on any project developments.

Main Considerations for the Committee

Project update

5. As nominated by the ESC in January, Cllr Green has attended Gypsy and Traveller strategy project group meetings to gain knowledge and understanding of the current position of our existing service delivery, as well as to gain an awareness of Gypsy and Traveller issues and needs.
6. The project group met on the 21st of January 2010 to agree the overall aims and objectives of the strategy, and consider what service delivery and engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities will be like in 5 years time.
7. Membership of the project group is detailed in appendix 1 and includes officers from across the authority a community representative from Friends, Family and Travellers, as well as the Chaplain to the Travelling community and Travelling Showpeople.

Wiltshire Council Gypsy and Traveller Strategy Definition

8. As a Local Authority Wiltshire Council provides services to all people regardless of their lifestyle and so for the purposes of this document, the definition of 'Gypsy and Traveller' will use be based on the legislative definition which recognises Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers as ethnic groups. But in this context the definition will be extended to include New Age travellers, Showpeople, and any other groups with a similarly nomadic lifestyle.

For reference, 'Nomadic' means 'people who move from place to place rather than living in one place'.

Strategy aims and objectives

9. The overall aim of the Gypsy and Traveller strategy is that by 2015, service provision and engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities *will be strengthened, coordinated and in line with our aims to create strong and resilient communities*, with the needs of those communities balanced against the needs of the settled population.

The strategy aims are;

10. That service provision and engagement is co-ordinated throughout the council and involves consultation with Gypsy and Traveller communities.
11. The improvement of services and facilities are aimed to empower Gypsy and Traveller communities, through joint working, participation and involvement.
12. The needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities and settled communities are recognised and addressed in partnership, in line with our aims to create strong and resilient communities.
13. The project group held further meetings in February to examine service delivery and engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities in relation to 4 key areas;

Accommodation

- 13.1 The provision of appropriate accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers, with equal standards to that of the settled population.

Knowledge and information

- 13.2 Gathering and using better knowledge and information to improve services that meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers communities. Resources would need to be identified to meet these needs, and where possible funding will be sought for at either regional / national level.

Community engagement and involvement

- 13.3 Consultation with, and involvement of Gypsy and Traveller communities is essential to enable the council to identify and meet needs effectively. Through engagement and involvement with communities, services across the authority will be able to achieve positive engagement for effective planning and provision of services. Partnership working with Gypsies and Travellers will look to increase resilience and empowerment in those communities.

Health, education and safer communities

- 13.4 To understand the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities for health, education and safer communities, particularly the identification of existing inequalities and disadvantage, which has disproportional and adverse impacts on the quality of life for this community. Better planning and appropriate targeting of services will enable all partners to effectively meet the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in relation to health, education and safer communities. By tackling inequalities and disadvantage in these areas, we will encourage service take up to improve health, educational and community safety needs within Gypsy and Traveller communities.

14. The meeting to focus on each area considered all aspects of service delivery and engagement, and looked at the actions that would be needed in each area.
15. The project group are in the process of finalising the complete action plan of the strategy, but from the start of the process some actions were immediately identified as being central to the success of the strategy.

Actions needed to achieve aims of strategy

Communication, education and training

16. The issue the project group felt was central to achieving the successful implementation of fair and equitable services for Gypsy and Traveller communities in 5 years time, is a joined up approach to service delivery internally and communication with stakeholders, the settled community, Gypsy and Traveller communities, officers, Members and frontline service workers.
17. It is clear that a joined up approach to service planning and provision needs to be established by various service areas in the council, which needs to ensure a coordinated and cost effective delivery of services overall
18. A joined up approach to service planning and delivery will mean that council officers and staff will
 - have greater awareness of how their specific service delivery links in with other services areas / provision
 - be able to share resources affectively
 - share expertise and experience of working with Gypsy and Traveller communities – including exchanging information and knowledge
 - increase capacity without additional staffing costs to deliver services
 - be able to be cost affective in service planning and delivery
19. There is also a need to look at how service provided by our external partners fit with our service provision – this includes NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Police, Fire & Rescue Service and services provided by the wider Voluntary and Community Sector.
20. Looking at multi-agency scope for joined-up service provision is something that will need to be considered within the strategy's delivery plan overall.

21. There is a need to review communication materials that are provided by the public sector, for example ensuring that planning guidance information is accessible and appropriate for communities who may have low literacy levels.
22. Successful communication of the strategy and its purpose is also a key part of this process. Without understanding the context of and need for the strategy, it can never be completely effectively implemented.
23. A central action in beginning the process of communication, education and training is a Member training session run by the IDeA (the Improvement and Development Agency) on the 19th of March.
24. This training session will provide support and advice to Members and senior officers on the issues faced by both the Gypsy and Traveller communities and the settled communities with the aim of enabling delegates to appreciate the Local Authority role in the provision of decent homes for all and the importance of this for the health and well-being of communities.
25. Further briefing and training events are likely to be able to be undertaken by existing officers. The production of training and education packs, and of officer time required to deliver sessions is not currently budgeted for.

Refurbishment of LA owned/managed sites

26. Wiltshire Council owns or manages 6 residential and one transit site for Gypsies and Travellers. A site conditions survey conducted in 2008 identified that in most cases these sites are in a poor state of repair. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2009 also identified that the standard of the accommodation of Gypsies and Travellers has a potential adverse impact on the health and wellbeing of those communities. (Please see the January ESC report for further information on this).
27. In considering the above, the project group has identified that it is essential for the council to consider the feasibility of refurbishing / rebuilding of Wiltshire Council's Gypsy and Traveller sites.
28. This would involve applying for funding from the Homes and Communities Agency that would potentially cover 50% of the cost of any site refurbishment.
29. Work is underway to identify the financial cost of beginning to carry out any such programme of work, along side an analysis of the cost impact that not refurbishing would have on the health and wellbeing of the residents.
30. This exercise will compare the cost of not providing adequate provision against the cost of the 50% match funding that would be required from the Council to undertake some or part of the refurbishing/rebuilding programme.

Next steps

31. The delivery of coordinated and needs focused services and engagement/ involvement of Gypsy and Traveller communities will require internal commitment and dedication to a change of approach to the method, quality and style in which we plan and deliver services. This change of approach will also need a drive towards creating a refreshed and modern mindset and culture within the council overall, so that we promote inclusion of Gypsy and Traveller communities in line with our overall aims to create strong and resilient communities.
32. It is proposed that a report will be considered by Wiltshire Council Cabinet to approve the new strategy in April 2010. Member buy-in and commitment to a new approach to service delivery and engagement is an essential component of a change in approach to Gypsy and Traveller communities.
33. From June, a 6 month programme of rolling consultation and involvement will take place with Gypsy and Traveller communities across the county, and voluntary and community sector partners and other stakeholders will be involved.

Introduction of the strategy

34. June is Gypsy, Roma, Traveller history month, and a good time to begin rolling out the strategy.
35. During autumn 2010, the Gypsy and Traveller DPD site identification consultation will be taking place as part of the spatial planning work on the core strategy. The rolling programme for strategy consultation enables all comments and feedback gained during the autumn to be fed in to the next version of the strategy.
36. In April 2011 a new version of the Gypsy and Traveller strategy will be produced, building on the consultation feedback and new knowledge and information that have been gained.

Environmental impact of the proposal

37. It is envisaged that the strategy will have a positive effect upon environmental issues relating to Gypsy and Traveller communities occupying unauthorised sites (for example, waste and pollution, disturbing wildlife etc will look to be minimised through a coordinated response to Gypsy and Traveller community needs.
38. A wider environmental impact is on the perceptions of local communities – the potential risk of not adopting and actively promoting the Gypsy and Traveller strategy may mean adverse PR and reputation of the council with possible accusations of perpetuating inequalities and disadvantages exercised by Gypsy & Traveller communities.

39. Media and community relations will need to be managed affectively and with a view that our approach towards coordinated and consistent service delivery to Gypsy and Traveller communities in line with the Council's commitment to provide fair and equitable services to all, and not as preferential treatment to a particular group.

Equalities impact of the proposal

40. Our organisational goals are based on creating strong and resilient communities, and focus on lives and not services. Current service delivery and engagement with Gypsy and Traveller communities is not coordinated nor consistent, leading to the possibility of unfairness and discriminatory service provision overall.
41. The development and delivery of a robust and coordinated Gypsy and Traveller strategy will enable us to strengthen our inclusion of this disadvantaged group, and our overall work in creating strong and resilient communities.
42. The adoption of and commitment to a Gypsy and Traveller strategy will provide evidence towards Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) and other assessments, including Wiltshire Assembly's priority to tackle Inequalities and disadvantage.
43. Overall the development of a robust and coordinated strategy will have a positive impact on the promotion of equality in Wiltshire

Risk assessment

44. Not tackling the issues around Gypsy and Traveller service provision and engagement is not perceived to be an option.
45. By not taking a more consistent, coordinated approach to meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities and settled communities, the strength, resilience and sustainability of those local communities will be weakened, and possible perceptions of unfairness and discrimination will be increased.
46. The Comprehensive Area Assessment of Wiltshire in 2009 highlighted that the public sector is not doing enough to tackle the inequality and potential discrimination faced by Gypsy and Traveller communities.
47. Wiltshire Council has engaged consultants to produce a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Planning Document (DPD) as a priority document that the Council will prepare as part of Wiltshire's Local Development. The purpose of the DPD is to ensure that the identified needs of Gypsies and Travellers that permanently reside in Wiltshire are met through the allocation of suitable and sustainable sites.

48. Without the wider strategy development to ensure coordinated and consistent service planning and delivery, we will not be meeting our aims to create strong and resilient communities effectively.
49. Without a comprehensive strategy which is focused on promoting engagement, we will not achieve our legal duties under the Race Relations legislation to promote good community relations. This risk has the biggest implication on the community relations between Gypsy and Traveller communities, and nearby settled communities.

Financial implications

50. Financial implications of the proposal involve an amount of revenue funding to support and deliver communication, education and training information to stakeholders.
51. Capital funding will also be required if a successful bid is submitted to the Homes and Communities Agency for 50% of the costs of any site refurbishment/rebuild.
52. Work is underway to identify the cost/benefits of these actions. The report to Cabinet will provide a clearer indication of these cost levels and some analysis on whether the actions should be taken forward. This will be balanced with the perceived risks of not effectively supporting the Gypsy and Traveller strategy to be implemented, adopted and applied effectively across the organisation.

Legal implications

53. The adoption of a new Gypsy and Traveller strategy should enhance Wiltshire Council's position in terms of governance, reputation management and public trust and confidence in the Council.
54. Wiltshire Council has a legal duty to stop trespass on Local Authority land, which is often in conflict with our commitment to promote good community relations. Agreeing the rights and responsibilities of both transient Gypsies and Travellers and the Local Authority will be a key tool to ensuring that enforcement of unauthorised encampments is a necessary and robust, but negotiated process.
55. Wiltshire Council have obligations under the Race Relations legislation to promote good community relations between persons of difference racial groups, to eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. A comprehensive strategy will strength our commitment to our obligations and also our obligations under the Human Rights legislations.

Options considered

56. Not tackling the issues around Gypsy and Traveller service provision and engagement is not perceived to be an option.

57. By not taking a more consistent, coordinated and consistent approach to meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities and settled communities, the strength, resilience and sustainability of those local communities will be weakened.
58. Gypsy and Traveller service provision and engagement has not been approached cohesively and this opportunity needs to be taken to bring together the services being provided, leading to a much more coordinated and consistent approach to service delivery, which has a beneficial impact on the lives of both Gypsy & Traveller and settled communities.

Conclusions

59. Taking all of the above information in to account, it is proposed that the ESC;
- Note the progress of the Gypsy and Traveller strategy project
 - Note the aims and objectives of the strategy
 - Scrutinise the strategy proposal to ensure a good fit with organisational goals and wider partnership objectives
 - Recommend the acceptance and adoption of the strategy to Cabinet in April.

Graham Hogg, Service Director for Housing - Chair of the Gypsy and Traveller Corporate Project Team

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22nd February 2010

Background Papers

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report:

Gypsy and Traveller strategy project update – 12th January 2010, Environment Select Committee Report
[http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/Data/Environment%20Select%20Committee/20100112/Agenda/\\$Item%20No.%2008%20-%20Gypsy%20and%20Traveller%20Project%20Update.doc.pdf](http://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/Data/Environment%20Select%20Committee/20100112/Agenda/$Item%20No.%2008%20-%20Gypsy%20and%20Traveller%20Project%20Update.doc.pdf)

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Gypsy and Traveller strategy project group membership

Appendix 1 - Gypsy and Traveller strategy project group membership

Department/ organisation	Person	Role
Housing	Graham Hogg	Project lead - Service Director for Housing
	Amanda Smith	Service Development Manager, Housing Strategy and Support
	Sarah Hartley	Performance and Research Officer, Housing Strategy & Support
	Rachel Goff	Project manager, Gypsy and Traveller strategy project
Equality and Diversity	Mayur Bhatt	Project advisor – Head of Equality
Friends, Families and Travellers	Sally Woodbury	
Chaplain to Gypsies and Travellers	Roger Redding	
Wiltshire Police	Ron Peach	Community Affairs Officer
Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service	Rex Webb	
Councillors	Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Waste, Property and Environment
	Cllr Jose Green	Scrutiny committee representative
Communications	Paul Langcaster	Communications Manager
Development Control	Stephen Hawkins	Lead Principal Enforcement Officer
	Richard Hughes	Principal Planning Officer
	Tony Phillips	Senior Planning Officer
	Daniel Tyrrell	Planning Compliance Officer
Health	Jo Howes	Wiltshire PCT Community Engagement Manager
	Liz Norris	
Legal	Frank Cain	Principal Lawyer
	Rebecca Thompson	Solicitor
Safer Communities	Kimberley Duckworth	Community Safety Manager
	Aileen Fenlon	Anti-Social Behaviour reduction officer

Social Care	Annie Paddock	Programme Lead – Policy Development
	Heather Ludlow	
Spatial Planning	James Millard	Assistant Spatial Plans Officer
	Carolyn Gibson	Principal Planning Officer
Traveller Education	Jenny Cavan	Team managers, Traveller Education Service
	Nicole Powell	
	Lindsey Cox	Education Welfare Officer
Traveller Services	Stephen Helsby	Highways Enforcement and Traveller Services Manager
	Vicky Cobbold	Senior Traveller Liaison Officer
	Mike Davies	Senior Traveller Liaison Officer

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Environment Select Committee
Rolling Work Plan from March 2010

SUBJECTS	COMMITTEE/ TASK GROUP	PROJECT START DATE	NEXT DATE TO O & S COMMITTEE	SPECIFIC ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION	WHO REPORTS TO BE SUBMITTED TO	SUBMISSION DATE
Major Contracts (Standing)	Task Group		Ongoing Update in March 2010	To provide an update where one is available.		
Budget & Performance (Standing)	Task Group		Ongoing Update in March 2010	To provide an update where one is available.		
Review of Wiltshire Local Transport – Parking Plan			May 2010			

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