


CABINET

MINUTES of a MEETING held in KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN on Tuesday, 15 September 2015.

Cllr Jane Scott OBE	Leader of the Council
Cllr John Thomson	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities, Campuses, Area Boards and Broadband
Cllr Fleur de Rhé-Philippe	Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Skills and Strategic Transport
Cllr Keith Humphries	Cabinet Member for Health (including Public Health) and Adult Social Care
Cllr Laura Mayes	Cabinet Member for Children's Services
Cllr Jonathon Seed	Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding
Cllr Toby Sturgis	Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning (strategic and development management), Property, Waste and Strategic Housing
Cllr Dick Tonge	Cabinet Member for Finance, Performance, Risk, Systems Thinking, Procurement and Welfare Reform
Cllr Stuart Wheeler	Cabinet Member for Hubs, Governance (including information management), Support Services (HR, Legal, ICT, Business Services, Democratic Services), Heritage & Arts and Customer Care
Cllr Philip Whitehead	Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

Also in Attendance: Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Christopher Williams, Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Simon Killane, Cllr Dennis Drewett, Cllr Terry Chivers, Cllr Bob Jones MBE, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Magnus Macdonald, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr John Noeken, Cllr Stephen Oldrieve, Cllr Jeff Osborn, Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cllr Jerry Wickham, Cllr Horace Prickett

Key Decisions Matters defined as 'Key' Decisions and included in the Council's Forward Work Plan are shown as 

94 **Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

95 **Minutes of the previous meetings**

The minutes of the meetings held on 7 and 21 July 2015 were presented.

Resolved:

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meetings held on 7 and 21 July 2015.

96 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest from any Cabinet Members.

Cllr Wayman, presenting a report to the meeting, declared an interest in that she was a Director of Selwood Housing Association.

97 Leader's announcements

A) The Big Walk

The Leader thanked officers and Cllr Jon Hubbard for organising the Big Walk which raised money for Hope for Tomorrow and the Young Melksham charities.

B) Enterprise Zones

The Leader stated that she would be making an in principle decision, on behalf of the authority, to propose enterprise zones that should be considered as part of the Government's initiative, announced in July, to all the retention of business rates in those zones for 25 years. The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership had been working with both local authorities on their bids. The proposed zones for Wiltshire are: Porton Sceince Park, Castledown, Salisbury Hospital and Corsham. A report on this matter will be considered by Cabinet at a later date.

98 Public participation and Questions from Councillors

The Leader drew the meeting's attention to the questions circulated in the supplementary papers from Trowbridge Town Council, and from Patrick Kinnersly

The Leader invited Cllr Bob Brice, from Trowbridge Town Council, to present questions on behalf of Trowbridge Town Council. Cllr Stuart Wheeler, in his capacity as Chair of the Community Governance Review Working Group, responded that the review was still ongoing; that the major elements of the review would be subject to public consultation events, where interested parties and members of the public would be able to put their views; that a progress report would be presented to full Council on 29 September; and that a full report with the Working Party's recommendations would be presented to full Council on 24 November for determination.

It was noted that as Patrick Kinnersly, who had asked questions on behalf of the White Horse Alliance, was not present he would be sent a copy of the responses.

In response to a question from Cllr Steve Oldrieve, Cllr Toby Sturgis stated that following discussions with partners, there had not been an appetite to establish a formal Energy Efficiency Board, but that he would respond in writing to Cllr Oldrieve with regard to progress.

In response to a question from Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Philip Whitehead confirmed that Community Days would no longer be supported, to enable resources to be reprioritised, and that the Parish Stewards system would be reintroduced from the 1 April 2016. The Leader asked that, in the future, all Parish Council briefings should be automatically sent through to Wiltshire Councillors as a means of keeping them informed.

99 **Performance and Risk Outturn report: Q1 2015/16**

Councillor Dick Tonge presented a report which provided a quarter one update on outturns against the measures and activities compiled and reported on the council's website through the Citizens' Dashboard, as well as latest outturns on the council's strategic risk register. The report also contained, as an appendix, a briefing for Cabinet on the recent Ofsted inspection of Wiltshire Council services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

Resolved

- 1) To note the updates and outturns against the measures and activities ascribed against the council's key outcomes.**
- 2) To note the updates and outturns to the strategic risk register.**

Reason for Decision:

This framework compiles and monitors outturns in relation to the outcomes laid out in the Business Plan, distilled from individual services' delivery plans. In doing so, it captures the main focus of activities of the council against each outcome.

The strategic risk register captures and monitors significant risks facing the council: in relation to significant in-service risks facing individual areas, in managing its business across the authority generally and in assuring our preparedness should a national risk event occur.

100 **Revenue Budget Monitoring report**

Councillor Dick Tonge presented a report which advised members of the revenue budget monitoring position as at the end of period 4 (end of July 2015) for the financial year 2015/2016 with suggested actions as appropriate.

Cllr Toby Sturgis proposed, subsequently agreed by Cllr Tonge, that the recommendation that proposed the closure of Everleigh Household Recycling

Centre, as outlined in the report, be removed. He stated that this was due an ongoing review regarding changes to the Household Recycling Centres.

In response to a question raised by Cllr Jon Hubbard, Michael Hudson – Associate Director for Finance, stated that at the end of the year, the council would reallocate s106 funds from schemes that had already received sufficient funding from other sources. This process had happened earlier this year, and confirmed that no schemes, for which s106 money had previously been allocated, had not progressed due to this process. He would, however, be happy to provide a list of the schemes so reviewed.

In response to a question raised by Cllr Jon Hubbard, Michael Hudson – Associate Director for Finance, stated that some ICT schemes had been classified as revenue as a way of mitigating the risk of the scheme not coming to fruition and the leaving the money tied up as capital.

Cllr Sturgis stated that additional cost pressures were due to rapid growth in house building, the increase in landfill charges, and the decrease in commodity prices – particularly for paper. It was also noted that, as the economy grew, the amount people consumed and threw away increased.

Cllr Scott stated that education was key for seeking to encourage people to reduce their waste and recycle more.

Resolved

To note the outcome of the period 4 (end of July) budget monitoring and to approve the following changes to the budget as part of the current recovery plan to deliver a balanced budget:

- a. £1.1 million transfer from the General Revenue Fund Reserve to provide one off support for the provision of Waste Services in 2015/16.*
- b. A review of adult's residential care charges to recover costs.*
- c. Approve the use of commuted and section 106 funds to support the 2015/16 revenue spend in Highways and Transport as one off virements.*
- d. Approve the capitalisation of £0.800 million spend in IT as a one off virements*

Reason for Decision:

To inform effective decision making and ensure a sound financial control environment.

101 Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 - First Quarter

Councillor Dick Tonge presented a report which provided a quarterly review of the Treasury Management Strategy.

Cllr Tonge confirmed that the Council had successfully recovered nearly 98% of the money invested in Icelandic banks.

Cllr Tonge also stated that more money had been invested, than previously planned across the quarter, due to the timing of income and cashflow.


Resolved

To note that the contents of this report are in line with the Treasury Management Strategy.

Reason for Decision:

To give members an opportunity to consider the performance of the Council in the period to the end of the quarter against the parameters set out in the approved Treasury Management Strategy for 2015-16.

102 **Establishment of a Wholly Owned Subsidiary (WOS) (Housing) repairs and maintenance, planned and investment works as well as client function**

 Councillor Jonathon Seed presented a report which recommended that Cabinet agree to the formation of a WOS that would deliver council house repairs and improvements and management, and other works which would deliver the council greater efficiencies and more cohesive services.

The Leader invited Cllr Bridget Wayman, Lead Member for rapid scrutiny, to present a report, circulated as a supplementary paper. Cllr Wayman expressed her concern that Scrutiny Members had not been involved earlier in the process, and expressed the wish that they should continue to be involved in this process in the future.

Cllr Wayman went on to highlight some of the issues in the Rapid Scrutiny report, namely: that using only one, large contractor could exclude smaller, local contractors; that use of ICT was critical to the success of the programme; that tenants should continue to be involved in the process; the recommendation that apprenticeships be encouraged in the contract; the impact of the length of tenancies on the costs of the project and energy efficiency; and a recommendation that the existing contract be extended to enable new arrangements to be in place before the transfer. Cllr Wayman also declared an interest in that she was a Director of Selwood Housing Association.

Cllr Seed thanked Cllr Wayman for her report, and stated that quality and efficacy were the chief concerns for tenants, not who or how the service was delivered. He welcomed the input of Scrutiny and welcomed further input.

The Leader stated that, in her view, anything the Council procured should include a consideration of how apprenticeships could be promoted.

Cllr Mayes asked that reference be made as to how opportunities for looked after children were promoted within the scheme.

Cllr Seed stated that he would consider, with the advice of officers, how best to address these issues.

Cllr Hubbard stated that he was broadly supportive of the proposal; and asked if HRAs had been consulted to seek their views and to learn from their experience. Cllr Seed stated that he, and officers, had visited a number of HRAs and local authorities to consider how the model worked and had discussed options with local housing providers. In response to a further question from Cllr Hubbard, Cllr Seed confirmed that the WOS would employ its own staff, and that the Council would procure a company to manage the WOS on its behalf.

In response to a question from the Leader, Dr Carlton Brand – Corporate Director, stated that the matter would come back to Cabinet for consideration once the business case had been further developed, and that Scrutiny Members would be involved further in this process.

Resolved

To approve in principle for :-

- 1. The formation of a Wholly Owned Subsidiary (WOS) to deliver the Council's (Housing) Responsive Repairs, Voids, and Planned Investment works, works to hostels, Gypsy & Traveller sites, including the client function role.**
- 2. Approve advancing the procurement of a 'partnering contractor' that will manage the delivery of the Council's housing asset management function and housing maintenance client function**
- 3. To agree to delegate the finalisation of the proposal to the Associate Director for Adult Care, Safeguarding and Housing in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure, Libraries and Flooding, Corporate Director with responsibility for Housing and the Section 151 and Monitoring Officers.**
- 4. Proposals and final decision to be brought back to cabinet for determination.**

Reason for Decision:

A WOS will deliver a more effective service, and address the key issue of the skills gap within this service area.

103 **Transfer of the Colonel William Llewellyn Palmer Educational Charity**

Councillor Dick Tonge presented a report which gave the background to the proposal that the Council resigns its position as sole Trustee of the Colonel William Llewellyn Palmer Educational Charity (CLPEC) and approaches the Charity Commission to seek the transfer of the Charity from Wiltshire Council to the Bradford on Avon Town Council (BOATC) as sole Trustee.

Cllr Magnus MacDonald stated that he was pleased to see the proposals come forward.

The Leader concurred with this sentiment, and hoped to it may stimulate debate about further devolution.


Resolved

- 1. To give ‘in principle approval’ to the ‘transfer’ of its administration of the Colonel William Llewellyn Palmer Educational Charity to Bradford on Avon Town Council.**
- 2. To delegate authority to the Associate Director, Communities and Communication to seek approval from the Charity Commission and, subject to the Commission’s approval, to progress the transfer to its conclusion.**

Reason for Decision:

The transfer of the Charity will meet the aims of the Wiltshire Council Business Plan by removing a non- core Council activity. The transfer will further the aims of the Charity it being managed by an organisation closer to the residents that use it.

104 **Changes to council tax discounts on empty properties**

 Councillor Dick Tonge presented a report which proposed changes to council tax discounts on properties that are empty and unfurnished and properties that are undergoing structural alteration or repair and to introduce a levy on properties that are empty and unfurnished for over two years in order to contribute to meeting cost pressures resulting from the Spending Review July 2015.

Issues raised in the course of the presentation and discussion included: that the impact of previous changes made had had no negative effect on council tax collection rates; what the experience of other councils was and what approach they had taken to discounts; what consultation would be required; and how all precepting authorities in the Wiltshire Council area would benefit from this.

Cllr Tonge confirmed, following a question from Cllr Mayes, that the Council did not control the collection rules on NNDR.

Cllr Tonge confirmed, following a question from Cllr Hubbard, that the 50% levy charged against properties left unfurnished and unoccupied for more than two years, would be in addition to the original council tax bill

Cllr Tonge confirmed, following a question from Cllr Sturgis that the scheme could not be backdated to apply to properties already empty and, in effect, the clock would start from April 2016; so that any levy on empty properties could not be applied until April 2018.

Resolved

- a. That properties undergoing structural repair are no longer eligible for a discount on council tax (known as a Class D discount, as defined at Appendix A).**
- b. That properties that are unfurnished and unoccupied are no longer eligible for a discount on council tax (known as a Class C discount, as defined at Appendix A).**
- c. That properties which remain unfurnished and unoccupied for more than two years is charged a levy equating to 50% of the annual council tax due.**
- d. That changes are implemented with effect from April 2016, which will enable advance communications and advice to be provided.**

Reason for Decision:

The cost pressures on the Council's budget as a result of the July Spending Review are well known.

It is estimated that by removing the discount on unoccupied properties, properties undergoing structural repair and adding a levy to properties left unoccupied for more than two years will generate an additional income of £2.1 million per annum for the Council and a further £534,000 for towns and parishes, the Police and the Fire and Rescue Authority. The methodology of the council tax base does not allow the Council to make changes to the tax base without them affecting these other bodies.

It will reduce administration costs for the Revenues Service and will bring our policies more in line with neighbouring authorities.

105 Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.13 pm)

These decisions were published on the 25 September 2015 and will come into force on 5 October 2015.

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Yamina Rhouati, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718024 or e-mail yamina.rhouati@wiltshire.gov.uk
Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

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**Questions received from Patrick Kinnersly on behalf of the
White Horse Alliance**

Funding of new highway construction projects in Wiltshire

* What is the total cost of major road schemes planned or commissioned by Wiltshire Council, including schemes under construction in the county? Please list all such road schemes and the total estimated cost of each.

* How much capital will Wiltshire Council contribute to the cost of each scheme?

* How much capital will developers contribute to the cost of each scheme? Please identify the source of such funding, eg from Community Infrastructure Levy or Section 106 agreements.

Response:

Major Road Scheme	Estimated cost	Wiltshire Council contribution	Developers contribution	Other funding
A350 Chippenham Bypass Improvement – Bumpers Farm	£3.354m	£1.684m	-	£1.67m (LGF ¹)
A429 Malmesbury Improvement	£1.637m	£0.237m	-	£1.4m (LGF)
A350 Chippenham Bypass Dualling – Badger to Chequers	£111.1m ²	TBD	TBD	£7.1m (LGF)
A350 Yarnbrook and West Ashton Relief Road	£17.094m ³	-	£11.594m ⁴	£5.5m (LGF)
M4 J17 Improvement	£2.1m ⁵	TBD	TBD	£0.5m (LGF)

Notes:

1. Local Growth Fund
2. A number of scheme options will be considered as part of the development of the Outline Business Case.
3. Estimated cost as set out in the Outline Business Case submitted to the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Transport Body on 21 April 2015.
4. A 'shared approach' was agreed between Wiltshire Council and the developers of the Ashton Park strategic site as part of a 'Wiltshire Core Strategy Examination in Public Statement of Common Ground'.
5. A more accurate scheme cost will be established through the development of the Outline Business Case in associated with Highways England.

Funding of public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure in Wiltshire

* What is the total cost of new public transport infrastructure planned or commissioned by Wiltshire Council, including schemes under construction? Please list all projects, including

railway stations, bus interchanges, cycleways and improved facilities for pedestrians such as safe routes to schools.

* How much capital will Wiltshire Council contribute to the cost of each scheme?

* How much capital will developers contribute to the cost of each scheme? Please identify the source of such funding, eg from Community Infrastructure Levy or Section 106 agreements.

Response:

For integrated transport the capital budget for 2015/16 was £3.844m.

The total cost of Wiltshire Council funded public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure planned in 2015/16 is estimated at **£982,900** (comprising £636,000 pedestrian, £314,900 cycling and £32,000 public transport)

The total cost of developer funded (S106) cycling and pedestrian infrastructure planned in 2015/16 is **£478,200** (comprising £78,000 pedestrian and £400,200 cycling. There are no developer funded public transport schemes planned in 2015/16.

See attached table for more details.

* What is the revenue support budget for subsidising public transport services in the current financial year?

Response:

This year's revenue budget for 'subsidising public transport' is as follows (Note: this is technically not a subsidy, rather payments that Wiltshire Council makes to operators for the services they run under contract):

- Bus services; £2,780,600 Wiltshire Council funding plus £984,500 Bus Service Operators Grant (ringfenced)
- Connect 2 Wiltshire demand responsive services; £532,100
- Park & Ride; £491,600
- Community Transport grants; £324,400.

* What does the Council expect to spend on subsidising public transport in the next financial year?

Response:

The Council is currently undertaking a passenger transport review. The following was included in the recent pre-consultation with stakeholders and partners:

Although the importance of good passenger transport services is recognised, Wiltshire Council faces significant budget constraints. Over the next few years we will have to manage savings of at least £140 million (made up of projected cuts to funding plus the increase in demographics and demand into the major services), on top of the major reductions in spending that have already been achieved in recent years. Passenger Transport will have to bear its share of these reductions, and the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy envisages a reduction of £2.5 million in spending on passenger transport. This is equivalent to some 60% of the 2015/16 budgets for supporting public and community transport services. This will require close scrutiny of all areas of passenger transport spending, including support for public and community transport.

Staffing and expertise in the Council's transport teams

* In view of the scale and complexity of the work undertaken by its transport officers would the Council please list all officers responsible for delivering the above programme of work together with the relevant professional qualifications held by each of them?

Response:

The following tables provide the professional qualifications of the most relevant Wiltshire Council officers and Atkins employees (Atkins is Wiltshire Council's term consultant for transport planning and engineering). It should be noted that other officers in the Highways and Transport Group (e.g. traffic engineers and passenger transport officers) and in Wiltshire Council as a whole (e.g. legal and finance officers) provide additional support.

Wiltshire Council:

Post	Professional Qualifications
Associate Director	BSc MSc CEng Fellow of Institute of Civil engineers Fellow of Chartered Institute of Highways and Transport
Transport Planning Assistant	BSc (Hons) Geography
Senior Transport Planner	BSc in Physics and Applied Physics MSc in Transport and Planning
Traffic Engineering Manager	Incorporated Engineer (I.Eng) Member of Institute of Civil Engineers (MICE)
Policy Development Principal Assistant, Passenger Transport	BSc Natural Sciences Member of The Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (MCIHT)
Transport Planner	MSc Transport Planning
Principal Traffic Engineer	BEng (Hons) Incorporated Engineer (I.Eng) Fellow of Institute of Highway Engineers (FIHE)
Senior Transport Planner	MSc Transport Planning
Structures & Highway Improvements Manager	MEng (Hons) Civil Engineering Chartered Engineer (CEng MICE)
Head of Passenger Transport	MSc Transport Planning Member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CMILT)
Transport Operations Manager, Passenger	BA Management Studies Certificate of Professional Competence
Senior Transport Planner	MSc Transport Planning

Post	Professional Qualifications
Senior Transport Planner	BA(Hons) Geography MSc Transport Planning Member of The Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (MCIHT)
Senior Transport Planner	BA (Hons) Urban Studies MSc Transport Planning
Principal Traffic Engineer	Incorporated Engineer (I.Eng) Fellow of Institute of Highway Engineers (FIHE) Member of The Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (MCIHT)
Bus Network Manager, Passenger	HND Business Studies Member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CMILT)
Principal Transport Planner – Transport Policy	BA (Hons) Geography and Planning with Economics MA Geographical Information Systems MA Town and County Planning PGCert Transport Planning Chartered Town Planner (MRTPI)
Principal Transport Planner – Transport Strategy	BSc Engineering Geology
Senior Transport Planner	BA (Hons) Geography
Principal Traffic Engineer	Incorporated Engineer (I.Eng) Associate Member of Institute of Civil Engineers (AMICE)

Atkins:

Post	Professional Qualifications
Design Engineer	BSc (Hons) Manufacturing Technology with Management
Landscape Engineer	BSc (Hons) B.Arch DipLD (Diploma in Landscape Design) MA Chartered Member of Landscape Institute (CMLI), Architects Registration Board (ARB)

Post	Professional Qualifications
Senior Engineer	BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering Chartered Engineer (MICE) Chartered Member of the Institution of Water and Environmental Management (MCIWEM) CSCS accredited
Transport Planner	BA (Hons) Geography, MSc Transport Planning, CMILT
Transport Modeller	BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering MTech Transportation Engineering Member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CMILT)
Transport Modeller	BA (Hons) Geography
Group Engineer	BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering Chartered Engineer (MICE)
Senior Engineer – Traffic Signals	MEng Chartered Engineer, Member of the Institution of Engineering and Technology (MIET) Sector 8 Certified
Transport Planner	BSc (Hons) Oceanography with Physical Geography MSc Transport Planning & Engineering Member of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CMILT)

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Questions received from Trowbridge Town Council

1. For consideration as item 2 on the Wiltshire Council Cabinet agenda today in the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21st July 2015 at paragraph 89 are details of the discussion and resolution regarding asset transfers and service delegation to Salisbury City Council.

Question 1. How can Wiltshire Council believe that this will be a model for other town and parish councils to negotiate asset transfer and service delegation opportunities if, as a result of the likely failure of the community governance review, Wiltshire Council will ensure that otherwise sustainable towns will for the foreseeable future be the responsibility of multiple parish councils in addition to the main town councils, resulting in a lack of coordinated strategy to deliver such services and manage such assets? And does Wiltshire Council appreciate that if the community governance review fails to adequately address the boundary issues relating to the growth of Salisbury it may even put at risk the asset transfer to Salisbury City Council?

2. For consideration as item 7 on the Wiltshire Council Cabinet agenda today in the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report at paragraph 19 it states that the Communications and Communities department will be; 'seeking greater community ownership.'

Question 2. How can Wiltshire Council reconcile this desire to achieve greater community ownership of wider responsibilities with the likely failure of the community governance review to deliver communities which are capable of or willing to deliver services strategically and assist Wiltshire Council to build a better Wiltshire?

3. Also in the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report at paragraph 25 it states that the Highways department is facing pressures of £130,000 for the RUH Hopper bus service and £1.42million in other public transport budgets.

Question 3. Does Wiltshire Council agree that town and parish councils would be in a good position to assist with funding bus services, but that without clearly defined community boundaries the opportunity for parish and town councils to do that would be severely compromised and therefore such opportunities are once again at risk of been ignored if the community governance review fails to achieve this?

Response

The underlying theme of each of the questions is the community governance review which Wiltshire Council is currently undertaking. Whilst the Town Council's comments should be

directed to full council to whom decisions on community governance reviews are reserved, I will take this opportunity to respond to them as they are both premature and ill-founded. Under section 93 Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Wiltshire Council has the power to undertake reviews of the whole or part of its area, with a view to determining whether to make changes to the community governance of its area. These are known as Community Governance Reviews (CGR) and cover such matters as changes to parish boundaries, the electoral arrangements for parishes and the creation or abolition of parishes.

A CGR must reflect the identities and interests of the communities in that area and also facilitate effective and convenient local government. Consequently, a CGR must take into account the impact of community governance arrangements on community cohesion, and the size, population and boundaries of a local community or parish.

Over the years, the Council has received a number of requests from town and parish councils for such reviews of their areas to be undertaken. It was agreed in November 2013 that the Council would proceed to consider the requests that had been received and an exercise was undertaken to identify any further areas that might be appropriate to review. This led to the creation of a working party in February 2014 to conduct reviews of those areas that had been identified and to make recommendations to full Council. The Working Party, which has cross-party membership, have no decision-making powers and can only make recommendations to full Council. Terms of reference were approved for this working party. These identified the areas to be reviewed and the issues to be considered in respect of each of those areas. They also set out the consultation process to be followed.

When conducting a CGR, the Council must consult local government electors for the area(s) under review and other persons or organisations that appear to have an interest in the review. They then have a duty to take into account any representations received in connection with the review. Subject to those duties, it is for the Council to decide how to undertake the review.

The terms of reference for the Working Party provide that they will identify relevant consultees and determine the most appropriate and effective methods of communication. Any representations received as result of the consultation process will be considered by the Working Party and be taken into account in formulating recommendations to the Council. The Working Party have considered the requests for reviews that have been received from town and parish councils with a view to formulating options for any possible changes to governance arrangements. Meetings have been held with relevant parties to receive further details and to clarify the issues involved.

The Working Party have carefully considered all of the proposals put forward and any additional information submitted and have now formulated options for formal consultation. The method of consultation varies depending on the number of properties potentially affected by the proposals. Where only a limited number of properties are affected, individual letters are being sent out to the households concerned. With larger schemes, public meetings are to be held. In all cases, the town or parish council is being directly consulted and details will be on the Council's website.

Following receipt of responses to the consultation, the Working Party will make recommendations to full Council in November 2015.

Whilst the Working Party are consulting on proposals or options that they consider best meet the relevant criteria, the consultation documents also give an opportunity for responders to put forward any other views they may have about the review if they wish. These will be considered by the Working Party and reported to the Council. It will be for full Council to decide how to proceed in relation to each of the areas under review. Council may decide that

there should be further consultation on alternative proposals. Nothing has been formally rejected at this stage.

In conducting the review, the Council is complying fully with the requirements of the relevant legislation and Government Guidance. The review has reached the point where the formal consultation process is starting. At this stage, therefore, all options are still open to the Council.

A progress report will be presented to full Council on 29th September. A full report with the Working Party's recommendations will be presented to full Council on 24th November.

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