

# Scrutiny Committee Agenda



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

A meeting of the  
**Scrutiny Committee**  
will be held on Thursday 24 November 2011  
at 7pm  
in the Council Chamber, 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 4)

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 take care of your interests across the Vale with enterprise, energy and efficiency.

## 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

(Pages 5 - 25)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the minutes of the committee meeting held on 4 and 24 August, 22 September and 27 October 2011 (attached).

## 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. Community safety annual report**

(Pages 26 - 46)

To consider report 46/11 of the head of corporate strategy.

## **7. Corporate plan review**

(Pages 47 - 56)

To consider report 47/11 of the head of corporate strategy.

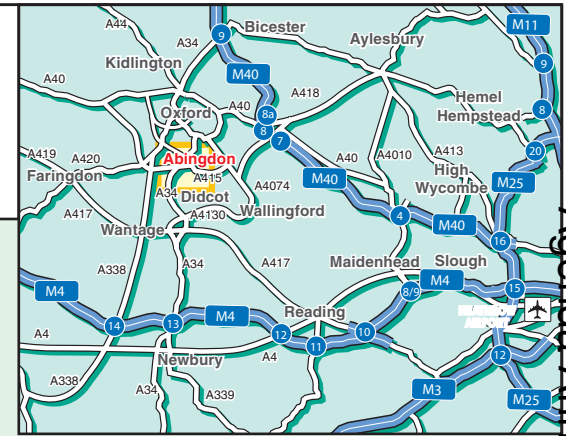
## **8. Scrutiny work programme**

(Pages 57 - 60)

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

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

None



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OS data. PU100040256. Crown ©2008. Mapping sourced from Ordnance Survey

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

**By rail** – the nearest main line railway stations to Abingdon are either Didcot Parkway (seven miles) or Oxford (eight miles). Radley railway station is located on the main line between Oxford and Didcot and is three miles from Abingdon town centre. For details of train times visit [www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk) or call 08457 484950

**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



# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Scrutiny Committee

held at 7pm on Thursday 4 August 2011  
at the Abbey House, Abingdon

**Open to the public, including the press**

### Present:

Members: Councillors Jim Halliday (Chair), Melinda Tilley (Vice-Chairman), Eric Batts, Andrew Crawford, Jane Crossley, Jason Fiddaman, Bill Jones, Sandy Lovatt, and Julie Mayhew-Archer

Substitute members: Councillor Kate Precious (as substitute for Councillor Fiona Roper), Councillor Janet Shelley (as substitute for Councillor Charlotte Dickson) and Councillor Richard Webber (as substitute for Councillor Tony de Vere)

Non-participating members: Councillors Matthew Barber and Elaine Ware

Officers: David Buckle, Steven Corrigan, Ian Price, Matt Prosser, Anna Robinson and Chris Tyson

Number of members of the public: Nil

### **Sc.20 Notification of substitutes and apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted Tony de Vere, Charlotte Dickson and Fiona Roper.

### **Sc.21 Declarations of interest**

Councillors Matthew Barber and Elaine Ware declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 5 call-in of cabinet decision as required by the councillors' code of conduct paragraph 11. As permitted by paragraph 12 of the code, they took part in the meeting to answer questions, then left before the committee debated the item.

Councillor Andrew Crawford declared a personal interest as a user of car parks.

### **Sc.22 Urgent business and chair's announcements**

None

## Sc.23 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting this meeting of the Scrutiny Committee

None

## Sc.24 Call-in of Cabinet decision

Councillors Matthew Barber and Elaine Ware declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item, as required by paragraph 11 of the councillors' code of conduct. As permitted by paragraph 12 of the code, they took part in the meeting to respond to questions, and then left before the committee debated the item.

Councillor Andrew Crawford declared a personal interest as a user of the council's car parks.

The committee considered Cabinet's decision made at its meeting on 8 July 2011 to introduce two hours free car parking (Minute CA.5 refers).

The specific reasons provided for the call-in were as follows:

- **An explanation of the options that were considered before a decision was taken, and the reasons for that decision** – *on the assumption that the aim is to stimulate town centre vitality, we are unclear about what other costed alternatives were considered, rejected, and why.*
- **Clarity of aims and desired outcomes** – *The precise aims of the policy are unclear as are the desired outcomes, how they will be monitored, and whether the scheme will be modified until the aims are fully achieved.*
- **The social, economic, and environmental well-being of the community** – *we are unclear about the practicality of the changes being proposed, why a differential increase in tariffs is being proposed, and are concerned that the effect of the period of free parking may be negated by the increase on post 3 hour fees and the extended charging period to 6pm.*
- **Proportionality ie the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome** – *We are concerned that the estimated cost of £250,000 is a dis-proportionately excessive cost to introduce an initial 2 hour free period of parking whilst at the same time removing the free period between 4pm and 6pm*
- **Due consultation and taking of professional advice from officers** - *we are unclear exactly what consultation has taken place about the policy, about the proposal to fund the scheme from the New Homes Bonus reserve, and about how the scheme should be funded in future years. We are also concerned that consideration of the item at Cabinet took less than seven minutes, particularly given the strong concerns expressed by the Officers in the report.*

Councillors Elaine Ware, Cabinet member for car parks, and Matthew Barber, Leader of Council, attended the meeting to respond to questions.

Committee members sought clarification on a number of issues the responses to which are set out below.

In response to questions, Councillor Matthew Barber confirmed that the aim of the two hour free car parking proposal was to stimulate town centre vitality.

He was unable to quantify the number of business which would benefit from the proposal but was of the view that all retail traders and businesses could potentially benefit from the increased footfall generated.

Ideally, all car parking would be free. However, due to capacity issues, Cabinet agreed the two hour period, although he did not believe there should be a limit on the consideration of a time limit.

In response to a question, Mr Chris Tyson, Head of Economy, Leisure and Property, advised that the existing free parking period between 4pm and 6pm was introduced to increase town centre visits. No data was available to evidence the success of this scheme.

Councillor Barber confirmed that the proposed scheme would be monitored and agreed that the scrutiny committee could comment on the proposed form of monitoring.

In response to a question, Councillor Matthew Barber agreed that the number and variety of shops was an important factor in attracting people into the towns. However, he believed free short stay car parking would benefit the market towns and that the offer of free car parking could potentially attract new retail traders to locate in the towns.

Although there was no firm evidence to show that free parking would increase footfall, local businesses had supported the measure as a means to encourage local people to visit the town centre shops and revitalise the local economy. He stressed that the proposal would form part of a range of measures to improve the economy and that, if successful, the next challenge could be the capacity of the car parks.

In response to questions, Councillor Matthew Barber confirmed that a number of monitoring options would be considered, including footfall surveys, vacant shop surveys and surveys of traders and businesses, together with anecdotal evidence. He confirmed that he would welcome the views of the committee on the retail trade survey prior to its circulation to local traders.

He confirmed that the requirement to obtain a ticket for the free parking period would be communicated via the media and signage in the car parks. Initially, non-enforceable tickets would be issued to offenders advising them of the new requirement to obtain a ticket. Whilst the ideal scenario, the capital cost of the required infrastructure and the revenue costs of monitoring made a payment on exit system costly.

He acknowledged that Abingdon residents would pay more to subsidise the free car parking due to higher increases in both short-term ticket prices and long-term resident and business permits. However, he stressed that resident car parking schemes already subsidised the car park account.

He did not believe that the proposals would lead to an increase in CO2 emissions. The proposal should attract users currently driving to towns outside the district and, therefore, would not increase car journeys. It could even reduce the number of miles travelled and,

therefore, CO2 emissions, if people living in the district travelled to a local town. In response to a further question, he confirmed that the environmental officer had not been consulted on the likely effect of the proposals on air quality in Abingdon, although he reiterated that he did not believe the impact would be significant.

He confirmed that Oxfordshire County Council had not been consulted about the impact of the free parking scheme on the financial viability of their on street parking scheme. The existing arrangements would continue whereby holders in Abingdon of Oxfordshire County Council Residents' Permits were able to park in the West St Helen Street Car Park overnight until 9am rather than 8am.

He confirmed the continuation of the current free day car parking offered in the run-up to Christmas.

In response to questions relating to why cabinet viewed a two hour free car parking period as a better option than the current free parking period between 4pm and 6pm, Councillor Barber stated that the current offer was inconvenient for users, underused and that the revised proposal would achieve improved economic benefit.

He defended the proposed use of the Home Bonus Fund for funding the scheme initially, as it would benefit all communities living in the Vale, whether living in towns or the rural areas.

In response to concerns that the proposals to encourage people to shop in the towns could have a detrimental impact on local rural shops, Councillor Barber responded that the convenience offered by local rural shops should not be affected.

He confirmed that the Conservatives did not embark upon a fully costed budget exercise prior to the inclusion of the proposal in their election manifesto. However, they did have regard to budget information in the public domain. Advice had been sought from officers since the election. Whilst the s.151 chief finance officer strongly advised against the introduction of free car parking, councillors had previously acted against such advice, and in this case the decision was not based on purely financial factors. He believed the council could cover the loss of income.

David Buckle, Chief Executive, confirmed that he agreed with the s.151 advice. The council faced uncertain times with new initiatives impacting on resources. The loss of income as a result of the proposal represented a substantial commitment at a time of uncertainty over the medium term financial strategy and the financing of council services.

Whilst the committee did not refer the decision back to cabinet for reconsideration, members agreed that the committee would comment on the retail trade survey questionnaire and the method of monitoring the impact of the scheme and consider the monitoring reports in due course.

Officers agreed that the recommendations passed by Cabinet contained inaccurate information about the proposed fees and charges, while the annexes contained correct data. The Officers undertook to ensure the Order and schedules detailing the fees and charges were accurate.



**RESOLVED:**

- (a) not to refer the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration;
- (b) to review the retail trade survey at its meeting in September prior to circulation to retailers and the method of monitoring the impact of the scheme on town centre vitality; and
- (c) to consider the monitoring reports on the impact of the scheme on town centre vitality and consider whether, in light of experience, the scheme should be modified.

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

None

The meeting closed at 10pm

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Scrutiny Committee

held at 7pm on Wednesday 24 August 2011

at the Abbey House, Abingdon



**Open to the public, including the press**

### Present:

Members: Councillors Jim Halliday (Chair), Melinda Tilley (Vice-Chairman), Eric Batts, Jane Crossley, Tony de Vere, Charlotte Dickson, Jason Fiddaman, Bill Jones, Sandy Lovatt, Julie Mayhew-Archer, and Fiona Roper

Non-participating member: Councillor Yvonne Constance

Officers: Kate Arnold, David Buckle, Steven Corrigan, Bev Lee, Claire Litchfield, Margaret Reed, Anna Robinson, Sally Truman, Chris Tyson, and Chris Webb

DC Leisure representatives: John Bates and David Rolls

Number of members of the public: Nil

### **Sc.25 Notification of substitutes and apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Andrew Crawford and it was noted that Councillor Dudley Hoddinott was in attendance as a substitute member.

### **Sc.26 Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 23 June and 21 July 2011 were adopted and signed as a correct record.

### **Sc.27 Declarations of interest**

None

### **Sc.28 Urgent business and chair's announcements**

The Chair announced that on 15 September 2011 Members were invited to attend a briefing by officers about the service plans for the coming year. It was noted that the scrutiny committee would be asked to identify topics to include in the work programme following this briefing.

## **Sc.29 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting the Scrutiny Committee**

None

## **Sc.30 Leisure contract monitoring - DC Leisure**

The committee received and considered report 16/11 of the head of economy, leisure and property.

The committee was advised that the contract had not been set up with key performance indicators at its conception.

When asked whether there was any reason for the step down in usage figures, Chris Webb, (officer) reported that it was difficult to capture user data at the centre, given its open plan layout. He advised that there was no controlled access and that many customers using, for example, the café or spectating were not being included in the data. He added that spectator data would not be reflected in revenue.

It was reported that the centre performed as expected in respect of energy costs and usage, when considering its size and age.

One member asked why according to paragraph 16 of the report, there was no requirement for the contractor to improve performance. It was advised that this had not been written into the contract. Members commented that this was surprising at they would have expected a view to have been taken on performance by the officers. Chris Webb advised that he was content with the visitor numbers and that the centre performed well.

With respect to the customer survey, members commented that the numbers returned were so low that it would not give a true reflection of the customer experience. It was suggested that the contractor should offer incentives to customers to complete the survey.

One member asked for clarification on the issue of corporate identity. Officers advised that it was important that the centre be recognised as a council facility, given the strong Active Nation brand.

Members considered the trend monitoring data in open session, having been agreed by the head of economy, leisure and property.

One member questioned why there had been a drop in the standards of cleanliness. It was advised that following the contract for cleaning being contracted out the standards had fallen. It was reported that standards had improved since cleaning had returned in house. Mr Webb confirmed that the result of ad hoc visits to the site suggested that standards had improved.

One member questioned how the problems with telephone systems were being addressed. It was reported that from October the centre would be offering online booking and in addition the contractors would be looking at different options for the phone system.

Mr Rolls, from Active Nation, commented that he was disappointed with the scores, however it was an improving picture. He advised that the centre was recruiting more experienced staff and that the turnaround of staff needed to be reduced.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Scrutiny Committee minutes

One member suggested that communication between the Vale and the centre should be improved, the Vale officers should be more proactive.

One member commented that the performance management of contracts should be more like the private sector model. He did not consider the current method adequate and suggested that the cabinet should be tasked with looking at how facilities in the future should be managed and assessed for performance.

**RESOLVED:** To recommend to the cabinet that it reviews how facilities such as the white horse leisure and tennis centre will be managed and assessed for performance.

### **Sc.31 Independent review on the conduct of the 2011 local elections**

The Chair invited Members to ask questions of the officers, following on from the meeting which was held on 21 July.

Members asked a series of questions, outlined below and the chief executive, head of legal and democratic services, democratic services manager and elections officer assisted in answering them.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Answer</b>
Did officers consider the risk assessment in planning the elections and had this been updated since it was considered at Scrutiny last year?	Yes
The register had identified risks and means of mitigating them, had these been considered?	Yes, for example the contingency for failure to deliver postal votes was to hand deliver.
Did officers advise the public about the problems of non delivery of poll cards?	Yes, a notice was placed on our website and David Buckle did an interview with Radio Oxford
Did anyone look at samples of the print work?	Yes. Bev Lee and Marcia Beviere attended the printers in Sunderland and checked a series of samples and found them satisfactory.
Did officers look at the size of the envelopes?	Unfortunately officers had not witnessed the envelope being placed in the return envelope and therefore were unaware of the issue with size.
Were agents aware that they could attend postal vote opening?	Yes, agents had been briefed.
Why did the council not issue a letter to the public advising that poll cards were not required to vote?	At the time officers were unaware of the extent of the problem, and therefore would have had to send a letter out to the entire district, which would have been very costly. Officers emphasised that the extent of the problem was not immediately apparent, and appeared sporadic in nature.

Question	Answer
What would be done if there was a similar problem in future	It is difficult, because all experienced printers would be busy at election times. For the past three elections, three different companies had been used and each had let the council down in different ways.
Shouldn't the Vale have someone overseeing the distribution internally?	One option would be to get the printing company to print, then send to us for distribution, however the deadlines are incredibly tight and this option might delay the receipt of postal votes.
Were project management tools and plans applied	Yes, there was a project plan and it was on track, all of the tight deadlines had been met. The problem arose with the printers, not in the project planning. The problems arose because the printers had not completed some tasks. If the printers had come a week before the election to advise that these tasks had not been completed, the council would have known the extent and could have acted.
Why was the printer not being proactively managed?	Officers were asking for docketts to prove batches had been sent out, however it was accepted that more cross checking was required. There should have been more use of the Online Business Account, which would have checked the quantities of the documents supplied.
Did the chief executive think the non delivery was acceptable?	No, he was disappointed and angry with the printers.
Did the officers check for poll card docketts?	Not immediately, they were requested at a later stage.

One member commented that many people had been disenfranchised, which was unacceptable. She questioned whether the chief executive was taking responsibility. David Buckle advised that he had made a public apology. He further commented that the vast majority of voters did receive their postal packs, and that elections staff had reissued 400 votes to people reporting that they had not received their packs.

One member commented that the heart of the issue was that people felt that they were disenfranchised and it was important to go the extra mile to encourage people to vote, which was why sending out poll cards was so important.

One member questioned whether there had been adequate resources in the elections team at the time. The head of legal and democratic services responded that she did not believe this had been a problem, in fact there had been 2.5 full time staff at previous elections and at this election there had been 3.0, working for both councils but supported by other staff across the service.

The chair proposed the establishment of a small working party, members to be nominated by the group leaders, to look at the election project and action plan. It was suggested that this group report back to the committee in February 2012.

The committee considered the recommendations contained within the independent review and it was

**RESOLVED:** To support the recommendations set out in the independent review, with amendments (shown in italics)

1. that the returning officer puts in place a project plan for the development of the elections service, with regular reviews on progress, incorporating the following:
  - i. an exercise to identify and select a suitably experienced printing firm be undertaken;
  - ii. a suitable local printer be identified to deal with small scale elections printing and to provide back up in the crucial period immediately prior to an election;
  - iii. a communications strategy be developed for all elections using the councils' facilities and a wide range of media and *in particular consider the use of adverts in the printed media.*
  - iv. during the nominations process frequent communication take place with agents;
  - v. the nomination process be reviewed to ensure a more efficient and effective use of resources and eliminate use of paper records;
  - vi. clerks of parish and town councils should be advised that they are not required to handle completed nomination papers;
  - vii. analysis take place to identify those activities which must be carried out by the core team and those which are peripheral and could be carried out by other parts of the organisation but shaped by the elections team;
  - viii. during the election period the project plan and risk register be regularly updated to form part of short and focussed meetings of the core elections team chaired by the returning officer (or a deputy authorised to act on his behalf) to oversee progress;
  - ix. the two separate IT systems used by the elections team be integrated as soon as possible;
  - x. data be supplied to the printer in a timely manner so that the majority of postal vote packs are in future provided to Royal Mail on the day after the postal vote deadline;
  - xi. the Online Business Account be used by both the printer and the elections staff in a timely manner to check the quantities of documents supplied to Royal Mail *against the data file supplied to the printer and that future printing*

*contracts specify exactly what regular reports are to be made to the council and when.*

- xii. an exercise be carried out to identify colleagues outside the core elections team who can support the process in a variety of roles such as overseeing postal votes, inspecting polling stations, count supervision having received appropriate training;
  - xiii. all options for count venue(s) in 2015 be considered and each potential count venue be subject to a detailed written assessment and that a named person holds responsibility for the preparation of the selected venue(s);
  - xiv. a training course be developed for count supervisors encompassing all aspects of their role;
  - xv. the 'combination method' is not a recognised means of counting 'split votes' and should not be used;
  - xvi. the returning officer review the method used for counting 'split votes' *and inform all agents of the method to be used in the future.*
  - xvii. all staff employed by the returning officer be paid by BACS through the payments system; use of cheques becoming an exception;
  - xviii. the allocation of polling stations be reviewed in the light of the electorate and turnout figures;
2. the returning officer shall provide a report to the scrutiny committee in six months and in November 2014 setting out progress on implementing these recommendations, and the scrutiny committee should regularly monitor progress on implementation; and
  3. to establish a working party tasked with considering the project and action plans for the management of elections which will report back to the committee in February 2012.

### **Sc.32 Annual equality and diversity update**

The committee received and noted report 17/11 of the head of corporate strategy.

One member suggested the scrutiny committee should receive the impact assessments on vale budget cuts.

One member commented that he did not believe that the Mantra group had yet been introduced, he advised that he would be pushing this at the community safety partnership.

**RESOLVED:** To note the content of the report.

### **Sc.33 Review of progress against the energy efficiency (carbon management) plan 2010/11**

The committee received and considered report 19/11 of the head of corporate strategy.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Scrutiny Committee minutes

One member suggested that it would be helpful to get an overview of what the emissions were from other facilities in terms of usage so that a comparison could be made.

**RESOLVED:** To note the content of the report.

### **Sc.34 Scrutiny work programme**

The committee agreed to review the work programme at its next meeting.

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

None

The meeting closed at 10pm



# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Scrutiny Committee

held at 7pm on Thursday 22 September 2011

at the Abbey House, Abingdon



**Open to the public, including the press**

### Present:

Members: Councillors Jim Halliday (Chair), Melinda Tilley (Vice-Chairman), Andrew Crawford, Jane Crossley, Tony de Vere, Charlotte Dickson, Jason Fiddaman, Bill Jones, Sandy Lovatt, and Fiona Roper

Substitute members: Councillor John Morgan (in place of Councillor Eric Batts) and Councillor Richard Webber (in place of Councillor Julie Mayhew-Archer)

Non-participating members: Councillors Matthew Barber and Elaine Ware

Officers: Kate Arnold, John Backley, Steve Bishop, Steve Culliford, Sarah Longman, Suzanne Malcolm, John Backley, Steve Culliford, Steve Bishop, Matt Prosser, Chris Webb, Kate Arnold and Sarah Longman

Contractor: Mark Jaggars (SOLL Leisure)

Number of members of the public: Nil

### **Sc.35 Notification of substitutes and apologies for absence**

Councillors Eric Batts and Julie Mayhew-Archer had sent their apologies for absence and had appointed Councillors John Morgan and Richard Webber respectively as their substitutes.

### **Sc.36 Declarations of interest**

None

### **Sc.37 Urgent business and chair's announcements**

The chair thanked councillors for attending the training session on 15 or 20 September and for suggesting items that could be considered by the Scrutiny Committee. This had proved to be a useful exercise.

### **Sc.38 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting the Scrutiny Committee**

Vale of White Horse District Council – Scrutiny Committee minutes

None

### **Sc.39 Leisure contract monitoring**

The committee considered report 24/11 of the head of economy, leisure, and property. This set out the performance of the council's leisure contractor, SOLL, during 2010/11. The contractor managed Faringdon Leisure Centre, Wantage Leisure Centre, and Tilsley Park. The committee noted the exempt appendix setting out exempt information but did not debate it.

The committee reviewed the contractor's performance. Councillors noted that despite there being doubts over the reliability of user data in the past, the contractor's new system now provided much more confidence. Although the council's customer satisfaction survey showed a drop in performance over the previous year, the contractor was not aware of any specific issues. The contractor's own surveys had indicated positive results. The committee investigated the possible reasons for the drop in survey score. Councillors noted that staffing levels had not changed, prices had increased with inflation, and the contractor took cleanliness just as seriously as before. There had been no drop in cleaning standards.

The strategic director suggested that the council needed to look at how it carried out the survey, and produce a better perception-based study. The council needed to understand why its customers had considered they were not receiving good service. Some committee members suggested that the Cabinet should look at whether the council was getting good value for money from particular leisure centres.

The committee was pleased to note the improvements in energy efficiency at the leisure centres at a time when energy costs were rising. Councillors commended the contractor's collaboration with the council for its work on this.

Councillors suggested that the committee should consider contract monitoring reports earlier in the year.

The committee looked at the officer's assessment of 'fair' for the contractor in 2010/11 and concurred with this.

#### **RESOLVED:** to

- (a) recommend the Cabinet member for leisure to award the council's leisure contractor, SOLL, a 'fair' overall assessment for 2010/11, and
- (b) congratulate the contractor for its part in improving energy efficiency at Faringdon and Wantage Leisure Centres and Tilsley Park.

### **Sc.40 Proposals to monitor the impact of the free two hours car parking scheme**

The committee considered report 25/11 of the head of economy, leisure, and property. This set out proposals to monitor the impact of introducing two-hours free car parking. The report sought the committee's comments before the Cabinet member finalised the monitoring arrangements.

Vale of White Horse District Council – Scrutiny Committee minutes

The officers proposed using a short online survey of all town centre businesses, the chamber of commerce groups, and town partnerships. The survey would also be available through the council's website, the council's economic development newsletter, 'Vision', and in town and parish council newsletters. There would also be a press release to publicise it. The report set out the draft survey questions.

The survey was aimed at businesses. Respondents would have to provide details of their business contact details. This way, the council could discount multiple responses from business. The officers could give more weight to responses from large businesses. In addition, the council would conduct annual footfall surveys in each market town.

Some councillors suggested additional data that the council could collate. The council could ask if free parking was the reason people came into the town centre. The officers could compare data from other market towns also, including footfall, car park usage and air quality. The strategic director thanked the committee for its suggestions but expressed caution at the additional work this would entail. He preferred to await the outcome of the survey before committing to additional work, which might be unnecessary.

Some councillors believed that it could take a few years to determine the effectiveness of free short stay parking. There were other influencing factors on town centre footfall, such as the decline of market towns and the economic downturn. The council should be measuring the effectiveness of the council's economic development policy, of which free short stay car parking was a part.

In answer to a question from the chairman, the Cabinet member responsible for economy reported that she had every confidence that the officers would conduct the survey thoroughly.

**RESOLVED:** To request the officers and Cabinet member for economy to consider the committee's suggestions before finalising the arrangements to monitor the impact of free short-stay car parking.

## **Sc.41      Fit for the future update**

The committee received a presentation from the leader of the council on the council's Fit for the Future programme. This looked at all aspects of service delivery, including cost effectiveness, improving efficiency, improving processes, and ongoing team development. The programme generated typically savings of 10 to 15 per cent per service. This work ran in parallel to other budget planning work. The first round of reviews was almost complete. This included reviews in Planning, Housing, Legal, and Accountancy. The tender process was underway for the second round. This included reviews for Human Resources, IT, Democratic Services, Environmental Health, Finance (non-Accountancy), and the Local Services Point. This second round should complete in 2013 but was dependent on resources.

The cost of the programme for the initial function review across all service areas had been £117,274. This included staffing and consultancy costs. The savings from the function review had been £1,236,266.

In answer to questions from councillors, the committee noted that the Fit for the Future figures that appeared in the recent financial outturn report to Cabinet, related to 2010/11

only. The programme ran across financial years. The chief finance officer undertook to investigate the costs and savings of the programme and to advise the committee outside the meeting. He assured the committee that there had been no double counting of costs or savings. He was confident that for each review, the savings had been greater than the costs.

The committee recognised that demand for council services did not reduce, so it was important for the council to look at performance and productivity. However, councillors questioned the rationale behind choosing the services for review and questioned why some were left out; the leader undertook to find an answer. The committee expressed an interest in seeing minutes from programme monitoring board meetings and projected savings for the next year. The committee wanted assurance that the programme could achieve the projected savings, as these formed a significant part of the council's budget.

Councillors questioned which committee was keeping track of the programme's progress. The leader offered an annual review of the programme at the Scrutiny Committee; the committee welcomed this and thanked the leader for his presentation.

**RESOLVED:** to add the Fit for the Future programme to the Scrutiny Committee's work programme for an annual review.

## **Sc.42 Scrutiny work programme**

The committee reviewed its work programme for the remainder of the municipal year. The committee added a debate on the budget for its December meeting, and an annual review of the Fit for the Future programme.

The committee also received a summary of the suggestions received from councillors that attended one of the training sessions on 15 and 20 September. At the sessions, councillors nominated their three preferred topics for scrutiny. The chair asked committee members to review the summary list and advise the chair and vice-chairman of their preferences to feed these into the work programme at the next committee meeting.

**RESOLVED:** to

- (a) update the scrutiny work programme to consider the budget in December 2011, and add an annual review of the Fit for the Future programme; and
- (b) request committee members to advise the chair and vice-chairman of their preferred issues to add to the scrutiny work programme.

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

None

The meeting closed at 8.52 pm

# Minutes

of a meeting of the

## Scrutiny Committee

held at 7pm on Thursday 27 October 2011

at the Abbey House, Abingdon



**Open to the public, including the press**

### Present:

Members: Councillors Jim Halliday (Chair), Melinda Tilley (Vice-Chairman), Eric Batts, Andrew Crawford, Jane Crossley, Tony de Vere, Charlotte Dickson, Jason Fiddaman, Bill Jones, Julie Mayhew-Archer, Fiona Roper

Substitute member: Councillor Holly Holman (in place of Councillor Sandy Lovatt)

Non-participating members: Councillors Debby Hallett, Dudley Hoddinott, and Reg Waite

Officers: Steve Culliford, William Jacobs, Steve Bishop, Paul Howden, Clare Kingston, Ian Matten, and Anna Robinson

Capita representative: Darren Keen

Number of members of the public: Nil

### **Sc.43 Notification of substitutes and apologies for absence**

Councillor Sandy Lovatt had sent his apologies for absence and appointed Councillor Holly Holman as his substitute.

### **Sc.44 Minutes**

The committee received the minutes of its meeting held on 4 August 2011. However, the committee amended the minutes and asked that an updated copy was brought to the next meeting for signing and adoption.

### **Sc.45 Declarations of interest**

None

### **Sc.46 Urgent business and chair's announcements**

The chair reported that as an efficiency measure, paper copies of the committee's agenda would no longer be posted to committee members unless they specifically requested a

copy. Instead, the agenda would be emailed to all councillors and paper copies would be available at the meeting. Councillors indicated on a form which option they preferred.

The chair also reported that, further to the last meeting, details for the costs and savings of the fit for the future round one were tabled for councillors' information. Any questions on this should be directed to the strategic director.

## **Sc.47 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting the Scrutiny Committee**

Councillors noted that Councillor Dudley Hoddinott wished to address the committee and ask questions on the financial services contract and the recycling and waste collection contingency plan items. The chair agreed to take these questions during these items.

## **Sc.48 Financial services contract monitoring**

The committee considered report 35/11 of the head of finance, which reviewed the 2010/11 performance of the council's financial services contractor, Capita.

The chair invited Councillor Dudley Hoddinott to address the meeting. Councillor Hoddinott believed that the report highlighted a number of instances where communications could be improved. Although some customers reported excellent service, others believed the service was not so good. In particular, customers had difficulty in speaking to the right person and did not always have confidence in the responses to their questions or found correspondence difficult to understand. Councillor Hoddinott asked what actions had been taken to ensure customers spoke to the most appropriate person and what was being done to improve both verbal and non-verbal communication?

Capita's representative, Darren Keen, could not identify the reasons for these customer responses to Capita's survey. He reported that Capita trained its call centre staff and monitored calls. No issues had been discovered. As for written communication, Capita was bound by the law on what had to be included in its letters and forms; it had no choice on the wording.

The committee then considered the officer's recommendations to rate Capita's performance for each service. The following points were made:

### **Revenues**

- The number of complaints about the revenues service were believed to be approximately the same as the previous year. However, the chair asked for the officers to confirm this to the committee members outside of the meeting
- The Citizen's Advice Bureau no longer had concerns over the bailiff service
- The committee was pleased to note an improvement in rating the revenues service from 'good' in 2009/10 to 'excellent' in 2010/11.

### **Benefits**

- During 2010/11 the Audit Commission qualified the council's 2009/10 benefit subsidy grant claim, criticising the council's benefits arrangements. Initially, this meant the council would be penalised £52,998 on its subsidy grant claim for breaching the local authority financial error threshold. However, the council challenged this penalty and following further audit work, the Department of Work

and Pensions had agreed to waive the penalty but the final decision rested with the Secretary of State. The outcome was awaited.

- In terms of old debts owed to the council, these were paid off over time by a court order arrangement. There was a cost to the council but it had reduced its bad debt provision. The officer undertook to provide the committee with the level of bad debt written off last year.
- Most of the overpaid benefits were due to fraud or benefit recipients not advising the council of their changed circumstances. However, the accuracy of administering benefits claims had improved.
- The committee was pleased to note an improvement in rating the benefits service from 'weak' in 2009/10 to 'good' in 2010/11.

### **Exchequer services**

- Councillors noted that exchequer services covered accounts payable and accounts receivable.
- The committee was pleased to note an improvement in rating the exchequer service from 'fair' in 2009/10 to 'excellent' in 2010/11.

### **Financial management system**

- Since writing the report, Capita and the council had agreed to improved training in the report writing capabilities of the financial management system.
- The committee was pleased to note an improvement in rating the financial management system from 'weak' in 2009/10 to 'good' in 2010/11.

### **Concessionary fares (assisted travel)**

- The committee was pleased to note an improvement in rating the administration of the concessionary fares service from 'good' in 2009/10 to 'excellent' in 2010/11. The officers reported that they had recommended a 'good' rating as the council had received no complaints about this service but could not justify awarding a higher rating as they had no data to support this.

The committee congratulated Capita and the council's contract monitoring officer on the significant improvements made during 2010/11. The committee agreed with the officer's assessment of Capita's performance and agreed with the ratings set out in the report.

The committee noted that the financial services contract was closely monitored by the Ridgeway Shared Services Partnership Board. The board consisted of two Cabinet members from the Vale and two from South Oxfordshire District Council. It met at least every quarter and sometimes monthly to monitor Capita's performance. The committee thanked the board for its work.

**RESOLVED:** To recommend the Cabinet member for finance to agree the financial services contractor's performance ratings for 2010/11 as follows:

- Revenues – excellent
- Benefits – good
- Exchequer services – excellent
- Financial management system – good
- Concessionary fares – excellent

## **Sc.49 Recycling and waste collection contingency plan**

The committee considered the draft recycling and waste collection adverse weather plan. The committee recalled that at its meeting in June 2011, the Cabinet member responsible for waste and recycling had offered to bring the draft adverse weather plan to the Scrutiny Committee in October. He invited the committee to comment on the draft plan.

Before opening the debate, the chair invited Councillor Dudley Hoddinott to address the committee and ask his questions. Councillor Hoddinott welcomed the adverse weather plan but believed it did not take into account the varying number of days of disruption to different parts of the Vale. In particular, there was a greater disruption to the service where hills were covered in snow. He asked how the plan would differentiate between those areas where the disruption might be for one or two days, and areas and specific roads where the disruption was likely to be much longer? He also asked how would the council communicate information on plans to collect waste from people living in these specific areas?

The Cabinet member for waste, Councillor Reg Waite, accepted that the council's communication systems had been poor during the worst weather before and after last Christmas and New Year. The council must learn from this. He hoped the plan would overcome the problems experienced last winter and that communications would be significantly better. The plan was to improve communication to district councillors and parish councils. There was also the text messaging service open to the public to register to receive text updates to their mobile telephones. He urged all councillors to promote this scheme. This should cut down on the emails and calls to the council during this time. There were also plans to park refuse vehicles overnight in areas closer to the operator's home during the worst weather, rather than requiring drivers and operators to travel to the vehicle depot each morning. The County Council had offered each parish one tonne of road salt to clear local roads. Parish Councils were co-ordinating this. He was pleased that the contractor, Biffa, had shown a positive attitude to plan for any adverse weather this coming winter.

The committee thanked the Cabinet member for inviting the committee to comment on the draft adverse weather plan. The committee made the following suggestions:

- There should be an owner for the adverse weather plan, and a date and version number.
- To further improve communication, information could be sent via local village or town newsletters, neighbourhood watch co-ordinators, local radio, local television news programmes, and advertisements in local newspapers.
- Paragraph 1.1 should include district councillors in the list of people to alert to impending adverse weather.
- Paragraph 3.2 should specify that the forms of communication set out in that paragraph would be used to communicate to those parts of the Vale where there were specific problems, such as where there were roads on hillsides.
- Paragraph 4.2 should include emptying dog waste bins.
- Paragraph 4.3 in the second row of the table in the last column, clarify that the Biffa disposal site at Sutton Courtenay is not open to the public but if opened on Saturdays, it would allow Biffa to dispose of waste from collection vehicles.
- Appendix 1 regarding the text alert system, ensure that text messages specify the day and date of the next collection.



- Appendix 1, remind residents that the garden waste scheme will be suspended over the Christmas/New Year period.
- During the worst weather, the council should promote the use of 'bring sites', the local recycling points near shops and community centres for recycling.
- There should be communication to the public after the winter weather was over, detailing what happened and why.

The committee noted that the communication and waste teams and their managers were now located in the same office space, which should improve communication while the adverse weather plan was in operation. The committee welcomed this. The Cabinet member reminded the committee that the plan was a living document, and he would welcome any further suggestions outside of the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** To request that the officers and Cabinet member for waste take the committee's suggestions into account before finalising the recycling and waste collection adverse weather plan.

## **Sc.50 Scrutiny work programme**

The committee reviewed its work programme for the remainder of 2011/12. Following the councillors' briefing sessions in September, at which councillors identified some areas for possible scrutiny, the chair suggested that these fitted into two categories:

- Items that required a councillor briefing
- Other items that required more detailed work

The committee highlighted some suggestions from the list that could form part of the committee's work programme. These included an update on the work of Science Vale UK, a review of brown bin billing, and a look at the monitoring and policing of section 106 agreements. The committee asked the strategic director to consider the best time to schedule these in the work programme. The committee also suggested adding in a review of the new grounds maintenance contract for September 2012.

With regard to the draft budget 2012/13 item that was due to be considered by the committee in December, the strategic director offered to report back to the next meeting of the committee on the plan for budget consultation this year.

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

None

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

## Scrutiny Committee

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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DATE: 24 November 2011

## Community Safety Strategy 2010/11

### Recommendation

To note and comment on the community safety report 2010/11

### Purpose of Report

1. This report is a progress update of the delivery of the final year of the community safety strategy 2008/11. It shows how the partnership delivered against its priorities for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

### Strategic Objectives

2. Helping to maintain a safe Vale

Which includes the following corporate priorities:

- Help to maintain, or further reduce, low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Reduce the fear of crime and anti social behaviour

## **Background**

3. The Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was created in accordance with the requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and established partnership working between the police, local authorities fire and rescue, primary care trusts and police authorities. The Policing and Crime Act 2009 further extended this duty to include Probation from 1 April 2010.

The purpose of the partnership was to ensure that these responsible authorities worked together to tackle crime and disorder specifically including anti social behaviour and substance misuse and develop and deliver a three year strategy, updated annually to achieve this.

When the Government came to power it scrapped the previous top down performance management structure, this included national indicators, local area agreements, comprehensive area assessments and several existing strategies. New crime and Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) strategies are outstanding; in addition, there is an emphasis on localism and locally set targets. The Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership agreed a template for an interim rolling plan to guide the CSPs through this period of transition following the comprehensive spending review and introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners.

The introduction of PCCs will mean a fundamental change for community safety partnerships. The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill will place a mutual duty on PCCs and the responsible authorities of CSPs to co-operate to reduce crime and disorder and re-offending. In addition, both will have to have regard to each other's priorities when drawing up their plans.

This report is a progress update of the delivery of the final year of the community safety strategy 2008/11. It shows how the partnership delivered against its priorities for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011.

Moving forward, the 2011/12 annual plan aims to address the national and local crime priorities of the South and Vale and sets out the way that we will engage with communities. Once a year, the CSP is required to conduct a Strategic Intelligence Assessment (SIA) to identify the priorities for the forthcoming year. We use this information to develop the annual rolling community safety plan

The South and Vale Community Safety Partnerships have both approved a process to pilot a new partnership from the 1 April 2011, which is coterminous with the newly formed local police area. This has enabled the partnership to pool expertise, knowledge and resources to effectively tackle crime and disorder, and reduce the number of meetings that partnership officers and statutory members are expected to attend.

## **Financial Implications**

4. N/A

## **Legal Implications**

5. N/A

## **Risks**

6. The CSP funding has been reducing year on year; cut by 20 per cent 2011/12 with a further 40 per cent reduction anticipated for 2012/13. The funding will transfer to the newly appointed Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) with effect from 1 April 2013.

## **Other Implications**

7. N/A

## **Conclusion**

8. The government recognises that when agencies work together they can tackle crime and disorder more effectively than when they work alone. There will be a mutual duty on PCCs and CSPs to cooperate and both will have to have regard to each other's priorities when drawing up their annual plans.

The partnership has agreed the 2011-12 plan and it will form the basis of next year's scrutiny report.

## **Background Papers**

- Community Safety Strategy 2010/11 Report

# Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

## Summary of projects 2010/11

This section provides a brief account of the priorities, results and activities of the projects funded or co-ordinated by the CSP.

### REDUCING ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	% +/-	Target met
<b>Criminal Damage</b>	1372	1059	939	-31.5%	√

	Summary of action	Details and Outcomes
1	Reduce the underage sales of alcohol and underage drinking by conducting at least six test purchasing exercises per year	<p>Four test purchase, (TP), operations were carried out Of premises 27 tested seven failed =26% 20 passed = 74%</p> <p>In 2007/8 the pass rate of premises tested was 62%, (39 tested, 24 passed). Continuous testing has encouraged premises to check ID regularly.</p>
2	Art project at Louie memorial playing fields	<p>In response to complaints about ASB the local neighbourhood action group identified the playing fields as an area of concern. The Community Safety Projects Officer worked with Thames Valley Police, (TVP), North Hinksey Parish Council, Probation and the district council Arts Officer to develop the project.</p> <p>The CSP Projects Officer arranged for Thames Valley Probation Unpaid work scheme to remove and paint out the graffiti. Young people from Matthew Arnold school and a local artist completed an arts project painting the wall with a mural. The probation service returned and sealed the new artwork with a coating to protect it against potential future attacks.</p> <p>North Hinksey Parish Council has also provided new sports facilities for the young people in the area.</p>

		<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No further incidents of graffiti have been reported.</li> </ul>
3	<p>Operation Exit Seven</p> <p>A project run by a charitable group and supported by local police officers and The Foyer in Abingdon</p>	<p>The CSP awarded a grant of £1500 towards the starting up costs of this project. The project engages young people in Abingdon aged 13 to 21 in seven positive activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal challenges</li> <li>Teamwork</li> <li>Education</li> <li>Health awareness</li> <li>Mentoring</li> <li>Restorative</li> <li>Careers</li> </ol> <p>The aim of the project is to encourage young people to stay out of trouble, build confidence, and self-esteem, whilst developing a sense of worth and making a positive impact on the community.</p> <p>Workshops are delivered in partnership with other agencies and include: drug and alcohol awareness, smoking cessation, restorative justice, healthy eating and community and fund raising.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>positive engagement of 20 plus young people who meet every Tuesday at the Abingdon Foyer.</li> <li>young people are learning to interact and communicate with others and organise local events.</li> </ul>
4	<p>Lighting project Daisy Bank, Abingdon</p>	<p>The CSP received concerns from local residents about the lack of lighting and fears for their safety. The CSP Projects Officer co-ordinated a project to improve the lighting at Daisy Bank in Abingdon. Two additional lights have been provided along a foot path which runs from the Radley Road to the Daisy Bank Estate.</p> <p>The project costs of £5600 were equally shared between the CSP and Abingdon Town Council. Oxfordshire County Council installed the light during September 2011.</p>

		<p>Expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased use of the area and an increased sense of personal safety.</li> <li>• The CSP Project Officer will consult with residents during autumn 2011 when the lights are operational to gauge the effectiveness' of the project.</li> </ul>
5	<p>Street pastors</p> <p>Street pastors recruit local volunteers who are trained to offer advice to people who have had too much to drink or need assistance</p>	<p>The CSP continues to support the street pastor initiative.</p> <p>The CSP has produced an advice card for street pastor schemes and neighbourhood police teams to hand out locally during their evening patrols. The cards provide information about a range of support services which people may need following a night out.</p> <p>Street pastor schemes are running in Wantage and Grove with Abingdon going live summer 2011.</p> <p>Outcomes: The street pastors have provided around 1730 hours of help on the streets. Some examples of their work are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A drunken girl was on the pavement as she had fallen and hit her head. The Police had called an ambulance, so while they were waiting for it, the Street Pastors wrapped her in a space blanket.</li> <li>• A middle-aged man who was drunk and had slipped on the ice was helped to his feet, and the Street Pastors made sure he was not hurt.</li> <li>• A Street Pastor moved a car to another spot (safe for the next day) for a lady who was over the legal alcohol limit.</li> <li>• Two aggressive groups of young people were shouting at each other and the situation was becoming threatening. Some punching and head butting was going on. The street pastors talked to them and helped separate the groups, encouraging them to go home.</li> </ul>

6	The CSP works in partnership with other organisations to prevent the escalation of anti-social and criminal behaviour	<p>ASB neighbourhood/partnership meetings:</p> <p>The Thames Valley Police (TVP) ASB team co-ordinate six weekly meetings in each neighbourhood to ensure that ASB issues are dealt with at the early stages.</p> <p>TVP neighbourhood teams, environmental health officers and housing officers from the relevant registered social landlords attend the meetings.</p> <p>The CSP ASB co-ordinator attends the meetings or makes referrals when complaints are received directly to the council.</p>
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## ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB) INTERVENTIONS

The tables below show the use of ASB powers and legislation in the district during 2010/11. The Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) team and partners have continued to tackle issues at an early stage, which is likely to have contributed to there not being a need to issue higher-level interventions such as Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs). Before agreeing to give an Acceptable Behaviour Contract (ABC) to a young person, the ASB team offer the opportunity for the Youth Offending Service to contribute to the decision making process. In addition, the family is offered an intervention package that supports the young person either one to one or in a group. This has the effect of helping the family support any changes the young person may need to make in their behaviour.

Control methods issued	Quarter One	Quarter Two	Quarter Three	Quarter Four
ASBO	1	1	0	0
ASBO Breach	0	5	3	1
Premises closure order	0	0	0	0
Section 27	20	49	69	37
ABCs	1	2	6	12
Warning letters	8	6	5	9
Parenting	2	1	0	0
Fixed penalty notices	21	39	29	44
Vehicle Section 59	6	4	1	7

**Section 59 - Antisocial use of motor vehicles** These are issued to vehicle drivers/owners who undertake antisocial use of vehicles and can lead to the vehicle being seized and possibly destroyed. A section 59 intervention is in two parts: firstly, a warning letter is issued to the owner/driver, and if within a 12-month period, the



vehicle is used in the same manner or the same person uses an alternative vehicle in a similar manner, the vehicle is seized. The keeper pays the cost of the recovery and storage for up to 21 days, but if they fail to do so, the vehicle is scrapped

### **Section 27 - Violent Crime Related Dispersal**

The notices are handed to people aged 16 and over who have been involved or are thought to be at risk of being involved in violent alcohol related crime. The notices ban people from a specified area for up to 48 hours. The notices are most effective in town centres and this is reflected in a higher number of notices handed out in Henley and Didcot, where the nighttime economy is more active.

### **Youth alcohol seizure letters**

Each time alcohol is seized from under age drinkers, the TVP officer notifies the ASB team. The ASB team send letters to the parents warning them that if the young person is reported for drinking alcohol again, they risk being the subject of an Acceptable Behaviour Contract.

## REDUCING VIOLENT CRIME BY 5% BY 2010/11

	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	% +/-	Target met
Assault with less serious injury	499	368	282	-43%	√
Domestic abuse incidents recorded (serious )	457	372	324	-29%	n/a
Domestic abuse incidents non-recordable crime (minor)	564	739	848	-50% *	n/a

\* the partnership aims to increase the reporting of domestic abuse incidents, therefore an increase in the number of less serious incidents reported is viewed as positive

	Summary of action	Details and Outcomes
7	Reduce alcohol related crime by continuing to support the Vale Nightsafe scheme working positively with licensees to reduce town centre violence.	<p>The CSP Projects Officer co-ordinates the Nightsafe meetings and campaigns.</p> <p>The <b>Nightsafe</b> group reviewed the terms and conditions of the scheme with Abingdon and Wantage pub watch. A Nightsafe charter was drawn up for all licensees to adhere to. The charter states that pubs signed up to Nightsafe must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sign up to the pubwatch scheme and regularly attend meetings</li> <li>• sign up to the drugs prevention initiative</li> <li>• have an age awareness policy in place</li> <li>• consider and sign up to the benefits of the radio link scheme (where applicable)</li> <li>• ensure that all bar staff are trained in fire safety drills, drugs awareness and managing alcohol misuse</li> <li>• support local Nightsafe campaigns and display information</li> <li>• where door supervisors are in place, agree that they will wear something highly visible.</li> </ul>

		<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Abingdon, eight premises have signed up to the scheme. Further premises will have the opportunity to sign up to the initiative through pub watch meetings during the year. The new scheme will be launched in Wantage at the pubwatch meeting on the 17 August 2011.</li> </ul> <p>The CSP has funded six <b>drugs dogs</b> operations in the Vale at a total cost of £2100. There were two operations during the year in Abingdon, Faringdon and Wantage.</p> <p>The police patrols are high visibility and send out a clear message to the public that drugs misuse is not acceptable in licensed premises.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 46 premises visited.</li> <li>• Class A drugs three finds</li> <li>• Class B drugs one find</li> <li>• Arrests four</li> </ul> <p>The data collected from these operations is used to work positively with the designated premises supervisors and the licensee, to improve standards.</p>
8	Increase the reporting of domestic abuse (DA)	<p>The Oxfordshire Domestic Abuse Strategy Group oversees all policy and activity to respond to DA issues in the county. For full details please use the link below  <a href="http://www.reducingtherisk.org.uk">http://www.reducingtherisk.org.uk</a></p> <p>The CSP part funds an outreach service in the Vale. A2 Dominion delivers the service. During 2010/11, there were 28 new referrals. The source of referrals included self referrals and the police domestic abuse unit.</p> <p>Outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9 clients completing a programme of support</li> <li>• 7 moving to a refuge</li> <li>• 7 refused to engage</li> <li>• 1 reconciled with partner</li> <li>• 1 referred to the high risk service</li> <li>• 3 no support required/ refused to engage</li> </ul>

9	Sustain the domestic abuse champion network	<p>There is a network of 177 frontline domestic abuse champions across the South and Vale, who are trained to support victims and signpost them to help and support.</p> <p>The champions come from a wide range of organisations. Some of the workers are health visitors, teachers, social workers, housing officers, emergency nurses, education officers, youth workers, family support workers, midwives, crown prosecutors, fire officers and probation officers.</p> <p>The CSP part funds the County Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator who runs the champions network.</p> <p>Outcomes: The champion's main aim is to make services to victims more accessible and available. From speaking to victims, it has been noted that every time they see a different organisation they have to explain their situation again. Working with a champion means that they do this only once and then the information collected at their first visit is passed to the other organisations directly.</p>
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## MAINTAIN THE CURRENT LEVEL OF ACQUISITIVE CRIME

	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	% +/-	Target met
burglary dwelling	215	196	162	-24.6%	√
robbery business property	3	2	2	-50%	√
robbery personal property	11	11	14	+27%	X
theft of vehicle	136	87	78	-42.6%	√
theft from vehicle	309	262	234	-24%	√
<b>Total</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>558</b>	<b>490</b>	<b>-27%</b>	√

	Summary of action	Details and Outcomes
10	Reduction in acquisitive crime by funding the Anchor/Mears small repairs scheme during 2010/11	<p>The funding enables the Police Crime Prevention Reduction Advisors (CPRA) to make referrals, for elderly and vulnerable victims, to the scheme to prevent repeat incidents. The work carried out ranged from door chains, lever deadlocks, sensor lights, door bars and memo-cams fitted.</p> <p>Outcomes: 119 referrals, £9882 – average cost £83.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abingdon area 71 (60%) referrals</li> <li>• Wantage area 43 (36%) referrals</li> <li>• 35 referrals due to individuals/families identified as vulnerable</li> <li>• 14 referrals due to domestic abuse incidents</li> <li>• 12 referrals related to burglary offences</li> </ul> <p>Mrs C Door chain and mirror fitted by Anchor. <i>"It is such a relief to know there is a service to help with the jobs that keeps the home ticking over and can help in emergencies – I am a widow".</i></p>

<p>Oxfordshire County Council, Trading Standards - Rogue Trader Days</p>	<p>There have been three partnership days of action in the Vale organised by the Crime Prevention Reduction Advisor (CPRA) and the doorstep crime team from Trading Standards. The days involved staff from Trading Standards, police officers from the Neighbourhood Policing team, and waste management officers from Vale District Council.</p> <p><b>21 July 2010 event</b> 27 traders stopped and checked</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two males were stopped from completing work on an elderly gentleman's home in Grove near Wantage; they were served with a harassment warning and dealt with for two trading standard offences. A cheque for £217 was stopped and the victim was prevented from giving the offenders a further £500. A memo cam was installed at the victim's home because he has been targeted previously for gardening work.</li> <li>• The CPRA and the neighbourhood team distributed about 80 information packs to residents in Grove to raise awareness and prevent further incidents.</li> </ul> <p><b>10 March 2011 event</b> As a follow on from the first rogue trader day and the intelligence gained Grove was identified as a hot spot for rogue trader activity. The CPRA set up a "No Cold Caller Zone" (NCCZ) in the Ormond Road area of Wantage and the old part of Grove, due to the large number of distraction burglaries there (approximately 1500 homes). The NCCZ has made a huge impact locally. The police and trading standards are receiving calls about rogue traders and information about companies breaching the NCCZ.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have also received lots of anecdotal evidence from people who say they feel safer and more confident when dealing with doorstep callers.</li> </ul>
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11	Crime prevention initiatives	<p><b>Trap vehicle - £4015</b> The vehicle was deployed 27 times across the Vale. One deployment recorded positive results and resulted in an arrest and custodial sentence.</p> <p><b>Digital door viewers £2070</b> The CSP purchased 20 digital door viewers. They are designed to prevent repeat victimisation and collect evidence of nuisance callers. The viewers have been installed, at the properties of elderly and vulnerable tenants who had been a victim of distraction burglary.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <p><i>“Mrs N said, “It’s marvellous. I am very happy with the door viewer and I feel more confident when someone calls at the door.”</i></p> <p><b>Burglary prevention campaign</b> – The CSP joined forces with Thames Valley Crimestoppers to help local people cut Christmas crime. Local police teams kept an eye out for properties that looked empty and put advice cards through the door with simple steps to help people keep their homes safe encouraging residents to use timer switches to give the illusion of someone being at home.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CRAs said it had had a positive impact on reducing the number of burglaries.</li> </ul> <p>The CSP funded 2000 <b>bike labels</b>, for £398, for local police neighbourhood teams to attach to parents and students cycles to prevent theft. In the event of theft the tamper proof lable helps the police to identify the owner of the stolen bicylce. All local schools are engaging with the PCSO’s to visit the schools regularly to code additional cycles and educate cyclists on road safety.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take up was very strong. TVP and the schools want to run the operation again.</li> </ul>
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## REDUCE THE HARM CAUSED BY DRUG AND ALCOHOL MISUSE

	<b>Summary of action</b>	<b>Details and Outcomes</b>
12	Ensure residents of the Vale have access to treatment services	<p><b>Smart - Community Drug and Alcohol Service.</b> A mobile unit visits Wantage and Faringdon weekly.</p> <p>The locations of the unit are reviewed regularly to make sure they are responding to local needs.</p> <p>The unit is open to everyone, (young people and adults), who want help for their own use, referrals to other services or into SMART, harm reduction advice, needle exchange and family and carers advice. More information is available at: <a href="http://www.smartcjs.org.uk">www.smartcjs.org.uk</a></p> <p>Smart - Case study: A new client who had a drinking problem became down and wanted to end their life. They wanted to stop drinking and went to their local doctor who referred them to the Smart Van.</p> <p>Initially they were reluctant to visit however, they just happened to be in town on the same day as the Smart van. "I arrived just as Eamon and Simone were about to leave, we stood in the rain talking because the van was packed ready to leave, that's how close I was to missing them."</p> <p>The client has continued to visit on a weekly basis. They have been able to talk about their personal problems, which have allowed them to look at things more clearly. "There are difficult times, when I am on my own and I am able to reflect on the conversations I have had with the support workers and I find this is a great help. I am sure that I am a different person from the one that first stepped into the Smart van."</p> <p><i>"Both Eamon and Simone put me very much at ease, I am very confident in talking to either of them. I don't get any impression that they judge me, they are only there to support me through this difficult time in my life. "The client reported that the service was easy to access; they can call in while shopping in town, and don't have to</i></p>



		<i>travel too far. "If the Smart van wasn't there, then I seriously wonder if I would still be here."</i>
13	Pursue Abingdon town centre order to prohibit the consumption of alcohol in public places  Designated Public Place Order (DPPO)	The order has in been in place since May 2009, providing confidence for officers when seizing alcohol from people behaving in an anti-social manner. Outcomes: ASB in the town has reduced over the past two years and the local neighbourhood team report that the order has aided their positive approach to policing the town centre.
14	Continue to develop an enhanced confiscation of alcohol from young people project. Develop a programme of education and support for young people, parents and guardians.	Under "Operation Maverick" the Abingdon neighbourhood team have agreed a process for referring young underage people caught repeatedly with alcohol to a workshop at the Abingdon Bridge. Letters are sent out to parents/guardians after the first offence together with advice leaflet, 'Your kids and alcohol'.  1 July 2010 to 21 June 2011: 99 letters to parents/guardians 74 males, 25 females  Ages of the young people when found drinking: 13 years – 3 14 years – 4 15 years – 13 16 years – 35 17 years – 44  Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out of the 99 young people TVP have referred 15 (14 males and 1 female) have been referred for a second time. They received a home visit and referred to the workshop.</li> </ul> The Abingdon Bridge have lottery funding for a further two years and will continue to provide workshops and alcohol intervention programmes for young people in Abingdon.  In Wantage and Faringdon when young people are found in possession of alcohol the TVP Anti Social Behaviour Team sends a warning letter to parents/guardian. An advice guide is also included.

## REDUCE THE OFFENDING RATE OF PRIORITY AND PROLIFIC OFFENDERS

	<b>Summary of action</b>	<b>Details and Outcomes</b>
15	Review the Priority and Prolific Offender matrix annually ensure that it reflects the Vale priorities	<p>The matrix was reviewed during 2010/11. However, the scheme is now run centrally from Oxford.</p> <p>Integrated Offender Management brings together the Probation Substance Misuse Team, the Drug Intervention Project and the Prolific and Priority Offenders team into one unit. This approach ensures prolific offenders, those tested positive for Class A drugs in police custody and those under Probation supervision with a Class A drug addiction could all be dealt with seamlessly, and the necessary targeted support provided.</p> <p>In 2010/11 the results of this intensive work was recorded Oxfordshire wide, however for 2011/12 the details will be specifically available for South and Vale area.</p>

## IMPROVING ROAD SAFETY

	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	% +/-	Target met
People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	53	58	71	Base line year 2007/8 = 60  +18%	No
Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents	6	3	7	Base line year 2007/8 = 5  +40%	No

	Summary of action	Details and Outcomes
16	Target speeding and dangerously parked vehicles through neighbourhood action groups	<p><b>Stickers on Wheelie Bins (pilot project)</b></p> <p>The pilot areas for this project were Milton, Chilton and Harwell and Watchfield, Shrivenham, Longcot and Bourton. The CSP contributed £1326 together with the parish councils who contributed £800 and distributed the stickers in their areas.</p> <p>The speed indicator device (SID) was used periodically from the 11 May 2010 to the 24 Feb 2011 to gauge the level of the speeding problem before the use of the stickers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milton village, 7 hours, 1226 vehicles recorded, 4 vehicles speeding.</li> <li>• Harwell village, 35 hours, 5390 vehicles recorded, 123 were speeding.</li> <li>• Chilton village, 3 hours, 254 vehicles recorded, 4 vehicles were speeding.</li> </ul> <p>If drivers are caught driving in excess of the speed limit they are stopped and spoken to, their registration details are taken and kept on record.</p> <p>Expected outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall reduction in speeding.</li> </ul> <p>The SID will be deployed during the second quarter in the following year to assess any change in driving habits.</p>

		<p><b>Inner Abingdon Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) – school project</b></p> <p>The Inner Abingdon NAG set up a project aimed at parents who were parking inconsiderately outside local schools. Parents were reminded of the importance of zig-zag lines and asked not to park on pavements to keep them free for pedestrians. This project has supported a review of the county school travel plans and is being promoted to other schools as best practice during 2011/12.</p> <p>The CSP funded <b>high visibility bands</b> that can be worn by cyclists or pedestrians whilst walking to school. The fluorescent bands wrap around school bags and clothing to ensure people can be seen and be safe.</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 Abingdon primary and secondary schools were visited. 1000 bands were distributed at a cost of £620. The bands have proved popular with staff and parents with further enquiries from the school asking for suppliers details.</li> </ul>
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## Vale of White Horse District Council - Community Safety

	£	£	£	£	£
Area Based Grant (ABG)	ABG	ABG	ABG	BCU Fund	Total
Income	Capital	Revenue	Total	Total	Funding
	Reduced by 50%				
Income 2010/11	14,889	90,679	105,568	45,500	<b>151,068</b>
Grant from Sovereign Vale Housing Association			5,000		<b>5,000</b>
Carry Forward 2009/10		3,200	3,200	-	<b>3,200</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>14,889</b>	<b>98,879</b>	<b>113,768</b>	<b>45,500</b>	<b>159,268</b>
<b>Expenditure (Actual &amp; Committed)</b>					
Anti-Social Behaviour Co-ordinator - District	-	33,000	33,000	-	<b>33,000</b>
Community Safety Project Co-ordinator - District	-	35,000	35,000	-	<b>35,000</b>
Anti-Social Behaviour Assistant - TVP	-	-	-	12,500	<b>12,500</b>
Crime Reduction Advisor - TVP	-	-	-	32,000	<b>32,000</b>
Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator - OCC	-	6,500	6,500	-	<b>6,500</b>
IRIS running costs- TVP	-	5,000	5,000	1,000	<b>6,000</b>
Nightsafe	-	2,100	2,100	-	<b>2,100</b>
Target Hardening - Anchor Small Repairs Scheme	4,000	-	4,000	-	<b>4,000</b>
Domestic Abuse Outreach – A2 Dominion	-	5,000	5,000	-	<b>5,000</b>
Alcohol Awareness project for parents and young people		1,500	1,500	-	<b>1,500</b>
Community Safety Projects	10,889	10,779	21,668	-	<b>21,668</b>
<b>Total Vale Initiatives 2010/11</b>	<b>14,889</b>	<b>98,879</b>	<b>113,768</b>	<b>45,500</b>	<b>159,268</b>
<b>NB: £7059 c/fwd to 2011/12</b>					
<b>LAA Reward Funding £24,112 revenue £24,112 capital currently on hold until further notice</b>					

## **Extract of Scrutiny Committee minutes – 20 January 2011**

### **Community Safety Partnership 2009/10**

The committee considered report 94/10 of the head of corporate strategy. Appended to this was the annual report, which reviewed progress against the community safety plan for 2009/10. The report showed that the partnership had reduced vehicle crime, burglary, criminal damage, alcohol and drug misuse, and prolific offending. The partnership had also improved road safety and the incidence of reporting domestic abuse. The committee noted examples of where the partnership had proved successful due to the agencies working together to tackle these issues.

The committee congratulated the community safety partnership on its success over the year but noted that there would be funding pressures in the future. The committee thanked the Thames Valley Police Chief Inspector for his work. He thanked the council for its support.

### **RESOLVED**

To note the contents of the annual report on the 2009/10 community safety plan.

# Scrutiny Committee



Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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To: Scrutiny committee

DATE: 24 November 2011

**REPORT NO: 47/11**

## Corporate Plan 2012-2016

### Recommendation

Scrutiny committee is invited to consider and comment on the strategic objectives, corporate priorities and success measures set out in the draft Vale of White Horse corporate plan for the period 2012 – 2016.

### Purpose of Report

1. This report sets out the proposed strategic objectives and corporate priorities contained in the draft Vale of White Horse corporate plan for the period 2012-2016. It provides an opportunity for the scrutiny committee to consider and comment on these before the plan is finalised in February 2012.

### Strategic Objectives

2. The development of the council's corporate plan is fundamental to the way that the council manages its business effectively. The purpose of the plan is to identify the strategic objectives and corporate priorities, which will drive the council's business during a four year period and help to guide decisions on the allocation of resources. The draft corporate plan for the period 2012 – 2016 proposes a set of new objectives, priorities and measures of success to replace those set out in the current corporate plan, which ends on 31 March 2012.

### Background

3. The council agreed its current corporate plan in 2009. Following the local elections in May 2011, the council began a review of the corporate plan to develop a new set of objectives, priorities and measures and has now completed a draft plan for the

period April 2012 to March 2016. In developing the draft plan we have involved many stakeholders through:

- two workshops with councillors
  - a workshop with residents
  - inviting views and comments from local councils
  - inviting views and comments from service teams via their heads of service, staff briefings and our staff newsletter.
4. The draft corporate plan, attached as **annex A** to the report, was published for consultation on Friday 14 October 2011 and the closing date for responses is 3 January 2012. We are carrying out consultation on the draft using a variety of methods:
- draft corporate plan and consultation questionnaire on the council's website
  - availability of draft corporate plan publicised through a press release, parish newsletter, newsletter to voluntary and community sector and grant recipients
  - draft corporate plan and questionnaire sent to equalities and disability panels
  - draft document and questionnaire sent to all towns and parishes and information provided at the town and parish forum
  - consultation workshop at the voluntary and community sector forum
  - consultation with key partners through the Vale Partnership.
5. The council will review progress against the plan annually, in the autumn, and may also agree minor changes to priorities and targets to ensure that the plan remains up-to-date and relevant. At the end of the four year period, the council will conduct another fundamental review of its objectives and priorities.

## **National and local context**

6. The context within which the council is developing its new objectives and priorities has changed. New national legislation, particularly relating to neighbourhood planning and localising the delivery of services will have an impact upon the council's work and priorities, although it is not yet clear what this will be in detail. The corporate plan includes objectives and priorities which relate to neighbourhood plans and other initiatives contained within the Localism and Decentralisation Bill, and it is likely that as implementation of the legislation proceeds we will need to review priorities that relate to this to ensure that they remain relevant. The council will have the opportunity to review these annually.
7. Another significant change is that government has withdrawn the set of national indicators that local authorities and other public sector organisations were required to report against. It has also ended local area agreements (LAA). These required local authorities to agree with central government targets for up to 35 national indicators addressing issues that had been identified as priorities in sustainable community strategies. While the draft corporate plan continues to take account of



the priorities and targets in the Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse sustainable community strategies the council now has more flexibility in determining its targets and measures.

## **Strategic objectives and priorities**

8. The draft strategic objectives for 2012-2016 are:

- excellent delivery of key services
- effective management of resources
- meeting housing need
- building the local economy
- support for communities.

9. As in the current corporate plan, for each strategic objective we have identified a number of priorities that the council will focus on during the life of the plan. However, we have adopted a different approach to how we set out these priorities in the new corporate plan by making a distinction between:

- priorities that the council will deliver directly
- priorities that the council will facilitate or work with partners to achieve.

10. This approach enables us to be clear about those priorities that are the direct responsibility of the council and those which the council will be seeking to influence but does not have direct control over. We can, therefore, set targets and measures that reflect the extent of the council's ability to influence outcomes.

## **Financial Implications**

11. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report although the corporate plan will be used to guide decisions on the allocation of resources.

## **Legal Implications**

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

## **Risks**

13. Risks will need to be identified specific to individual corporate priorities and included in the operational service area risk register.

## **Conclusion and next steps**

14. We have carried out a major review of the corporate plan, and developed, in consultation with stakeholders, a draft plan for 2012-2016 setting out new objectives, priorities and measures. The plan will provide a focus for the council's work over the four year period and will also guide decisions on allocation of resources.

15. The draft plan is currently out for consultation, which ends on 3 January 2012. The committee is invited to comment on the current draft objectives, priorities and measures set out in the draft plan attached at **annex A**. Cabinet will consider consultation responses and finalise the corporate plan in February 2012, for adoption by Council.

## **Background Papers**

- Vale of White Horse corporate plan 2009 -2012
- Oxfordshire 2030
- Vale of White Horse sustainable community strategy
- notes of consultation workshops with residents
- notes of consultation workshops with councillors
- corporate plan 2012 -2016 consultation questionnaire.

# Vale of White Horse District Council

## CORPORATE PLAN 2012-2016: CONSULTATION DRAFT

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<b>Excellent delivery of key services</b>	
<b>What we will do</b>	<b>How we will measure success</b>
Put residents at the heart of service delivery and seek to provide an excellent customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• percentage of people very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the way the council runs things</li> <li>• percentage of people who agree with the statement that the council does a good job for people like me</li> <li>• percentage of people satisfied with the way the council dealt with their enquiry (all methods of contact)</li> </ul>
Keep residents and other stakeholders informed about our services, activities and spending and ensure we take their views into account before making key decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• percentage of people who say they feel well or fairly well informed by the council about the services it provides</li> </ul>
Deliver high performing services with particular emphasis on achieving excellent levels of recycling, keeping streets and public spaces clean and attractive and ensuring good quality sports and leisure provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• percentage of people who are very satisfied or fairly satisfied with the waste and recycling collection service, keeping the area clean and litter free, and sports and leisure facilities</li> <li>• recycling rate</li> <li>• one of the top ten councils nationally for recycling</li> <li>• reduce the number of fly tips (rolling six month average)</li> <li>• time taken to clear fly-tipping</li> <li>• sports centre users satisfaction survey</li> </ul>

<b>Effective management of resources</b>	
<b>What we will do</b>	<b>How we will measure success</b>
Keep council tax low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to keep council tax for district services in the lowest 20 nationally and work towards being in the lowest 10</li> </ul>
Agree prudent and sustainable medium term financial plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no adverse comment from external auditors in annual governance report</li> </ul>
Reduce energy usage throughout the council's operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• X per cent reduction in gas usage and x per cent reduction in electricity usage in council offices and civic buildings</li> <li>• X per cent reduction in gas usage and x per cent reduction in electricity usage in council sports centres<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• reduce business mileage by x</li> </ul>
Continue to work in partnership with South Oxfordshire District Council to reduce operating costs and enhance services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• achieve joint savings with South Oxfordshire District Council of at least £100,000 per year throughout the corporate plan</li> <li>• examples of services improving through joint working</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> We are currently reviewing possible targets for this to ensure that we align with national targets and county carbon dioxide targets. We are also looking into different options for measuring energy use reduction for example, maintaining combined gas and electricity usage measures or possibly splitting these, cost measures, and the need for weather adjusted targets.

<b>Meeting housing need</b>	
INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF MARKET AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING	
<b>What we will do</b>	<b>How we will measure success</b>
Set housing targets and identify land supply to meet future housing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• core strategy approved</li> <li>• core strategy targets agreed</li> <li>• regular monitoring of performance against targets</li> </ul>
Process planning applications for housing promptly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70 per cent major planning applications determined within 13 weeks</li> <li>• 75 per cent minor planning applications agreed within eight weeks</li> </ul>
Secure sufficient financial contributions from development to deliver essential infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• percentage of contributions secured in s106 agreements received by the council at year end</li> <li>• annual report of facilities and infrastructure provided with contribution from developers</li> <li>• Community infrastructure levy (CIL) implemented<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>
Ensure that new developments include a range of different types of affordable housing to meet local needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new developments deliver the levels of affordable housing stipulated in the core strategy</li> </ul>
<b>What we will facilitate in partnership with others</b>	<b>How we will measure success</b>
Work with developers to overcome obstacles to development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sites with potential problems identified and action plans to overcome these agreed</li> <li>• quarterly report on progress achieved against action plan</li> <li>• number of new developments started</li> </ul>
Work with local communities to identify suitable sites for community led housing schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• annual report setting out the council's contribution towards bringing development sites forward in response to community led and</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> Section 106 agreements and CIL are subject to emerging legislation. Until we are clear about how they will work in the future we do not plan to set a specific target for how much we hope to secure.

neighbourhood plans<sup>3</sup>

**Building the local economy**

TO PROMOTE BUSINESS IN ALL PARTS OF THE VALE

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>How we will measure success</b>
Continue to invest to improve the viability and attractiveness of our towns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• two hour free car parking introduced in market towns by end of 2011</li> <li>• annual town centre vitality survey, including footfall and vacant shop surveys</li> <li>• impact of public wi-fi scheme piloted in Wantage</li> <li>• market town strategy reviewed and annual action plans developed</li> <li>• progress against annual action plans</li> </ul>
Develop and implement local development orders to stimulate business growth at Milton Park and Harwell Science Campus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development orders in place by June 2012</li> <li>• annual report on the number and square metres of new business units developed under provisions of the development order</li> </ul>
Enter into a commercial partnership to secure redevelopment of Abingdon town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• refurbishment of Abbey Centre completed by (date tbc)</li> <li>• redevelopment of the Charter substantially completed by end of plan period</li> </ul>
Enter into a commercial partnership to secure new retail development at Botley and use some of the proceeds to improve Westway shopping centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• new retail development built and operating by end of corporate plan period</li> <li>• improvements to Westway shopping centre agreed and implemented</li> </ul>
Review the potential for building a new leisure centre in Wantage/Grove as the town expands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• options study produced by end 2012</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> At this stage we do not think it appropriate to identify a specific number of schemes or sites

What we will facilitate in partnership with others	How we will measure success
Roll out faster broadband across the district	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) funding spend secured for Vale of White Horse</li> <li>• all parts of the district to have access to improved broadband and mobile phone coverage by the end of the corporate plan period</li> </ul>
Deliver the Science Vale UK enterprise zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number of jobs created, number of and square metres of new business units developed</li> <li>• increase in business rates</li> </ul>
Improve Infrastructure to support business growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strategy for investment for enterprise zone business rates growth agreed with Oxfordshire Local Economic Partnership</li> <li>• strategy implemented and progress confirmed in annual report</li> </ul>
Maintain low levels of crime and anti social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• at least 97 per cent of people feel safe walking alone in their community in daytime</li> <li>• at least 79 per cent of people feel safe walking alone in their community after dark</li> <li>• monitor performance against priority crime targets in community safety strategy</li> </ul>
Promote the River Thames at Abingdon as a visitor and leisure attraction	Tbc
Build on the 'Choose Abingdon' partnership to create a district-wide business partnership	Number of businesses that are member of the district-wide partnership

<b>Support for communities</b>	
<b>What we will do</b>	<b>How we will measure success</b>
Improve the way we work with local communities and their representative bodies to create opportunities to localise service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• examples of localised service delivery</li> </ul>
Offer grants to voluntary and community organisations who are delivering projects and services that support our objectives or those in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grants criteria aligned with council's priorities</li> <li>• amount of grant awarded and number of projects funded and number of projects completed.</li> <li>• annual report on key grant aided projects setting out benefits to local community and how they have helped to deliver council priorities</li> </ul>
Explore options for the further development of Wantage Civic Hall as a successful community facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plan agreed for developing Wantage Civic Hall</li> <li>• increase in the number of bookings and users of the Civic Hall</li> <li>• decrease in net expenditure</li> </ul>
<b>What we will facilitate in partnership with others</b>	
Support rural communities to retain or provide facilities where there is local support to do so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support development of community-led plans</li> <li>• number of actions in community-led plans progressed with the support of the council each year</li> </ul>
Encourage communities to develop neighbourhood plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all local councils provided with information about developing neighbourhood plans and sources of advice and support</li> <li>• number of communities engaged in developing neighbourhood plans</li> </ul>
Devolve responsibility for delivery of services to parish councils, community groups and others where it makes sense to do so	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific examples of devolved services in place</li> </ul>



# SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME



containing scrutiny work to be undertaken 1 November 2011 to  
30 September 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>Community safety annual report</b>	Scrutiny Committee 24 Nov 2011	Liz Hayden Tel. (01235) 540309 Email: <a href="mailto:liz.hayden@southhandvale.gov.uk">liz.hayden@southhandvale.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

Item title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Why is it here?	Scope	Notes
<b>Corporate plan review</b>	Cabinet 10 Feb 2012	Sally Truman, Policy and Community Engagement Manager Tel. (01235) 540408 Email: <a href="mailto:sally.truman@southandvale.gov.uk">sally.truman@so uthandvale.gov.u k</a>	Cabinet is consulting on the draft corporate plan.	To submit comments on the draft plan.	
<b>Budget 2012/13</b>	Scrutiny Committee 22 Dec 2011	William Jacobs, Head of Finance Tel. (01235) 540455 Email: <a href="mailto:william.jacobs@southandvale.gov.uk">william.jacobs@s outhandvale.gov. uk</a>	Cabinet is consulting on the draft budget 2012/13.	To submit comments on the draft budget to the Cabinet.	
<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@s outhandvale.gov. uk</a>	To conduct an annual review of the contractor's performance	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 22 Mar 2012	Margaret Reed, Head of Legal and Democratic Tel. (01235) 540407 Email: <a href="mailto:margaret.reed@outhandvale.gov.uk">margaret.reed@outhandvale.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>Science Vale UK</b>	Scrutiny Committee January 2012	Anna Robinson, Strategic Director Tel. (01235) 540523 Email: <a href="mailto:anna.robinson@outhandvale.gov.uk">anna.robinson@outhandvale.gov.uk</a>	To receive a briefing on Science Vale UK's work.		
<b>Garden waste bins - billing</b>	Scrutiny Committee January 2012	Steve Bishop, Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer Tel. (01235) 540332 Email: <a href="mailto:steve.bishop@outhandvale.gov.uk">steve.bishop@outhandvale.gov.uk</a>	The committee has asked to review the billing administration of the garden waste scheme.	To consider the report and feedback any comments to the Cabinet.	

Item title	Meeting date	Lead officer	Why is it here?	Scope	Notes
<b>Section 106 agreements - monitoring implementation</b>	Scrutiny Committee January 2012	Adrian Duffield, Head of Planning Tel. (01235) 540340 Email: <a href="mailto:adrian.duffield@southandvale.gov.uk">adrian.duffield@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	The committee has asked to review the administration of section 106 agreements and to look at how the money raised is managed.	To consider the report and feedback any comments to the Cabinet.	
<b>Fit for the future annual review</b>	Scrutiny Committee September 2012	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>Grounds maintenance contract review</b>	Scrutiny Committee September 2012	Ian Matten Tel. (01235) 540373 Email: <a href="mailto:ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk">ian.matten@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	The committee has asked to review implementation of the new contract.	To consider the report and feedback any comments to the Cabinet.	