

# Scrutiny Committee Agenda



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Date: 16 August 2011  
Website: [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

A meeting of the  
**Scrutiny Committee**  
will be held on Wednesday 24 August 2011  
at 7pm  
Abbey House, Abingdon

## Members of the Committee:

### Councillors

Jim Halliday (Chair)  
Melinda Tilley (Vice-Chairman)  
Eric Batts  
Andrew Crawford  
Jane Crossley  
Tony de Vere

Charlotte Dickson  
Jason Fiddaman  
Bill Jones  
Sandy Lovatt  
Julie Mayhew-Archer  
Fiona Roper

A large print version of this agenda is available. In addition any background papers referred to may be inspected by prior arrangement.

Please note that this meeting will be held in a wheelchair accessible venue. If you would like to attend and have any special access requirements, please let the Democratic Services Officers know beforehand and they will do their very best to meet your requirements.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M Reed".

Margaret Reed  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Members are reminded of the provisions contained in the code of conduct adopted on 30 September 2007 and standing order 34 regarding the declaration of personal and prejudicial interests.

# Agenda

## Open to the Public including the Press

### Map and vision

(Page 5)

A map showing the location of the venue for this meeting is attached. A link to information about nearby car parking is [http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/transport/car\\_parking/default.asp](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/transport/car_parking/default.asp)

The council's vision is to build and safeguard a fair, open and compassionate community.

### 1. Notification of substitutes and apologies for absence

To record the attendance of substitute members, if any, who have been authorised to attend in accordance with the provisions of standing order 17(1), with notification having been given to the proper officer before the start of the meeting and to receive apologies for absence.

### 2. Minutes

To adopt and sign as a correct records the minutes of the committee meetings held on 23 June and 21 July 2011 (previously published).

### 3. Declarations of interest

To receive any declarations of personal or personal and prejudicial interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

### 4. Urgent business and chair's announcements

To receive notification of any matters, which the chair determines, should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances, which have made the matters urgent, and to receive any announcements from the chair.

### 5. Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting the Scrutiny Committee

Any statements and/or petitions from the public under standing order 32 will be made or presented at the meeting.

## **6. Leisure contract monitoring - DC Leisure**

(Pages 6 - 13)

To consider report 16/11 of the head of economy, leisure, and property.

## **7. Independent review on the conduct of the 2011 local elections**

To continue the committee's consideration of the independent review report on the conduct of the 2011 local elections.

Mr Tim Revell, Local Democracy Consultant, appointed to undertake the review, presented his report to the committee meeting held on 21 July 2011 and responded to questions. Mr David Buckle, Returning Officer, and his deputy returning officers also answered questions. However, the committee ran out of time to consider Mr Revell's recommendations and deferred consideration to this meeting.

Committee members are requested to bring their report with them to this meeting. This formed part of the agenda for 21 July meeting.

## **8. Annual equality and diversity update**

(Pages 14 - 20)

To consider report 17/11 of the head of corporate strategy.

## **9. Review of progress against the energy efficiency (carbon management) plan 2010/11**

(Pages 21 - 26)

To consider report 18/11 of the head of corporate strategy.

## **10. Scrutiny work programme**

(Pages 27 - 30)

To consider the attached scrutiny work programme, amend as necessary and recommend its approval to council.

## **11. Exclusion of the public, including the press**

The chair to move that in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the remainder of the meeting to prevent the disclosure to them of exempt information, as defined in Section 100(I) and Part 1 of Schedule 12A, as amended, to the Act when the following item is considered:

### **Leisure contract monitoring**

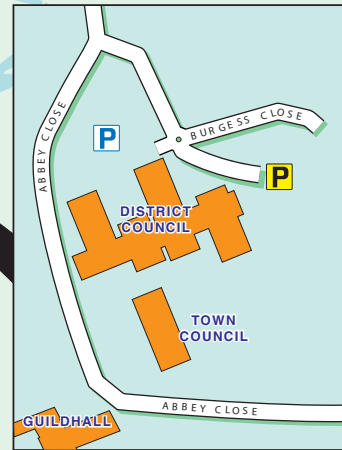
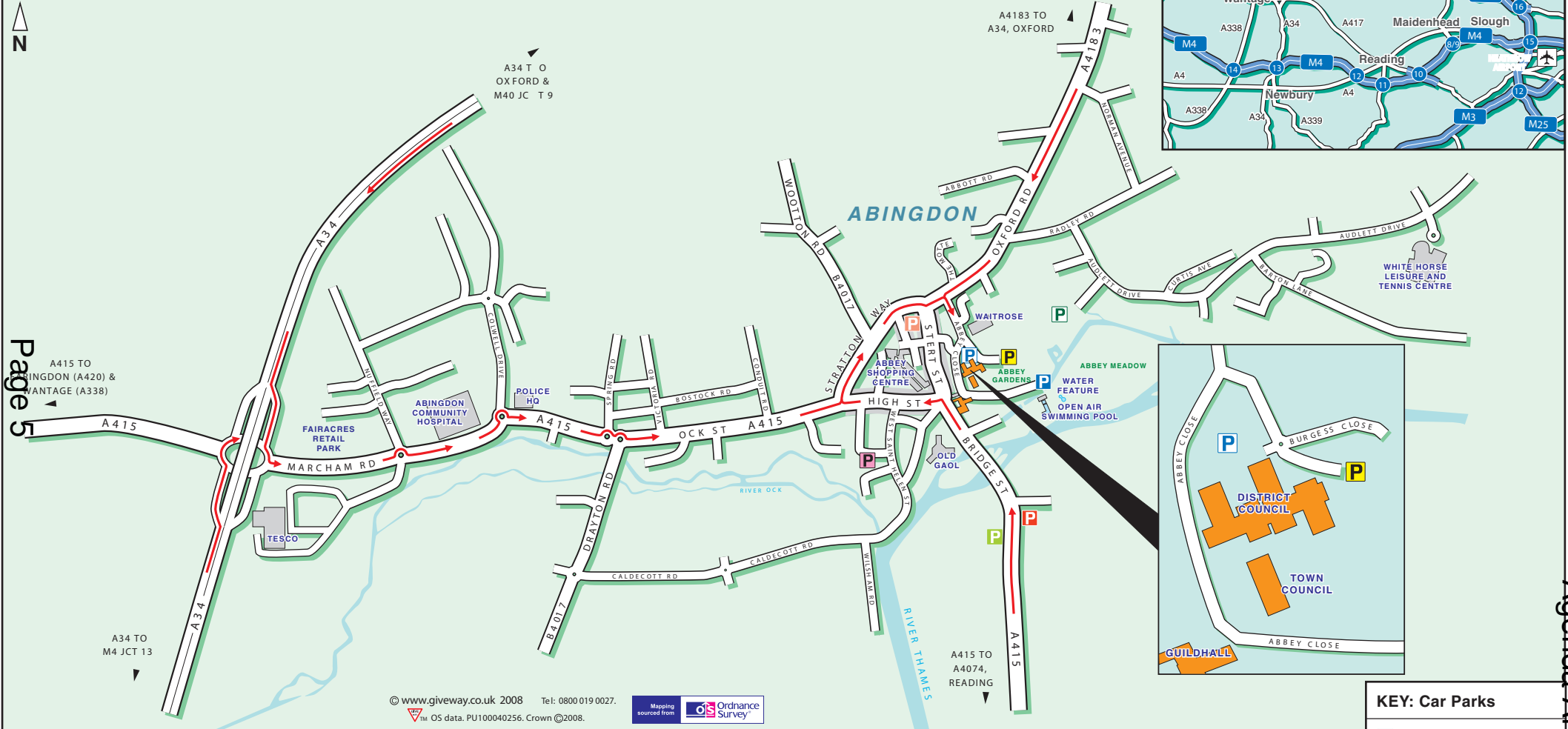
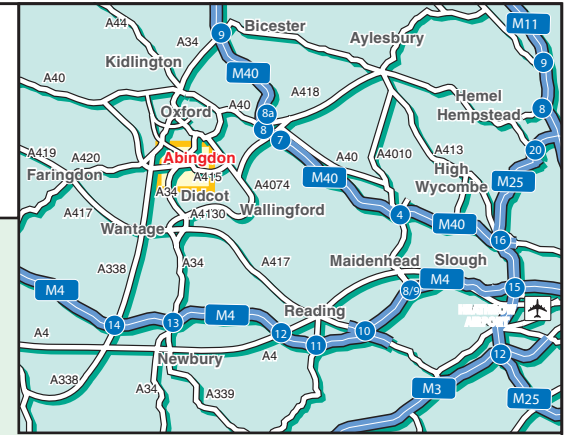
(Category 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.)

**Exempt information under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972**

**12. Leisure contract monitoring - DC Leisure**

**(Pages 31 - 42)**

To consider the confidential annexes to report 16/11 of the head of economy, leisure and property.



**KEY: Car Parks**

	Abbey Close
	Cattle Market
	Charter Multi-storey
	Civic
	Rye Farm
	Hales Meadow
	Audlett Drive
	West St Helen Street

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**By bus** – there are a number of bus routes serving Abingdon town centre. For details of services and timetables, visit Oxfordshire County Council’s website at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk). Contact details for bus operators can be found on the travel information pages on our website [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

**Parking** – details of car parks charges can be found on our website

# Scrutiny Committee



## 24 August 2011

Report of head of economy leisure and property

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To: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 24 August 2011

Report no. 16/11

## DC Leisure performance review 2010/11

### RECOMMENDATION

That the committee considers DC Leisure's performance in delivering the leisure management contract for the period 2010/11 for the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre and makes any recommendations to the cabinet member for leisure to enable her to make a final assessment on performance.

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The report considers the performance of DC Leisure Ltd in delivering the leisure management contract at the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011. Following the scrutiny committee's meeting on 23 June 2011, officers amended the report to address points raised by the committee.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2. The performance review of DC Leisure Ltd helps ensure that the Vale Council is achieving its strategic objectives and corporate priorities, particularly the following:  
strategic objective 2: managing our business effectively, and corporate priority EB1: provide value for money services that meet the needs of our residents and service users – through negotiations with DC Leisure the Vale Council has procured an extension to the existing contract, which delivers an income stream up to 2014 when the contract will be aligned with the Vale Council's other leisure management contract. Annual customer satisfaction surveys are undertaken to monitor that

customer needs are being met and action plans put in place to address areas in need of improvement.

strategic objective 2: managing our business effectively, and corporate priority EB2: optimise access to our services – by working collaboratively with DC Leisure and our various customer panels we will increase awareness of the Access to Leisure scheme. With the introduction of schemes such as GO Active into the centre's programme, officers anticipate that new users will be encouraged to visit the centre, as well as regular users continuing to participate in activities.

strategic objective 5: helping to maintain a safe Vale, and corporate priorities SV1: help to maintain, or further reduce, low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour and SV2: reduce the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour – structured leisure activities can divert people from crime and anti-social behaviour. Those participating in regular physical activity tend to have a lower fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.

## **BACKGROUND**

3. The DC Leisure Ltd contract for managing the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre was let from 1 April 2002 for a ten year period ending on 31 March 2012. Due to improved tax benefits, the Vale Council allowed DC Leisure to sub-let the contract to a charitable not for profit organisation, the former Community Leisure Services (now known as Active Nation). Both companies were involved in the centre from the design stage. However, for the purposes of this report, DC Leisure is the main contractor and the organisation that is accountable to the Vale Council for the centre's performance. The original contract required the Vale Council to pay DC Leisure a nominal annual sum.
4. In 2009/10 the Vale Council negotiated an extension to the original contract, which allows DC Leisure to continue its arrangements with Active Nation up to 31 August 2014. In return for this extension, the Vale Council receives a monthly payment from DC Leisure from 1 April 2010 until 31 August 2014. The change in end date allows all of the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire leisure management contracts to run conterminously; presenting opportunities for increased shared working in the future.
5. DC Leisure and Active Nation have maintained their performance during 2010/11, by increasing the size and skill base of their management team at the centre and ensuring the whole team performs to the best of its abilities. Since the centre opened in 2002, there has been a significant increase in competition to the centre in the local area in the form of built leisure facilities and the trend towards private training and other lifestyle providers. Despite this, the centre continues to perform well in all areas of its programmed activities.
6. The Vale Council monitors this contract on a monthly basis; each visit is unannounced and follows a detailed check list. Throughout the year, eight of these visits will be normal operational inspections and four will be based on health and safety. Areas that require immediate improvement are notified to the contractor before the officer leaves site and a full report detailing all findings is issued to the contractor within two days of the inspection; along with a summary section detailing required actions and deadlines for completion.
7. In addition to the formal inspections, there are formal monthly client / contractor meetings at the centre where any relevant issues are discussed. These visits also allow for ad-hoc inspections to take place. There are quarterly strategic meetings,

which allow for medium to long-term issues to be discussed and planned for but any important issues can be raised and resolved should they arise.

8. Managing contractor performance is essential for delivering the council's objectives and targets. The Vale Council cannot deliver excellent service to its residents unless its contractors are excellent. Working jointly with contractors to review performance regularly is therefore essential.
9. The Vale Council's process for managing contractor performance focuses on continuous improvement and action planning. The success of the performance review framework depends on contractors and the council working together to set and review realistic, jointly agreed and measurable targets.
10. The overall framework is designed to be:
  - a consistent way for the council to consistently measure contractor performance, to help highlight and resolve operational issues
  - flexible enough to suit each contract, including smaller contracts which may not require all elements of the framework
  - a step towards managing risk more effectively and improving performance through action planning.

## OVERVIEW OF THE REVIEW FRAMEWORK

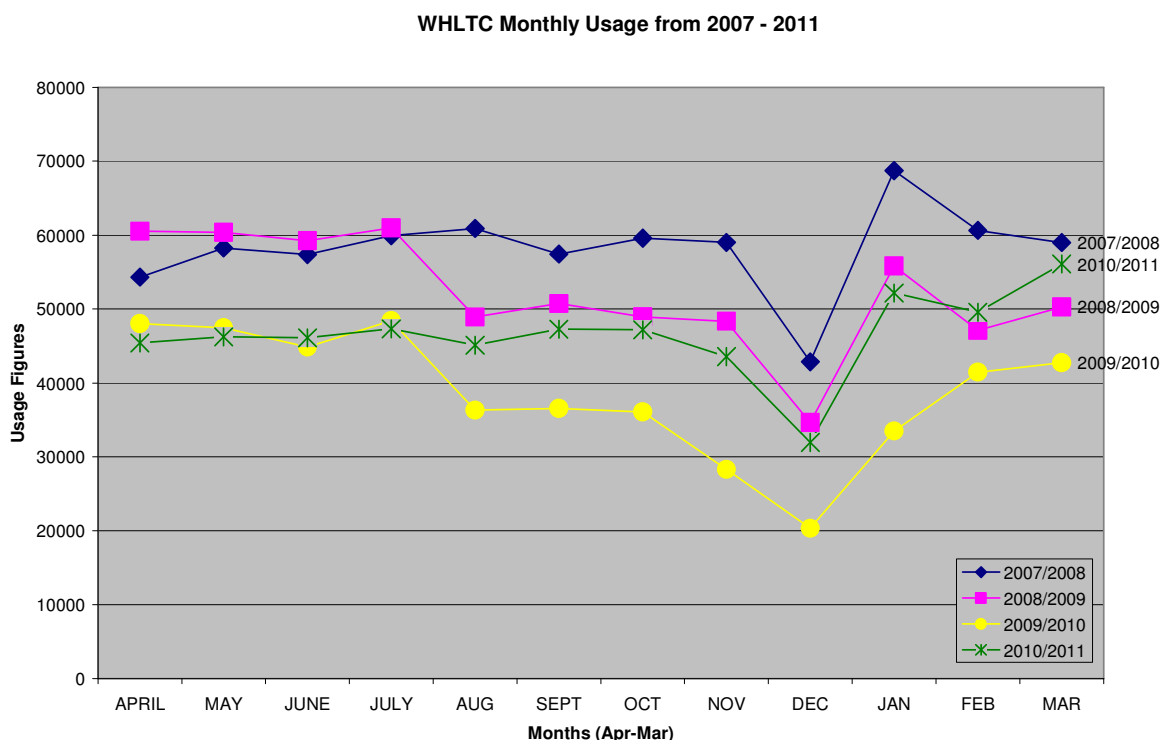
11. The review process consists of three essential dimensions:
  1. performance measured against key performance indicators (KPIs)
  2. customer satisfaction with the total service experience
  3. Vale Council satisfaction as client.
12. Each dimension is assessed and the head of service makes a judgement of classification. Contractor feedback and an assessment of strengths and areas for improvement are also included. Where some dimensions are not relevant, or difficult to apply fairly to certain types of contract, the framework may be adjusted or simplified at the discretion of the heads of service. In the case of this review, there are no key performance indicators to measure performance against in dimension 1, so trend monitoring is used to track performance instead.

## DIMENSION 1 – TREND MONITORING

13. The DC Leisure contract was not set up using key performance targets as measures of achievement. The client team has introduced a monitoring process, which provides a trend analysis of key areas of performance. Detailed trend analysis of the data appears in confidential annex A attached to this report.
14. The data is based on the following criteria monitored on a quarterly basis:
  - **number of visits (the total number of users who pay to use the facility as either casual customers or members)**  
attendance at the centre in 2010/11 (558,024 visits) has recovered well after the major pool pipe failure in November - December 2009/10 (477,158 visits),



although is still lower than usage in 2008/09 (603,045) and 2007/08 (698,099). Monthly usage figures for 2007-2011 are shown in the following graph:



Active Nation has launched a number of initiatives to encourage an increase in participation; trying to resist the national trend of reducing numbers of people taking part in formal indoor activities. One area of potential growth is outdoor-based fitness and Active Nation is working with officers to consider the options for implementing an outdoor-based programme at the site.

- **subsidy per visit (the management fee paid by the council divided by the number of visits)**

the subsidy arrangements for the centre changed in April 2009. Since 2002, the council had paid a nominal sum of £500 a year to DC Leisure to operate the centre. Since April 2010, DC Leisure has paid the council a significant annual sum for an extension to the contract until 31 August 2014.

- **maintenance costs (the expenditure from the contractor for maintenance is divided by the square meterage of the facility)**

the centre has been maintained to a good level and continues to retain its core customer base. The expenditure on maintenance is at a level expected for the age and needs of the facility and will need to be enhanced as age inevitably takes its toll. Maintenance costs have remained within 11 per cent over the past three years, which is considered commendable with material costs increasing and the building requiring more and more work; it is unlikely that these costs will reduce despite the best procurement skills of the contractor.

- **utility costs (the contractor's expenditure on utilities is divided by the square meterage of the facility)**

costs associated with utilities will continue to rise despite DC Leisure's and the Vale Council's best efforts to reduce consumption. The Vale Council is working

closely with DC Leisure to introduce green technology and agreements to recover council investment costs and share savings are being negotiated during 2011/12. Lighting projects and the procurement and installation of a pool cover are already underway, with estimated savings of £11,849 a year being achieved from the pool covers alone these installations were completed in June 2011.

15. In comparison to our other leisure management contract (for Wantage and Faringdon leisure centres and Tilsley Park), the above trends are largely comparable taking into account the older age of these buildings and the design and technologies used in the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre (which is eight years younger than Tilsley Park and 28 years younger than Wantage Leisure Centre).
16. It is recognised that the outcomes of these key areas of performance are to some extent outside of the contractor's control. The criteria that are monitored as part of this contract do not give a basis to form a score as there is no requirement within the contract for the contractor to improve performance. Therefore, the head of service recommends that this dimension of the review is not scored.

## **DIMENSION 2 – CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

17. A customer satisfaction survey was developed by officers and DC Leisure. Centre staff encouraged customers to complete the survey. A total of 143 completed surveys were received (171 surveys were returned in 2009/10) which represents only 0.003 per cent of total visits (558,024) and so results should be treated with an element of caution. The survey covers a range of customer-related issues from the start of their relationship with the facility to the time they leave the building. The survey also captures equalities data, which will assist in developing the leisure equalities impact assessments potentially leading to future service improvements. Customers were asked to score each of the 32 satisfaction categories on a scale of 1 (poor) - 5 (excellent). This resulted in an average score of 3.59, which is similar to last year's score of 3.6 which resulted in a mark of fair. Many of the scores for the different elements across the two years are similar.
18. Consideration was given to undertaking electronic surveys but based on response rates received by other contractors who have trialled this; it was decided to continue with face to face surveys to ensure a valid response rate.
19. Additional comments were encouraged on the completed survey documents where customers could provide more feedback as to how various elements of the service could be improved or changed. These comments ranged from better standards of cleanliness to changes in the menu in the café, pool temperature and car parking. An analysis of customer satisfaction performance appears in annex B attached.
20. An action plan based on the key areas of both customer and council satisfaction comments during the 2010/11 performance review can be found in annex C of this report. Progress against this action plan will be reported as part of the 2011/12 performance review and can be compared against future satisfaction reports. To assist the committee, the action plan for 2010/11, based on the 2009/10 performance review, has been included as annex D.
21. Whilst cleanliness still remains the area where the greatest number of comments are received, the number of customers who raised this as part of the customer satisfaction survey has reduced from 42 in 2009/10 to 25 in 2010/11. This is due to a concerted

effort to respond to the previous year's survey results by introducing regular deep cleaning of the pool changing area and a trial of using external contractors to undertake the majority of cleaning in the centre. The reduction in comments is positive and further efforts in this area will hopefully reduce the number further.

22. The 2009/10 survey suggested that a review of the range of food and drink available from the café was required. As a result, the sandwich supplier has been changed and the range of food available in the café amended to add more variety for customers and provide a wider range of healthier options. The on-going review of food options features on the 2011/12 action plan also.

23. The tidiness of the reception desk was also a source of customer dissatisfaction from the 2009/10 customer survey. Active Nation has incorporated this as a check on the opening/closing procedures for this area and no concerns have been raised through the monthly inspections regime. No further comments have been received from customers regarding this.

24. The other areas where a high number of comments were received included the telephone system where 10 comments were recorded in both 2009/10 and 2010/11. The telephone system was upgraded in 2009 with facilities to filter calls and provide a menu option to try and reduce the number of calls requiring an operator. The client team will further investigate additional improvements to the system with DC Leisure and Active Nation as part of the 2011/12 action plan.

25. The three areas showing the largest difference in scores between the 2009/10 and 2010/11 surveys were as follows:

- how customer issues were dealt with – this element showed an improvement of 0.41 per cent which can largely be attributed to the emphasis and additional training given to the reception and duty manager team as well as changes to some of those teams in terms of personnel
- quality of information on notice boards - a decrease in satisfaction of 0.21 per cent was noticed in comparison to the 2009/10 survey results. This is due to a policy change within Active Nation to encourage customers to talk to staff by decreasing the amount of posters etc cluttering the centre. This is an item on the action plan for 2011/12
- quality of lighting in the sports hall/activity area - an increase in satisfaction of 0.43 per cent achieved due to the re-lamping of all of the main areas of the centre, including the sports hall.

26. For reasons of consistency with previous assessments and for fairness between contractors, the following is a rough guide to the assessment of contractors on customer satisfaction:

Score	4.3 – 5.0	3.9 – 4.3	3.4 – 3.9	3.0 – 3.4	<3.0
Classification	Excellent	Good	<b>Fair</b>	Weak	Poor

27. Based on this performance and an average score of 3.59, the head of service has made a judgement on customer satisfaction as fair; this is consistent with the fair judgement that was awarded in 2009/10.

Customer satisfaction judgement Fair

### **DIMENSION 3 – COUNCIL SATISFACTION**

28. Various officers have professional interaction with the DC Leisure and Active Nation teams and nine of these officers provided feedback on their experiences of the contractor. An analysis of council satisfaction performance appears in annex E attached to this report, along with the calculations that resulted in a score of 3.44 out of a maximum of 5. DC Leisure was awarded its highest scores for its approach to health and safety, being easy to deal with and the quality of the relationship. Its lowest score was for compliance with the Vale Council's corporate identity, a matter which is to be challenged in the forthcoming year. Areas where improvements are required are included within the 2011/12 action plan, which can be found in annex C.
29. Based on this performance and a score of 3.44, the head of service has made a judgement on council satisfaction as fair; this is lower than the good judgement that was awarded in 2009/10 with a mark of 3.96. The difference in scores can be largely attributed to the positive approach that Active Nation demonstrated during the 2009 swimming pool closure, which contributed to the higher 2009/10 council satisfaction rating.

Council satisfaction judgement Fair

### **OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

30. The Vale Council considers that DC Leisure has continued to provide a consistent level of service throughout 2010/11. Overall user figures appear to have picked up from the low in 2009/10 experienced due to the unforeseeable closure of the pool following the pool pipe failure.
31. Despite total usage figures having recovered from the swimming pool closure, the 2010/11 wet side figures are still lower than in 2009/10. This is almost certainly due to the accuracy of the raw data captured and the open design of the centre's reception desk, which allows customers to bypass the desk if they are members. In 2008 there was an experiment to position turnstiles at the entrance to the pools in order to control entry into this area. These remained in place until mid 2009. This assisted in distorting the user figures to a higher level as every spectator and person accompanying a swimmer was counted every time they passed through the turnstiles (in the case of parents with children on swimming lessons this could be several additional swims recorded for each swimmer), rather than just the swimmer themselves. Since the removal of the turnstiles, some users will have reverted to not swiping in at reception, meaning that having gone from a position of over recording usage we are now under-representing this. The client team will be working with DC Leisure and Active Nation to improve both the reception layout and accuracy of data capture in 2011/12.
32. This will provide a significant challenge to both DC Leisure and Active Nation in the year ahead; however there is a determination to provide accurate data as well as maximising direct interaction at reception with all customers coming into the centre. This may require a new reception design and layout but the improvements will be a benefit in terms of user information gathered.

33. Taking into account the performance of the contractor against customer satisfaction and council satisfaction, the head of service has made an overall judgement as follows. Recognising the high importance of customer satisfaction, this dimension is accorded greater weight in the judgement. This is consistent with the fair judgement that was awarded in 2009/10.

Overall assessment 

Fair
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## **STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

34. A key feature of the process for reviewing the performance of contractors is that the council provides them with an opportunity to give their feedback on the assessment, including suggestions for improvements to council processes. This is included in annex F attached to this report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

35. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

36. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **CONCLUSION**

37. The head of economy, leisure and property has assessed DC Leisure's performance as **Fair** for its delivery of the leisure management contract for the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre. The committee is asked to make any recommendations to the cabinet member for leisure to enable her to make a final assessment on performance and to enhance the action plan, which is currently being developed.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- none

# Scrutiny Committee

## 24 August 2011



Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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To: Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 24 August 2011

Report no. 17/11

## Annual equality and diversity update

### Purpose of Report

1. This report provides the annual update of progress on the council's equality and diversity work. It outlines the progress the council has made in delivering its Corporate Equality Action Plan (CEAP) during 2010/11, to ensure that we are providing accessible services and employment opportunities to everyone in line with current legislation and the Equality Framework for Local Government.
2. The committee is asked to note the progress made.

### Strategic Objectives

3. Our work on equality and diversity links to our strategic objective of managing our business effectively and is fundamental to achieving our corporate priority to optimism access to its services.

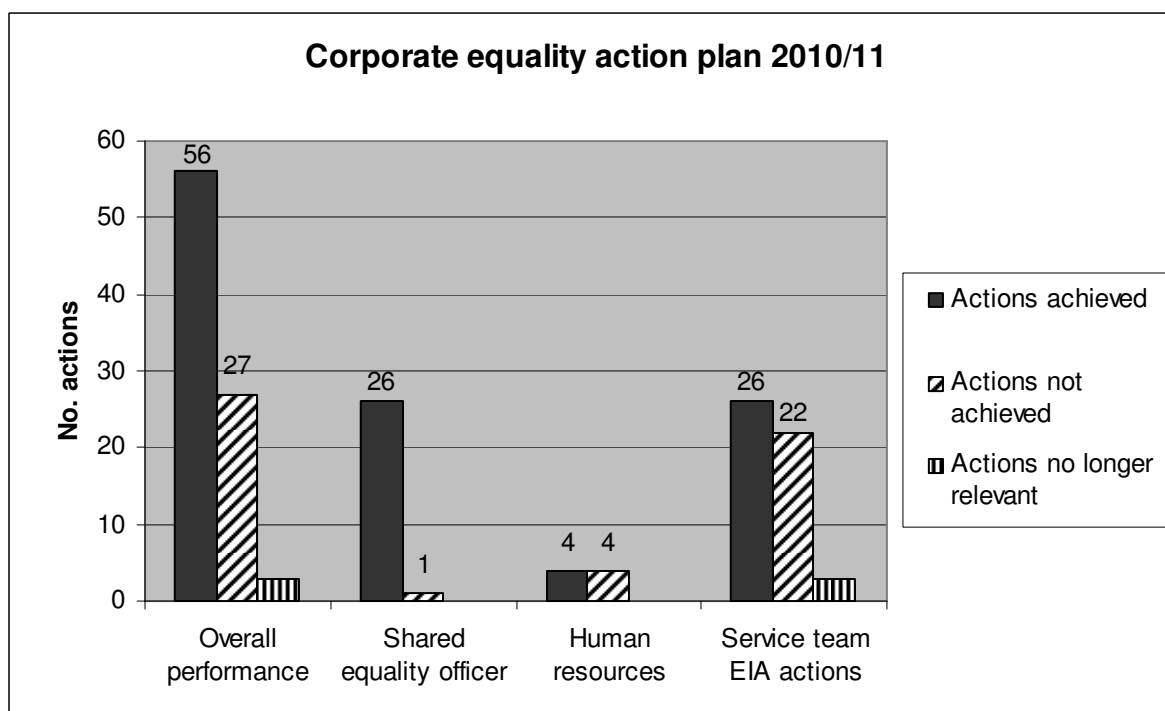
### Background

4. The CEAP is a three year plan and aims to deliver the commitments we set out in our Equality and Diversity Scheme 2008 - 2011. It is reviewed and updated annually to take into account the changing needs of our residents, staff, councillors and partners. The CEAP for 2010/11 was the final year of the Plan.
5. It also brings together the main activities we need to carry out in order to meet our legal duties. In summary, current legislation requires us to:

- eliminate any potential for unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity in service delivery and employment between people who share a protected characteristic<sup>1</sup> and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not<sup>2</sup>.

## Overall performance in delivering the 2010/11 CEAP

6. We have made good progress during 2010/11 towards the completion of our CEAP. The following table shows the overall performance across the council, the performance of the shared equalities officer, HR team and completed equality impact assessment (EIAs) service team actions. The vast majority of outstanding actions relate to service team EIA's, discussions are being held with the relevant heads of service to ensure those actions are completed in 2011/12.



7. A copy of the plan, annotated with progress notes is available as a background paper and key achievements during the year are outlined below.

## Preparing for the Equality Act 2010

8. In order to ensure the council was ready to implement the requirements of the Act we:
- produced a briefing note on the main implications of the Act and provided guidance and codes of practice to relevant staff, contractors and HR

<sup>1</sup> A "protected characteristic" under the Act: colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion, belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity

<sup>2</sup> Bullets two and three do not apply to the protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership

- carried out consultation with residents, stakeholders and councillors to check what else, if anything, we need to do to make sure services are delivered fairly to service users and employees protected by the Act
- produced a draft harmonised equality policy which cabinet approved in July 2011.

## **Advancing equality of opportunity**

9. During 2010/11 we continued to engage with local residents who may face barriers when trying to access council services during 2010/11:

### **SUPPORTING THE VALE DISABILITY ACCESS GROUP**

10. During the past 12 months, we have continued to support the Vale Disability Access Group, in partnership with Sovereign Vale. The group consists of vale residents who either have a disability or care for a disabled relative or friend. They meet on a quarterly basis to increase their awareness about council and housing association services and give feed back on our services in terms of disability equality.
11. During 2010/11 the group received presentations about the new waste service, and the accessibility of seating in council parks. They also had the opportunity to provide feedback on EIAs, the budget and the polling station review.
12. We continued our community leadership role in helping the group to carry out an access review of shops in Bury Street Abingdon. Group members carried out the mystery shop visits looking specifically at: ease of access to the shops, accessibility once inside and staff knowledge of services provided for people with mobility, hearing, visual or speech problems. 24 out of 31 shops assessed were considered 'disability friendly'. Those businesses that were not, received constructive feedback about how they could improve access.

### **WORKING WITH THE EMBRACE PARTNERSHIP**

13. During 2010/11, we continued to engage with people from ethnic minorities in the district via the Embrace partnership. Embrace involves a range of agencies from the public and voluntary sectors that work together to find ways of getting service information out to people from different cultures and hearing their views.
14. In the past 12 months, the partners have delivered a number of initiatives across southern Oxfordshire, including:
  - building links with organisations supporting ethnic minority residents in southern Oxfordshire, through regular meetings
  - producing a quarterly newsletter to organisations supporting ethnic minority residents in southern Oxfordshire and our ethnicity panel.

## **Mainstreaming equality**

15. Mainstreaming equality is key to advancing equality of opportunity and removing the potential for discrimination. We recognise that this also applies to partnerships and



have produced online guidance in response to a request from the Oxfordshire partnership.<sup>3</sup>

16. During the year we also developed guidance for risk champions on how to consider equality issues within their risk registers and updated the pre qualification questionnaire paperwork (pqq's) for major procurements.<sup>4</sup> In addition we have included equality considerations in; contract documentation for the Citizens Panel and Abbey Meadows contract, strategic intelligence assessment, sexual entertainment venue licensing report, office accommodation and the joint Licensing Policy for the Licensing Act 2003.

## **Internal audit of the corporate equalities work**

17. During the year internal audit carried out a review of the corporate equalities work and reported satisfactory assurance. The audit looked at the councils' policies, procedures and processes to ensure we are compliant with the Equality Framework for Local Government and the Equality Act 2010, equalities training, and access to all buildings run by the council and car parks.

## **Equality impact assessments**

18. We have a legal duty to review all of our services, new policies and strategies to ensure that they remain accessible to all. These reviews are called EIAs. Teams use EIAs to develop action plans to help address any barriers to accessing services<sup>5</sup>, advance equality of opportunity and consider the need to foster good relations between different groups of people. Action plans are monitored through the corporate performance management system.
19. During 2010/11 we completed 12 EIAs<sup>6</sup>, 11 of these were joint assessments with South Oxfordshire District Council. In addition we carried out EIA's on the Vale budget cut proposals and designed a template for assessing the impact of reducing funding to organisations mid year.
20. Consultation is an important part of these reviews. In addition to using service satisfaction and usage data, we consult the Vale Disability Access Group, the ethnicity panel and the vales internal advisory group when relevant<sup>7</sup>. This year we developed this group to include staff representing South Oxfordshire District Council, as the majority of assessments are now joint.
21. Teams made progress during the year in completing their EIA action plans. Some of these improvements are:
  - included articles about flooding in the Embrace key messages sheet
  - updated the councils website to include access information for council parks
  - provided information to Vale Disability Access group and other organisations about grants and services that are available to help people in fuel poverty
  - added google translate and our text phone number to the councils website

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.oxfordshirepartnership.org.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OxfordshirePartnership/Home/Equalities+in+partnerships/>

<sup>4</sup> Further work now required to procurement documentation as a result of the Equality Act 2010

<sup>5</sup> Due to race, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership or rural isolation

<sup>6</sup> EIAs -1 Vale only, 7 joint and 4 joint equality impact checks on policies

<sup>7</sup> Staff who act as a critical friend to help their teams identify actions to advance equality of opportunity for disadvantaged groups

- increased the number of benefit surgeries in Wantage and Faringdon and encouraged people to report any changes in their circumstances through articles in the Embrace key messages sheet and Unvaled
- updated the growth bid proformas to include giving consideration to equality impact
- publicised council tax discounts available on the website
- improved lighting in Abingdon multi-story car park
- updated our parks satisfaction survey to collect information on the accessibility of the parks to inform the new grounds maintenance contract
- leisure contractors publicised the access to leisure scheme to encourage take up of the scheme.

## **Raising awareness about equality of opportunity**

22. During 2010/11 the council has delivered a number of actions in the CEAP designed to increase people's understanding of diversity and its relevance to council business and wider community cohesion. For example we:

- scoped induction training for new councillors
- reviewed staff training needs and identified suitable training for inclusion in the corporate training program<sup>8</sup>
- ran a 'respecting difference' session at the youth forum
- arranged carers awareness training
- in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council we are producing briefing papers<sup>9</sup> to help understand the communities we serve, identify inequalities and inform service delivery.

## **Ensuring equality of access for councillors and staff**

23. The council wants to ensure that we are providing equality opportunities to staff and councillors. During 2010/11 we:

- included a positive statement about support for disabled councillors and welcoming candidates from all backgrounds in councillor nomination packs and advised political agents
- updated equalities information in the councillors' welcome pack
- produced our annual equality and diversity report regarding access to employment opportunities
- updated our job application forms to reflect the requirements of the Equality Act and produced a positive statement for job adverts welcoming applications from all sections of the community.

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<sup>8</sup> Mandatory full day equalities training, human rights and disability awareness training

<sup>9</sup> Ethnicity and migration papers produced, community safety paper drafted

## **Tackling discrimination and harassment**

24. During the year the council has been involved in the following partnerships which help to remove discrimination and harassment and encourage community cohesion:

### **OXFORDSHIRE HALT**

25. HALT is a multi agency partnership which aims to challenge and eliminate all forms of homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in the county and offer support to victims of such abuse. In the past year, the council has supported the partnership by:

- providing service information to festival goers at Oxford Pride
- managing the annual survey we carry out at Oxford Pride
- supported the partnership to run a mini campaign to encourage people to report verbal incidents.

### **OXFORDSHIRE MANTRA**

26. The council has been an active member of the Oxfordshire Mantra strategic steering group during the year.

27. Oxfordshire Mantra is a multi agency partnership which aims to challenge and eliminate all forms of hate crimes and incidents. The partnership provides a comprehensive system of recording hate crime/incidents and provides support for both victims and witnesses.

## **Fostering good relations**

### **CHALLENGING MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA GROUP**

28. During the year the council has been a member of the challenging mental health stigma steering group<sup>10</sup>. The project provides grants for organisations across Oxfordshire to develop projects and or events<sup>11</sup> that will help to:

- increase public awareness of prejudice or discrimination against people who have experienced mental distress
- improve social contact between people with and without mental health problems.

### **PROMOTING RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS**

29. Increasing general understanding of cultures within the community can help foster good relations between people of different racial groups. We have promoted some of the key religious festivals in the council's local service point in Abingdon.

## **Conclusion**

30. The council has made good progress during the year in advancing equality of opportunity, supporting projects to tackle discrimination, harassment and in fostering good relations. The committee is asked to note the progress made.

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<sup>10</sup> NHS Oxfordshire lead project

<sup>11</sup> In line with the national Time to Change Campaign

## **Background Papers**

- Corporate Equality Action Plan

# Scrutiny Committee



## 24 August 2011

Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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To: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 24 August 2011

**Report no. 18/11**

## **Review of progress against the energy efficiency (carbon management) plan 2010/11**

### **Recommendation**

That Scrutiny Committee notes progress made towards meeting the council's carbon emissions reduction target of 20 per cent over five years.

### **Purpose of report**

1. The Executive adopted the council's Carbon Management Plan in February 2009. This Plan sets out our goal to reduce the council's carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent over a five year period from 2008/9 to 2012/13, and how we intend to achieve it. This Scrutiny report reviews progress on the second year of implementation of the Carbon Management Plan and sets out our plans for future action.

### **Strategic objectives**

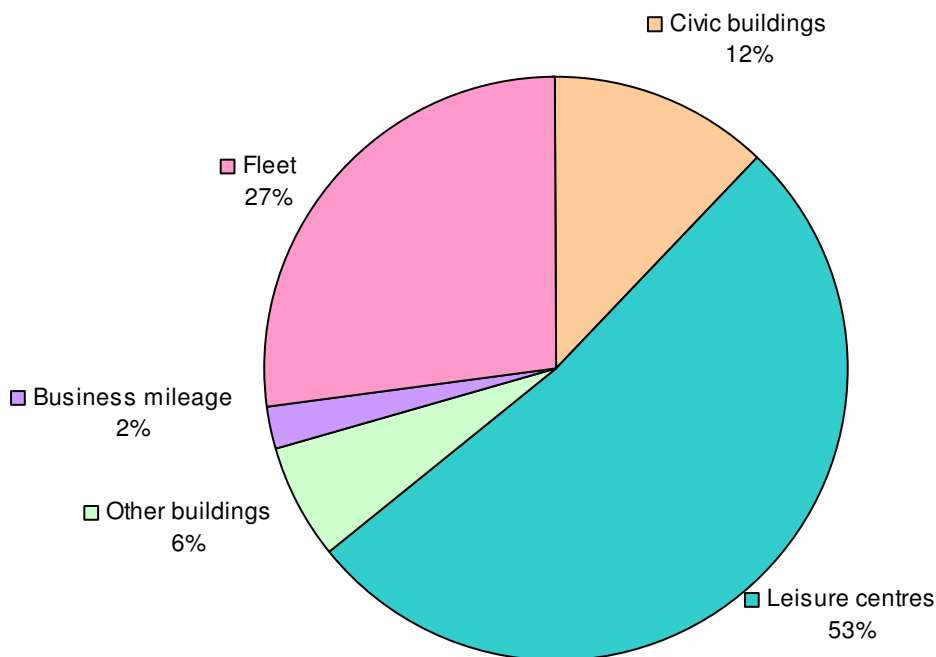
2. This report relates to strategic objective 'Rising to the challenge of climate change' and specifically the corporate priority CC1 - Minimise our impact on the causes of climate change. By reducing expenditure on energy, this work also contributes to providing value for money services.

## Baseline

3. The council's baseline emissions in 2007 were 5134 tonnes. This figure does not tie in with the baseline originally published in the Carbon Management Plan as emissions from leisure centres was underreported to the council and were revised subsequent to the publication of the Plan. The chart below shows the breakdown of baseline emissions from different sources.

### Baseline CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for 2008/9

Total emissions 5134 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>



## 2010/11 results

4. Total carbon emissions in 2010/11 were 4689 tonnes, a reduction of nine per cent on the baseline. Reductions for different sectors are shown in the table below.

	2007 baseline emissions tonnes CO <sub>2</sub>	2008/9 emissions tonnes CO <sub>2</sub>	2009/10 emissions tonnes CO <sub>2</sub>	2010/11 emissions tonnes CO <sub>2</sub>	Percentage reduction from baseline
Civic buildings	663	657	612	615	7%
Leisure centres	2,697	2,818	2,580	2,559	5%
Other buildings	305	349	227	217	29%
Business mileage	114	121	95	48	58%

Fleet	1,355	1,479	1,433	1,250	8%
Total	5,134	5,424	4,944	4689	9%

## Weather effects

5. Over the period of our carbon management programme, the weather has become steadily colder year on year. This has affected winter demand for gas, therefore increasing energy use and emissions. We have made nine per cent savings on our emissions despite these weather-related trends. Using national standard weather conditions, we can take away the weather effects and estimate what our savings would have been had the weather remained constant over the period. In this case, our emissions savings would have been an 18 per cent reduction on the baseline.

## Projects delivered

### LEISURE

6. We delivered two key projects this year as set out in the table below. Swimming pool covers save energy by reducing heat loss from the pool overnight. They also reduce evaporation and substantially cut requirements for pool hall ventilation. Valve wraps are insulating jackets that cover up exposed valves in plant rooms, stopping heat loss to the surrounding air.

Project	Site
pool covers	White Horse Tennis & Leisure Centre, Wantage Leisure Centre, Faringdon Leisure Centre
valve wraps	White Horse Tennis & Leisure Centre, Wantage Leisure Centre, Faringdon Leisure Centre, Tilsley Park

7. As commissioning was just after the year end in April 2011, the energy savings for these projects will show up in our figures for 2011/12. The combined predicted savings from the projects above are 295 tonnes per annum. This is equivalent to a further 5.7 per cent reduction on the baseline. We are negotiating contract variations with our leisure suppliers to ensure that the council recoups a share of the benefits of these energy saving investments, which arise through reduced energy costs.

8. We also delivered the following minor projects in 2010/11.

Project	Site
pool pump inverters	White Horse Tennis & Leisure Centre, learning pool
pool air handling – fan inverters & humidity sensor	Wantage Leisure Centre
LED lighting trial	White Horse Tennis & Leisure Centre, learning pool

### WASTE MANAGEMENT

9. Immediate energy savings were realised when the council's new waste management contract came into operation in October 2010. Efficient waste collection vehicles have contributed to a reduction in fleet emissions of over 12 per cent in the past year.

## WANTAGE CIVIC HALL

10. An energy audit of Wantage Civic Hall was carried out in January 2011. This identified scope for cost effective energy savings in space heating, lighting and hot water. We have drawn up a programme of work for 2011/12 which includes:

- regular meter readings for better awareness of energy use
- review controls on heating system and ventilation to ensure systems are not running at weekends and overnight if not needed
- insulate various cupboards and doorways where these are leading to cold spots and draughts
- better management of hot water with timers
- occupancy sensors for lighting in toilets, corridors and meeting rooms
- adding multi purpose low energy lighting to main hall to avoid use of theatre lighting, which is expensive to run and not fit for purpose for general meetings.

## COUNCIL OFFICES

11. We have installed and commissioned server virtualisation equipment. We are at the stage of configuring the system to allow servers to be migrated to the virtual environment. We expect to complete the implementation phase in quarter two 2011/12, with some initial servers moved from physical to virtual.

12. Some energy saving projects scheduled for 2010/11 were put on hold pending a review of future office accommodation.

## ENERGY AWARENESS

13. We carried out a staff consultation in 2010/11 to create a shared Energy Code of Practice for both councils. The code sets out what we ask staff and councillors to do as part of their day to day activities to help reduce energy use and save money. Management team approved the code and we have placed energy saving advice for staff on the intranet.

## BUSINESS MILEAGE

14. We achieved a 43 per cent reduction in business mileage for staff in 2010/11, a reduction of more than 79,000 miles. This exceeded the 5 per cent target.

## DATA QUALITY

15. We are monitoring energy use on a quarterly basis. Data quality has improved through a new web based system for collecting travel and mileage data and a new meter reading programme at our public conveniences. We have developed a new shared data collection system, to be implemented in 2011/12, which will include more on site meter readings at staffed buildings.



## **Projects not on track**

### **LEISURE**

16. The leisure programme of work has experienced some delays due to staffing changes, however we have made substantial progress during 2010/11.

### **Next steps**

17. The following actions are included in the carbon management work programme for 2011/12:

- Leisure - preparation of a restricted tender for energy saving lighting projects across the two councils is underway. This includes a number of lighting projects. By tendering the work in lots, we will give small businesses the scope to bid for selected elements.
- Waste – further emissions reductions are expected as the new waste collection contract completes its first full year of operation. Meetings with the waste contractor are now happening to review progress and develop an environmental plan for 2011/12.
- Energy awareness – we will launch the Energy Code of Practice across both councils. Energy champions will be recruited for each service team and receive training. Champions will encourage their colleagues to reduce the amount of energy being wasted in the offices.
- Mileage reduction - we have set a further target for all service teams to reduce business mileage by 5 per cent in 2010/11. We will give heads of service quarterly reports of team and individual mileage and progress against target.
- Core processes – In 2010/11 we will review council policies and strategies for energy saving potential. Carbon management will be flagged where appropriate in the strategy and policy review timetable.

### **Financial implications**

18. Our proposed investment in energy projects is set out in the Carbon Management Plan. No additional funding is sought over and above what is set out in the Plan.

### **Legal implications**

19. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **Risks**

20. The following risks are associated with the delivery of the Carbon Management Plan:

- that the energy projects do not deliver expected savings however this is mitigated by the fact that the projects are based on tried and tested technologies
- the Carbon Management Programme does not allow us to adjust for cold weather conditions, which could lead to higher than expected energy use

- that the waste contractor does not follow up on contractual commitments and expected energy savings are not realised, however we will manage this by developing an environmental plan and holding regular meetings.

## **Conclusion**

21. The council has made progress in reducing carbon emissions with an overall reduction from baseline of nine per cent at the end of 2010/11. We have not met the interim target of a 13 per cent emissions reduction by 2010/11 however the overall programme has contingency built in for slippage so we still expect to achieve our five year target.

## **Background papers**

- Vale of White Horse District Council Carbon Management Plan

# SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME



containing scrutiny work to be undertaken  
1 August 2011 - 30 April 2012

The scrutiny work programme belongs to the council's Scrutiny Committee and sets out a schedule of scrutiny work due to be carried out over during period shown above. It is a rolling plan, subject to change at each Scrutiny Committee meeting; however, the scrutiny work programme and changes to it are subject to the council's approval.

Representations can be made on any of the following issues before an item is considered by the Scrutiny Committee. Representations must be made to the relevant contact officer shown below by 10am on the day the Committee is due to meet. The meeting dates are shown below.

Item title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Why is it here?	Scope	Notes
<b>Leisure contract monitoring - DC Leisure</b>	Scrutiny Committee 24 Aug 2011	Kate Arnold Tel. (01235) 540416 Email: <a href="mailto:kate.arnold@southhandvale.gov.uk">kate.arnold@southhandvale.gov.uk</a>	To conduct an annual review of the leisure contractor's performance	Relates to the White Horse Leisure and Tennis Centre	To consider whether to accept the report or whether to interview the service manager and contractor at a future meeting and recommend any corrective actions or improvements.

Item title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Why is it here?	Scope	Notes
<b>Election review</b>	Scrutiny Committee 24 Aug 2011	Margaret Reed, Head of Legal and Democratic Tel. (01235) 540407 Email: <a href="mailto:margaret.reed@southandvale.gov.uk">margaret.reed@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To consider the recommendations from the review of the management of the elections held in May 2011	To request the returning officer and his deputy returning officers to attend.	
<b>Annual equality update</b>	Scrutiny Committee 24 Aug 2011	Cheryl Reeves Tel. 01491 823047 Email: <a href="mailto:cheryl.reeves@southandvale.gov.uk">cheryl.reeves@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To monitor performance against the council's equality policy.	This is an annual update.	
<b>Energy efficiency plan (carbon management) review</b>	Scrutiny Committee 24 Aug 2011	Sally Truman, Policy and Community Engagement Manager Tel. (01491) 823046 Email: <a href="mailto:sally.truman@southandvale.gov.uk">sally.truman@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To review progress against the carbon management plan.		

Item title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Why is it here?	Scope	Notes
<b>Financial services contract monitoring</b>	Scrutiny Committee 22 Sep 2011	William Jacobs, Head of Finance Tel. (01235) 540455 Email: <a href="mailto:william.jacobs@southandvale.gov.uk">william.jacobs@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To conduct an annual review of the contractor's performance	Relates to council tax collection, business rates, benefits, payroll, accountancy, accounts payable, financial management system, and assisted travel	To consider whether to accept the report or whether to interview the service manager and contractor at a future meeting and recommend any corrective actions or improvements.
<b>Fit for the future update</b>	Scrutiny Committee 22 Sep 2011	Anna Robinson, Strategic Director Tel. (01235) 540523 Email: <a href="mailto:anna.robinson@southandvale.gov.uk">anna.robinson@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To receive an update on the fit for the future programme.	To consider a summary report and to question the Cabinet member.	
<b>Leisure contract monitoring - SOLL</b>	Scrutiny Committee 22 Sep 2011	Kate Arnold Tel. (01235) 540416 Email: <a href="mailto:kate.arnold@southandvale.gov.uk">kate.arnold@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To conduct an annual review of the contractor's performance	Relates to Faringdon and Wantage Leisure Centres, the Abbey Meadows, Abingdon, and Tilsley Park	To consider whether to accept the report or whether to interview the service manager and contractor at a future meeting and recommend any corrective actions or improvements.

Item title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Why is it here?	Scope	Notes
<b>Free short-stay car parking - monitoring plan</b>	Scrutiny Committee 22 Sep 2011	John Backley Tel. (01235) 540443 Email: <a href="mailto:john.backley@southandvale.gov.uk">john.backley@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To consider the monitoring plan and comment on the consultation document.	To request the Cabinet leader to attend.	
<b>Recycling and waste collection contingency plan</b>	Scrutiny Committee 27 Oct 2011	Ian Matten Tel. (01235) 540373 Email: <a href="mailto:ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk">ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To review the Cabinet member's contingency plan for the recycling and waste collection service.	The Cabinet member to attend.	
<b>Community safety annual report</b>	Scrutiny Committee 24 Nov 2011	Liz Hayden Tel. (01235) 540309 Email: <a href="mailto:liz.hayden@southandvale.gov.uk">liz.hayden@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	The Police and Justice Act 2006 gave the Council powers to scrutinise the crime and disorder reduction partnership, known as the community safety partnership	To scrutinise the Vale community safety annual report and recommend any corrective actions or improvements. Police authority co-optee to be invited to attend	Invite the Cabinet member for community strategy
<b>Recycling and waste contract monitoring</b>	Scrutiny Committee Not before 31st Dec 2011	Clare Kingston, Head of Corporate Strategy Tel. (01235) 540356 Email: <a href="mailto:clare.kingston@southandvale.gov.uk">clare.kingston@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	To conduct an annual review of the contractor's performance	Relates to recycling and waste collection services	To consider whether to accept the report or whether to interview the service manager and contractor at a future meeting and recommend any corrective actions or improvements.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted