

## Councillors Briefing Note No. 285

**Service:** Highways services

**Further Enquiries to:** Philip Whitehead

**Date Prepared:** 14 March 2016

**Direct Line:** (01225) 718277

### **Wiltshire Council highways service praised**

Strong leadership, effective local decision-making and an efficient, lean service were some of the findings from an independent review of Wiltshire Council's highway services.

The peer review saw a team of seven local authority and local government peers visit the council for three days in February. They met with a wide range of partners and staff at all levels to discuss how the service is currently run.

The review was very positive with the peer challenge team concluding that the council is successfully investing in the highways infrastructure, harnessing the knowledge and energy in local communities to improve outcomes and delivering Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership schemes on time and to budget.

Peer reviews are arranged by the Local Government Association and are designed to highlight strengths and identify areas for further improvement and learning.

The council's key strengths identified were:

The service managed the termination of the highways contract and the very challenging procurement of the new contract effectively

Harnessing the knowledge and energy in local communities has led to improved outcomes and additional funding

There is a clear positive intent amongst staff and partners to ensure the service is successful

Strong and capable senior political leadership which gives clear and consistent vision

The case has been successfully made for investment in the infrastructure and in an asset management approach/methodology

Areas for development included:

Clarity needed about how the wider council vision and transformation cascades to the highways and transport service

Consider the development of a performance management framework to underpin delivery of strategic outcomes

Ensure IT systems support integration and workflow/ feedback

Recognise and plan for the risks associated with the significant challenges faced over the coming months

A report on the peer review will be presented to full council later this year