

Date: 24 May 2006

TO: All Members of the Executive
FOR ATTENDANCE

TO: All Other Members of the Council
FOR INFORMATION

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **EXECUTIVE** to be held in the **GUILDHALL, ABINGDON** on **Friday, 2nd June, 2006** at **2.30 pm.**

Yours faithfully

Terry Stock
Chief Executive

Members are reminded of the provisions contained in Part 2 of the Local Code of Conduct, and Standing Order 34 regarding the declaration of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

A G E N D A

Open to the Public including the Press

A large print version of this agenda is available. Any background papers referred to may be inspected by prior arrangement. Contact Steve Culliford, Democratic Services Officer on telephone number (01235) 540307.

Map and Vision

(Page 9)

A map showing the location of the venue for this meeting, together with a copy the Council Vision is attached.

STANDING ITEMS

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes

To adopt and sign as a correct record the public minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 5 and 17 May 2006, (previously circulated).

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.

In accordance with Part 2 of the Local Code of Conduct and the provisions of Standing Order 34, any Member with a personal interest must disclose the existence and nature of that interest to the meeting prior to the matter being debated. Where that personal interest is also a prejudicial interest, then the Member must withdraw from the room in which the meeting is being held and not seek improperly to influence any decision about the matter unless he/she has obtained a dispensation from the Standards Committee.

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 and Petitions from the Public Under Standing Order 32

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

6. Questions from the Public Under Standing Order 32

Any questions from members of the public under Standing Order 32 will be asked at the meeting.

7. Referral under the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules or the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules

Call-In of Executive Decision – Internal Audit Plan 2005/06 Outturn

The Executive will recall that its decisions in respect of the Internal Audit Plan 2005/06 Outturn (minutes Ex.304 and 307) were called in by the Scrutiny Committee. The call-in meeting was held on 18 May 2006 and after considering the matter further, the Scrutiny Committee resolved that it had no more concerns about the Executive's decision. However, the Committee resolved:

that the Executive be recommended to request a progress report to its July 2006 meeting on the following improvements detailed in Paragraph 9 of report 287/05:

- (a) The full implementation of the Debt Strategy, which is essential to achieving and maintaining robust control over debt.*
- (b) The review of the Council's Risk Registers following the senior management restructure, and the production of Business Continuity Plans.*
- (c) Improvements in reconciliation of income and the resolution & ownership of discrepancies.*

8. Referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Other Committees

(a) Notice of Motion – Referred from Council 17 May 2006

At its meeting held on 17 May 2006, the Council received the following motion and referred it to the Executive for determination:

Motion to be proposed by Councillor Peter Saunders, seconded by Councillor Robert Sharp:

“This Council requests the Executive to reconsider how rural parishes can get fairer funding from the Vale for street cleansing and grass cutting”.

With the agreement of the proposer and seconder, this item has been deferred until the next meeting of the Executive on 7 July 2006 in order to allow further information to be collated to assist the consideration of this matter.

(b) Major and Minor Planning Applications Improvement Plan - Referred from the Development Control Committee 22 May 2006

The Development Control Committee considered the report 04/06 of the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) which also set out the implications of the Council being included on the list of Planning Standards Authorities for processing Major and Minor planning applications. The Committee resolved as follows:

- (a) that the Executive be recommended to agree the proposed Improvement Plan and Trajectory, amended to include the following:
 - (1) the comments of the Scrutiny Committee, namely the inclusion of an additional bullet point in Action 4 of the Improvement Plan specifying that all consultees are to be urged to respond within the statutory deadlines;
 - (2) revised deadlines for outstanding targets.
- (b) that the Executive be asked to endorse that the Officers be requested to put in place measures to enable the monitoring of the planning process in respect of major applications to enable the reasons for delay to be readily identifiable.
- (c) that the Executive be asked to consider whether the Council's internal procedures in terms of managing vacancies and recruitment have any adverse impact on performance in determining major and minor planning applications.

9. Items Deferred from the Previous Meeting

None

10. Financial Monitoring

(Pages 10 - 12)

Members are requested to consider any significant budget variances and any requests for virement or permanent budget adjustment.

KEY DECISIONS

11. Forward Plan

(Pages 13 - 16)

To receive the Forward Plan containing Executive decisions to be taken from June to

September 2006.

Recommendation

that the Forward Plan be received.

OTHER MATTERS

12. Corporate Governance Quarterly Report

(Pages 17 - 73)

To receive and consider report 11/06 of the Directors' Group.

Introduction and Report Summary

To receive the corporate governance report for the fourth quarter of 2005/06.

The Contact Officer for this report is Tim Sadler, Strategic Director (01235) 540360.

Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to resolve that:

- (a) the Directors' Group Corporate Governance Report for the fourth quarter 2005/06 be noted*
- (b) the current Comprehensive Performance Assessment action plans be closed in their entirety and that officers propose updated replacements to the July meeting of the Executive.*
- (c) staff in the Housing and Benefits teams are congratulated for strong performance through out the year.*
- (d) staff in the waste management are congratulated on the successful implementation of the Brown Wheeled Bin Scheme*
- (e) contact centre staff are congratulated on a successful first year.*
- (f) The reductions in BVPI 2a (equality standard) and 2b (promotion of race equality) are noted with concern and that the Strategic Director, Tim Sadler, and Portfolio holder, Roz Smith, progress the situation as a priority and monitor progress closely*
- (g) The success of the change to the Housing Allocations Policy in respect of hostels be noted.*

13. Vale of White Horse Local Plan to 2011

(Pages 74 - 103)

Appended to this agenda is report 7/06 of the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) to the Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group and the Development Control Committee. The Advisory Group and the Committee met on 24 May 2006 to consider this report in detail and make recommendations to the Executive. These will be circulated separately after the despatch of this agenda.

Introduction and Report Summary

Members will recall that following the consideration of the Inspector's Report on the Local Plan 2011 the Council's statement of decisions on the Inspector's recommendations and its proposed modifications to the Local Plan were published for comment between 23 March and 4 May.

The purpose of this report is to consider the representations received and decide whether any further modifications should be made before the Local Plan is formally adopted.

Appendix 1 to this report contains a schedule of representations received together with the

officers' responses and suggested recommendations to Executive and Council. Appendix 2 contains a list of policies subject to proposed modifications where no objections have been received. The Council at its meeting on 22 March agreed that such policies could be given full weight when considering planning applications.

The contact officer for this report are Katie Barrett, Section Head: Planning Strategy, contact Tel No: 01235 540339 and Grant Audley-Miller, Section Head (Environmental Planning & Conservation), contact Tel No. 01235 540343.

Recommendations

That the Advisory Group and the Development Control Committee recommend the Executive to recommend Council to:

- (i) note the representations received on the Council's decisions on the Inspector's recommendations and the proposed modifications to the Local Plan and agree the officers' observations and recommendations;*
- (ii) accept there is no justification for making further substantive changes to the Local Plan which would require the publication of further proposed modifications;*
- (iii) delegate authority to the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) to make minor editorial changes and up-dates to the Local Plan prior to adoption;*
- (iv) adopt the Local Plan as proposed to be modified and authorise officers to give notice of this decision and take the remaining necessary steps in accordance with the regulations.*

14. Formal Consultation on the draft South East Plan Submitted to the Government

(Pages 104 - 115)

Appended to this agenda is report 8/06 of the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) to the Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group and the Development Control Committee. The Advisory Group and the Committee met on 24 May 2006 to consider this report in detail and make recommendations to the Executive. These will be circulated separately after the dispatch of this agenda.

Introduction and Report Summary

The South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) submitted the draft Plan for the South East to Government in March this year. It is the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East and sets out how the region will develop to 2026. It follows extensive public consultation – this Council having commented on the emerging plan in March 2005 and the draft housing figures in October 2005. When approved, the South East Plan will replace current regional guidance (RPG9) and the Oxfordshire Structure Plan, and will become part of the development plan for the district. It will form the context within which the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) will be prepared and will be a significant material consideration when planning applications are determined. It will provide the context for other key regional strategies and incorporate the regional transport strategy. The closing date for comments is 23rd June 2006.

All Members of the Council have been sent an Executive summary of the draft South East Plan. Copies of all the documents submitted including the full draft plan, pre-submission consultation statement, sustainability appraisal, implementation plan and monitoring framework are available in the local services points in Abingdon and Wantage, the Council Office in Faringdon and the Members Lounge in Abbey House.

This report summarises the key features of the draft plan as they affect the Vale and outlines a proposed response from the Council. Section 4 of this report outlines and comments on the main features of the region-wide policies and section 5 focuses on the policies for Central Oxfordshire

and the housing figures for the Vale of White Horse. A report on the South East Plan incorporating where appropriate the views of the Advisory Group and Development Control Committee will be considered by Executive on 2 June and Council on 14 June. Relevant sections of the draft Plan have been circulated to assistant and deputy directors and a workshop of officers held to help formulate the Council response.

The Key dates for the next steps of the South East Plan are as follows:

31 August 2006 - the Panel publishes matters to be discussed at the Examination in Public and the participants to be invited
End of September - comments on matters and participants due
23 October - final list of matters and participants published
9 November - participants' statements to be submitted
28 November - Examination in Public starts
28 November -15 December - regional and general matters to be discussed
16 January – 30 March 2007 - sub-regional matters to be discussed
27 February – 9 March - Gatwick, London Fringe, Western Corridor, Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale sub regions to be discussed
End of July 2007 - Panel Report due

The contact officer for this report is Katie Barrett, Section Head (Planning Strategy) telephone number 01235 540339

Recommendation

that the Executive recommends Council to make representations on the South East Plan as set out in Sections 4 and 5 of this report.

15. Local Development Framework - Statement of Community Involvement

(Pages 116 - 134)

Appended to this agenda is report 9/06 of the Strategic Director to the Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group, which met on 24 May 2006 to consider this report in detail and make recommendations to the Executive. These will be circulated separately after the dispatch of this agenda.

Introduction and Report Summary

The Statement of Community Involvement was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 10th March 2006 and placed on deposit until 21st April 2006. This report summarises the representations received during the deposit period and Appendix A sets out the recommended response of the Council to the representations for consideration by the Inspector at the Examination.

The Contact Officer for this report is Grant Audley-Miller, Section Head (Environmental Planning & Conservation) 01235 540343.

Recommendations

That the Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group recommend the Executive to:

- (i) Note the representations received in response to the submission of the Statement of Community Involvement,*
- (ii) Forward Appendix A to the Planning Inspectorate as the Council's response to the issues raised by the representations and possible changes to the final Statement of Community Involvement that would improve the document.*

16. Major and Minor Planning Applications Improvement Plan

(Pages 135 - 145)

To receive and consider report 12/06 of the Strategic Director.

Introduction and Report Summary

This report considers the implications of the Council being included on the list of Planning Standards Authorities for processing Major and Minor planning applications. Historical and current performance for processing all planning applications are considered, and an Improvement Plan is proposed in relation to Major and Minor applications.

The Contact Officer for this report is Mike Gilbert, Development Control Manager, telephone (01235) 547681.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the proposed Improvement Plan and trajectory, as appended to this report, be agreed.

17. CCTV Service

(Pages 146 - 149)

To receive and consider report 13/06 of the Strategic Director.

Introduction and Report Summary

The Executive will be aware that the 2006/7 budget contained two commitments to make savings within CCTV, these are;

The merging of the current out-of-hours Duty Officer system with CCTV;
The deletion of the post of CCTV Manager.

This report recommends decisions necessary to achieve these commitments.

The contact officer for this report is Paul Staines, Assistant Director (Housing and Community Safety) tel. 01235-547621.

Recommendations

That the Executive agree to the proposals to merge the Duty Officer system with CCTV and delegate to the Assistant Director (Housing and Community Safety) the task of introducing this by September 2006.

The Executive recommend to PRAC the deletion of the post of CCTV Manager from the current staff structure and the creation of the post of CCTV Supervisor with effect from 30/06/2006.

18. Financial Services Update and Appointment of Joint Head of Finance

To receive an oral report from the Strategic Director.

19. Local Government Review - Unitary Authorities

(Pages 150 - 151)

To note that the attached press release was issued by the Leader of the Council on Thursday 18 May 2006 in conjunction with South Oxfordshire District Council.

Recommendation

that the action of the Leader of the Council, in issuing the attached press release, be endorsed.

20. Local Area Agreement

To note that the Local Area Agreement for Oxfordshire has not yet been signed by Oxfordshire County Council and the Government Office for the South East. The agreement, setting out final targets, is scheduled for conclusion by the end of June 2006.

21. Exclusion of the Public, including the Press

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

Item 22 Minutes
(Category 1 - Information relating to any individual.)
(Category 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.)

Item 23 Property Matters
(Category 3)

EXEMPT INFORMATION UNDER SECTION 100A(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

STANDING ITEMS

22. Minutes

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Exempt minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 5 May 2006, (previously circulated).

OTHER MATTERS

23. Property Matters

(Pages 152 - 157)

To consider any property matters.



OUR VISION AND AIMS

Our Vision is to build and safeguard a fair, open and compassionate community

The Vale of White Horse District Council aims to:

Strengthen local democracy and public involvement through access to information, consultation, and devolution of power so that everyone can take part in our community and contribute to the decisions which affect our lives

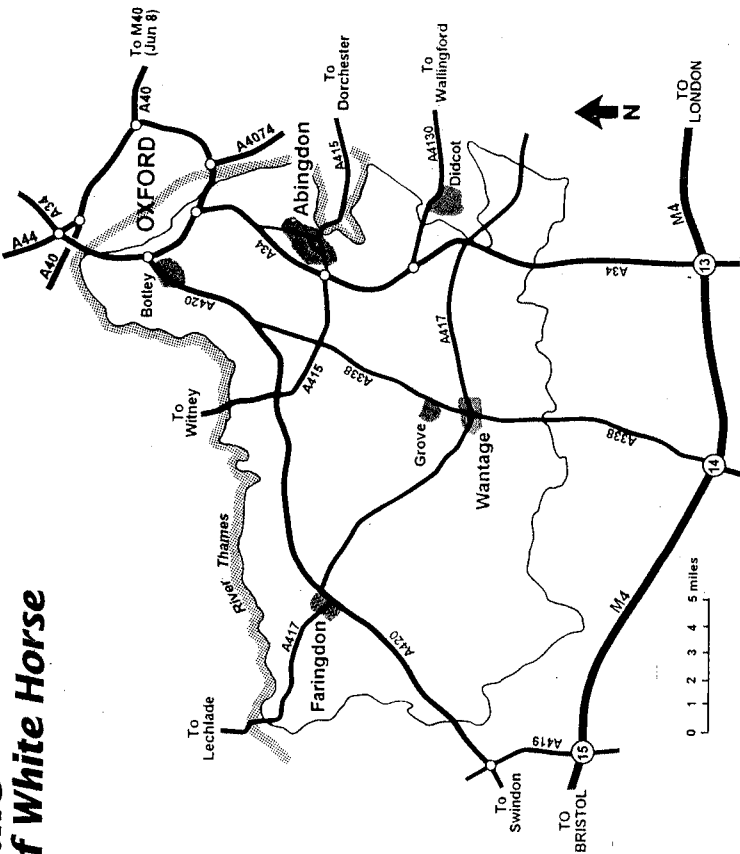
Create a safer community and improve the quality of life among Vale residents

Encourage a strong and sustainable economy which benefits all who live in, work in or visit the Vale

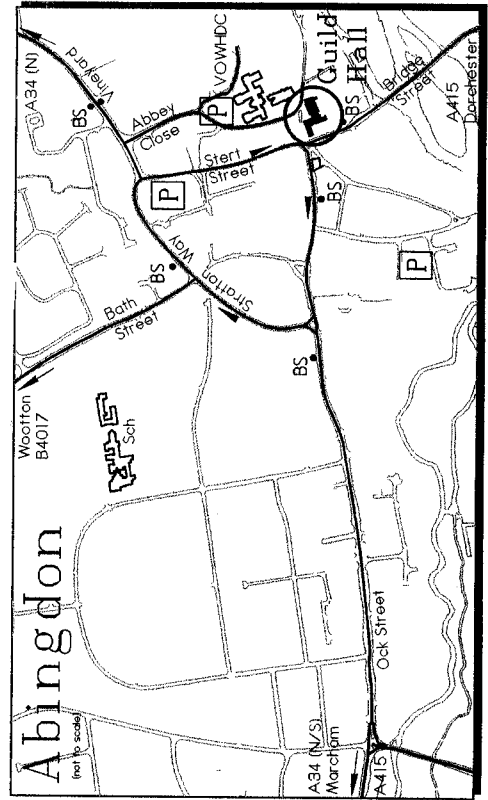
Help disadvantaged groups and individuals within the Vale to realise their full potential

Provide and support high quality public services which are effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of people within the Vale

Protect and improve our built and natural environment



Abingdon, Guildhall



LOCATION MAP



Note to Executive

**Permanent Budget Adjustment Requests
at 22 May 2006**

Key to Type

- 1 Within a subjective within a cost centre
- 2 Within a Cost Centre but across subjective headings
- 3 Within the cost centres of a service area
- 4 Across service areas
- 5 Over £10,000

No.	Date received	Account From	Code Centre	Cost Centre Name	Account to	Code Centre	Cost Centre Name	Adjustment total £	Reason	Type
1	05/05/06	499	M10	Committee Section Management	437	M10	Committee Section Management	5,000	Move budget for revenue consequences of capital to correct account	1
2	12/05/06	211	T08	Member Advice	211	T11	Political Assistants	1,000	Move room hire budget to more appropriate cost centre	3
								6,000		
Summary										
Total Type 1								5,000		
Total Type 2								-		
Total Type 3								1,000		
Total Type 4								-		
Total Type 5								-		
Total								6,000		

Note for Executive

Virement requests received at 22 May 2006

Key to Type

- 1 Within a subjective within a cost centre
- 2 Within a Cost Centre but across subjective headings
- 3 Within the cost centres of a service area
- 4 Across service areas
- 5 Over £10,000

No.	Date received	Account From	Cost Centre Code	Cost Centre Name	Account To	Cost Centre Code	Cost Centre Name	Virement Total £	Virement Percentage	Reason	Preventative Action	Type	Authorised by Director/ Deputy Director	TO BE AUTHORISED by EXECUTIVE	
1	07/04/2006	101/103/105/310		Various leisure cost centres	119	N50	Corporate Core	57,520	8.0%	To provide budget for Interim DD Contracts & Procurement from vacant AD Leisure post	N/a - part of Senior Management Restructuring	5	Y	Y	
2	10/05/2006	403	U01	Corporate Postal Service	402	U01	Corporate Postal Service	4,000	27.8%	To finance balance of new mailing machine	None - one off requirement	1	Y	Y	
3															
4															
Total Virements								61,520							
Summary															
Total Type 1								4,000							
Total Type 2								-							
Total Type 3								-							
Total Type 4								-							
Total Type 5								57,520							
Total								61,520							

Note to Executive

Supplementary estimates approved by Strategic Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council at 22 May 2006

No.	Date received	Account From	Cost Centre Code	Cost Centre Name	Account To	Cost Centre Code	Cost Centre Name	Supplementary Estimate Total	Description
1	16/05/2006	498	N80	Contingency	various	T58	Neighbourhood Wardens	£180	To remove credit budget left on closed cost centre
2									
3									
4									
Total Supplementary Estimates								£180	

VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN

CONTAINING EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JUNE 2006 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2006

This Forward Plan sets out a schedule of Key Decisions likely to be taken over the four-month period shown above. It is a rolling plan, subject to change monthly. A Key Decision is a decision of the Executive which is likely to result in: the Council incurring significant expenditure or making significant savings; a high proportion of the community being affected; or an impact on two or more agendas or services. Executive decisions can be taken by the Executive as a whole, a committee of the Executive, an individual Member of the Executive, an Officer of the Council, an Area Committee, or through joint arrangements with other bodies or another Council.

Where the decision is to be taken by the Executive, this comprises the Leader of the Council, Councillor Jerry Patterson, and the following elected Members: Councillors Mary de Vere, Tony de Vere, Richard Farrell, Joyce Hutchinson, Bob Johnston and Roz Smith.

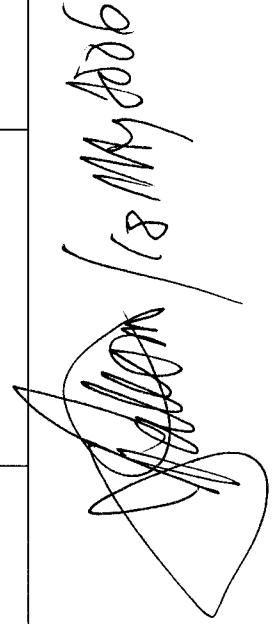
Representations can be made on any of the following issues before a decision is taken. Representations must be made to the relevant contact officer shown below by 5pm on the working day preceding the date of the decision.

Decision	Key decision?	Decision maker	Date first published	Consultees	Consultation method	Contact Officer	Documents used
Financial Monitoring		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	This item will appear on the Executive agendas each month	Executive Portfolio Holders	Consultation with budget holders	Steve Bishop, Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer Tel. (01235) 540332 steve.bishop@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	2005/06 Budget
Local Area Agreement		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Jerry Patterson	Consultation with other Oxfordshire Councils	Terry Stock, Chief Executive and Head of Paid Service Tel. 01235 540301 E-mail: terry.stock@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Corporate Governance Quarterly Report		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Jerry Patterson	Not applicable	Tim Sadler, Strategic Director Tel. 01235 540360 E-mail: tim.sadler@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.

Decision	Key decision?	Decision maker	Date first published	Consultees	Consultation method	Contact	Documents used
Housing Inspectors' Report		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Mary de Vere	Housing Inspection	Paul Staines Tel. 01235 547621 E-mail: paul.staines@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Vale of White Horse Local Plan to 2011		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Tony de Vere; Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group; and the Development Control Committee	Through the Local Plan Consultation process	Rodger Hood Tel. 01235 540340 E-mail: rodger.hood@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
South East Plan		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Tony de Vere; Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group; Development Control Committee	Not applicable	Rodger Hood Tel. 01235 540340 E-mail: rodger.hood@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Local Development Framework - Statement of Community Involvement		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Tony de Vere	Public consultation	Rodger Hood Tel. 01235 540340 E-mail: rodger.hood@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Major and Minor Planning Applications - Improvement Plan		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Tony de Vere	Not applicable	Rodger Hood Tel. 01235 540340 E-mail: rodger.hood@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
CCTV Service		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	May 2006	Councillor Mary de Vere	Consult CCTV Staff	Paul Staines Tel. 01235 547621 E-mail: paul.staines@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.

Decision	Key decision?	Decision maker	Date first published	Consultees	Consultation method	Contact	Documents used
Financial Services Update and Appointment of Joint Head of Finance		Executive 2nd Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillors Mary de Vere and Richard Farrell	Consult with South Oxfordshire District Council	Steve Bishop, Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer Tel. 01235 540332 E-mail: steve.bishop@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
South East Area Community Grants		South East Area Committee 13th Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Toby Warren Tel. 01235 547695 E-mail: toby.warren@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
North East Area Community Grants		North East Area Committee 29th Jun 2006	June 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Toby Warren Tel. 01235 547695 E-mail: toby.warren@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Abingdon Area Community Grants		Abingdon Area Committee 6th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Toby Warren Tel. 01235 547695 E-mail: toby.warren@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Tree Strategy		Executive 7th Jul 2006	March 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Chris Webb Tel. 01235 540358 E-mail: chris.webb@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Local Plan to 2011 - Supplementary Planning Guidance		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Richard Farrell; Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group; Development Control Committee	Statutory Public Consultation	Rodger Hood Tel. 01235 540340 E-mail: rodger.hood@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.

Decision	Key decision?	Decision maker	Date first published	Consultees	Consultation method	Contact	Documents used
South West Plan		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Richard Farrell; Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group	Not applicable	Rodger Hood Tel. 01235 540340 E-mail: rodger.hood@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Planning Delivery Grant		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Richard Farrell	Not applicable	Rodger Hood Tel. 01235 540340 E-mail: rodger.hood@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
West Area Community Grants		West Area Committee 11th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Toby Warren Tel. 01235 547695 E-mail: toby.warren@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Oxfordshire Waste Strategy - Public Involvement		Executive 4th Aug 2006	August 2006	Councillor Tony de Vere	Consultation with other Councils through the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership and consultation with Vale residents.	David Stevens Tel. 01235 540378 E-mail: david.stevens@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Oxfordshire County-Wide Waste Strategy		Executive 4th Aug 2006	August 2006	Councillor Tony de Vere	Oxfordshire Waste Partnership	David Stevens Tel. 01235 540378 E-mail: david.stevens@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Capita Contact Services Proposal		Executive 4th Aug 2006	August 2006	Councillor Roz Smith	Consultation with staff and South Oxfordshire District Council	Helen Bishop Tel. 01235 540372 E-mail: helen.bishop@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.



18 May 2006

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS
TO THE EXECUTIVE
2nd JUNE 2006

Corporate Governance Report Fourth Quarter (January, February, March) 2005/06

1.0 Introduction and Report Summary

- 1.1 To receive the corporate governance report for the fourth quarter of 2005/06.
- 1.2 The Contact Officer for this report is Tim Sadler, Strategic Director (01235) 540360.

2.0 Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to resolve that:

- (a) the Directors' Group Corporate Governance Report for the fourth quarter 2005/06 be noted*
- (b) the current Comprehensive Performance Assessment action plans be closed in their entirety and that officers propose updated replacements to the July meeting of the Executive.*
- (c) staff in the Housing and Benefits teams are congratulated for strong performance throughout the year.*
- (d) staff in the waste management are congratulated on the successful implementation of the Brown Wheeled Bin Scheme*
- (e) contact centre staff are congratulated on a successful first year.*
- (f) The reductions in BVPI 2a (equality standard) and 2b (promotion of race equality) are noted with concern and that the Strategic Director, Tim Sadler, and Portfolio holder, Roz Smith, progress the situation as a priority and monitor progress closely*
- (g) The success of the change to the Housing Allocations Policy in respect of hostels be noted.*

3.0 Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies

This report

- (a) relates to the entire Vision Statement.
- (b) relates to the Best Value Performance Plan and Corporate Plan and
- (c) Complies with Corporate Planning Timetable.

4.0 Background and Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Directors' "Corporate Governance Report" for the quarter looks at the key areas of:-
- Key issues and projects
 - CPA Improvement Action Plan monitoring
 - Corporate
 - Housing
 - Open Spaces
 - Implementing Electronic Government (IEG)
 - Best Value Performance Indicators
 - Local Performance Indicators linked to priorities for improvement
 - Financial Information

- Key staffing data

4.2 Key Issues

The key issues list has been updated and is reproduced in Appendix 1. There are no significant issues to report beyond this. In order to produce the Best Value Performance Plan for 2006/7 and update the Corporate Plan steps will be taken to close down as many outstanding key issues between this report and the next. The list will then be updated with new key issues identified in the service and budget process.

4.3 CPA Improvement Action Plans

These have been updated and are attached. Significant progress has now been made against these action plans. It is proposed that these action plans now be closed down and new plans be brought to the Executive reflecting that progress and those significant issues identified in the various recent reports from the Audit Commission which help the Council in focusing on new priority development areas.

4.4 Best Value Performance Indicators

Of particular note are:-

BVPIs 2a (Equality Standard for Local Government) and 2b (duty to promote race equality checklist score), due to a lack of maintenance of existing procedures, for example on review of the Corporate Equalities Plan, our performance has dropped over the last year. Members of the Executive will be aware that there are plans in place to reverse this trend.

BVPIs 183a (Average length of stay in bed and breakfast) and 183b (average length of stay in a hostel – weeks), Continued strong performance in respect of use of bed and breakfast. Much improved performance in respect of hostels reflecting the change in policy adopted last year which restricted the period of offer to three months. It is your officers' view that this change has had the desired effect with no noticeable negative impacts and that the policy should remain in its amended form.

None of the housing BVPIs are now in the bottom quartile, a substantial reversal of our position at the time of the CPA inspection.

Benefits BVPIs show continued high level performance despite the additional work and the acknowledge risk of staff uncertainty around the shared service organisation and the transfer of some work to Capita.

BVPI 82 (Recycled and composted waste) The impact of the introduction of the Brown Wheeled Bin scheme can be seen with the local target being exceeded.

BVPI 166 Environmental Health Checklist remains an issue for the Council. This has been investigated by the Scrutiny Committee and an action plan has now been approved to remedy the situation.

4.5 Local Performance Indicators

Affordable Housing – the local performance indicators show continued strong performance in the last quarter and for the year as a whole. There is an issue around the balance of rented to shared ownership provided in the context of the draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance and the targets the Council has set. This essentially relates to site viability and the amount of public subsidy available. Where there are viability issues the level of rented accommodation provided is reduced and replaced with shared ownership which requires less

subsidy. We are investigating a number of possibilities in this respect including the Expression of Interest in Private Finance Initiative funding.

Access to services – the contact centre has now been running for a year and has dealt with over 67,000 contacts. The target for the time to answer calls has been missed. However, it should be borne in mind that the Council's target exceeds the industry norm of 80% in 20 seconds and hence is still good performance. Of particular note is the abandoned call rate which has been reduced month on month to a record low of just 2%. Reducing the number of abandoned calls was a key driver for the introduction of the contact centre.

4.6 Financial Issues

There is no financial summary in this quarter due to the close down of accounts. A full report will be made to the next meeting of the Executive.

4.7 Staffing Issues

See commentary on sickness and turnover summaries. Turnover shows a third successive year of improvement. Sickness levels are being investigated by the Scrutiny Committee.

4.8 Risk Management

The review of the corporate risk register is due in the next quarter.

Terry Stock
Tim Sadler
Steve Bishop
Brian McAndrew
DIRECTORS GROUP

Background Papers: Corporate Governance Report of the Directors Group

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE – KEY ISSUES AND PROJECTS REPORT

4th Quarter 2005-06

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
1. HELP FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING	TDV	TS/PS	Improve the data held and its collation by the Council to support planning policies and negotiation of affordable housing at new developments	<p>Housing needs survey refreshed for Local Plan Enquiry. Agreed in principle to joint Housing Needs Assessment for Oxon.</p> <p>Monthly housing market analysis now in place.</p> <p>Council agreed to take part in ACTVaR Thames Valley Survey of gypsy and traveller housing needs.</p> <p>Project Team formed. Specification completed and tendered.</p> <p>Oxfordshire nominated as pathfinder area for HMA</p> <p>Project team formed</p> <p>Housing Market Assessment starts Summer 2006</p>	CLOSED MAY 06

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
2.	TDV	TS/RH	Complete Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on the provision of affordable housing	Inspector's Report Jan 06 Revised draft out for consultation April/May 06	Consider consultation responses and agree and adopt revised version July 06
3.	MDV	TS/PS	Introduce local performance indicators to track the performance in respect of housing provision	First publication 3 rd quarter 2005/06. Monitoring across Oxon started 1/4/06	CLOSED MAY 06
4.	MDV	TS/PS	Provide an outline business case to re-model hostel accommodation in time for budget process 2006/07	Director/Portfolio holder briefed. Included in Capital Programme	Outcome of feasibility study Oct.06
5.	MDV	TS/PS	Review Hostel allocation policy Sept 05	Approved by executive Dealt with in this Corporate Governance Report	CLOSE
6.	TDV	TS/RH	Implement an action plan agreed with the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) for housing delivery	On target	CLOSED MAY 06
7. CREATE A CLEANER, SAFER AND HEALTHIER COMMUNITY & ENVIRONMENT	TDV	SB/DS	Achieve Recycling Rate of 25% from existing green box and bring schemes	Rate is up on 2004/05 but waste arising up too. Cleanaway capacity constraint (now resolved) led to target revision to 24%. Latest quarter below	Recycling Plan 2006 – 09 to be produced in June 06

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
8.	TDV	SB/DS	Improve the Recycling Rate by an additional 2% from the introduction of a pilot composting scheme	target by 2% Scheme collections commenced August 05. Delay led to target revision to 1% 4K customers achieved by January 06 ahead of target. Latest quarter above target by 0.59%	Scheme expansion (interim) Feb 06; further expansion April 06; commenced
9.	TDV	TS/RH	Achieve the milestones in the Local Development Scheme 2005-08	Clear milestones and tracking to be delivered by SLAG & Executive	CLOSE
10.	TDV	TS/RH	Improve planning performance against national Best Value Performance Indicators and ensure all are out of bottom ¼ and on target	Minor and other BVPI's improving. Draft Improvement Plan has been drafted and approved by Portfolio Holder & Scrutiny Committee March/April 06	Plan being implemented. Progress being monitored in service review meetings, Corporate Governance Reports and Scrutiny.
11.	MDV	TS/PS	Introduce a twice a year update on Community Safety for staff/members/partners on community safety issues	First edition October 05	Second edition in preparation
12.	JH	SB/HG	Improve Leisure, Culture and Recreational Facilities by the conclusion of agreements in respect of the future use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tugwell Fields Stockham Park 	Tugwell Field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County decision Planning application Stockham Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specification Tender 	Commence schemes Tugwell Field - subject to county decision, earliest start possible Late 2006. Stockham Park – subject to specification in July. Earliest start possible Oct.06

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
13.	TDV	SB/DS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mably Way <p>Improve our waste management services following the recent Best Value Review – Implementation of Action Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation <p>Mably Way – developer decision on highway</p> <p>BVR Improvement Plan being drafted. Scrutiny Committee consulted and confirmed by November 05 Executive.</p> <p>Progress as follows:</p> <p>1.3 Waste & Recycling Strategy- OWP developments being incorporated;</p> <p>1.4 Service Standards – delay by 2 months</p> <p>1.5 Consultation- VVP5 survey completed</p> <p>1.7 Contract Monitoring – scrutiny comments implemented</p> <p>1.8 LPI Review – Bulky waste PI amended to reflect Scrutiny advice</p> <p>1.10 Enforcement (see Key Issue 18)</p> <p>1.11 awareness of Assisted Collection scheme – VVP5 results awaited</p> <p>1.12 Environment Strand of Community Strategy – Action plan in draft</p>	<p>Mably Way – subject to decision about access to the Grove housing site.</p> <p>1.3 Report to March 06 Exec.</p> <p>1.4 Due March 06</p> <p>1.5 Results due March 06</p> <p>1.7 Completed</p> <p>1.8 LPI review due March 06</p> <p>1.11 Results due in March 06</p> <p>1.12 Expected June 06</p>

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
14.	JP	TS/RH	Provide an effective contribution which protects the interests of the Vale in the development of the regional spatial strategies for the South East and South West	1.16 WM Team management capacity – Interim contracted to end March. Vale to comment on the emerging South East Plan documents:	1.16 Review March 06 Provide Vale response to the draft South East Plan to be considered by the Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group and Development Control Committee (May 06) and by the Executive & Council (June 06).
15.	JP	TS/RH	As above	Vale to comment on the emerging spatial strategy for the South West.	Vale response to the Regional Spatial Strategy to be considered by the Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group (June 06) and Executive (July 06).
16.	JH	SB/HG	Carry out review to enable Council as planning authority to optimise contributions from new developments towards leisure, culture and recreation Develop a Parks and Open Spaces Strategy which includes playground provision	PPG17 survey Results to feed into developer negotiations.	Survey ongoing, due to be completed Oct. 06.
17.	TDV	SB/DS	Street Cleansing - Investigate ways which will	Raised at Scrutiny presentation in July 05.	Contractor street Cleansing Improvement Plan

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
			incentivise our contractors to higher performance	Further recommendations In Oct and Nov. All implemented including revision to performance indicator for bulky waste	implementation in Feb 06; Environmental Cleanliness Action Plan due June 06
18.	TW	SB/DS	Publish an enforcement policy and implement associated procedures for "environmental crime"	Adoption of policy of presumption towards prosecution for fly tipping offences. Fixed Penalty Powers adopted in December 05.	Enforcement Implementation Plan due July 06
19.	JH	SB/AM	Provide a Skate Park in Abingdon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design stage entered in consultation with youth group Tender the scheme construction 	Completion of the design stage is expected soon. Subsequent to the designs assessment a package will be tendered
20.	JH	TS/TB	Adopt a Child Protection Policy	Approved by Executive and Council Dec. 05	To be included in training plan 2006/07
21.	JH	TS/TW	Carry out review of children's and young people's services and integrate with Children's and Young Peoples Plan	The Draft Youth Strategy went to Executive in March 06.	Draft strategy finalised in accordance with the Executive resolution on 3 rd March. Now out to public consultation until 18 th Aug. 06
22.	TDV	SB	Future use of Old Gaol	Receive feasibility report	Report to Executive once option assessment is completed
23. IMPROVE AND MODERNISE	RS	TS/HB	Complete the integration of Environmental Health back office processes into the	Environmental Health/Waste processes transferred.	Decide what role Capita may have in implementation May

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
ACCESS TO SERVICES			local services points and customer contact centre	Customer Contact strategy approved by Executive. Funding in budget	06
24.	MDV	SB	Investigate the improvement of revenues and benefits services by integrating business process re-engineering, workflow and customer contact centre (now incorporated into Vale-South Oxon District Council financial Shared Service project)	Submit bid Procurement decision	Project Completed resulting in the transfer of some services to Capita under contract and the creation of Ridgeway Shared Service Partnership with SODC. CLOSED
25.	RS	TS/HB	Implement a programme to develop Customer Focus	Customer Contact Strategy to Executive Feb. 06	Implementation Plan May 06
28.	RS	TS/HB	Complete and implement a Customer Contact Strategy	In draft form, discussion taking place with Directors and Leader Considered by Executive on 3 rd February 06 Council February 22 nd 06	CLOSED MAY 06
29.	RS	TS/HB	Investigate the potential for sharing Customer Contact Centre with other authorities	Initial talks with County Council & adjoining authorities Access to Services workshop completed November 05	Decision as to whether to include Capita in development – June 06

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
				Second workshop set up for a more focussed exploration around specific high priority customer segments in relation to information provisioning opportunities, process improvements and benefits from sharing best practice. Further actions and priorities to then be identified.	
31.	JH	TS	View of residents on ease of access – views of marginalised groups	Awaiting support from newly appointed Communications Officer	Delayed pending overall Communications Plan
33. BUILD OUR CAPACITY THROUGH MANAGERIAL & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	JP	BMcA	Design and implement an organisational development programme	Following extensive consultation a new structure and selection process has been proposed and is set for discussion at the November meeting of Council. Individual development plan	Team Building Away Days now underway. Phase 1 expected to be complete by end May. Further sessions are being planned to take place in June/July 06. The handover of Commitments from Interim Director to Permanent Vale staff.
34.	RF	TS/TB	Publish and implement our Pay and Workforce Strategy	Working Group established to develop People Strategy and Pay & Workforce Strategy	The People Strategy has now been approved and the detailed supporting actions, which form the Pay & Workforce Strategy, are being developed as part of

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
35.	MDV	SB	Streamline accounting processes to reduce workload whilst providing necessary information and controls (now incorporated into Vale-South Oxon District Council financial Shared Service project)	Work up Shared Service proposition incl. new Accountancy unit structure, working arrangements & Vale-SODC agreement	the service planning process. Project completed. Vale and SODC will harmonise accounting processes to achieve significant efficiency gains. CLOSED
36.	JP	TS/HB	Re-confirm role and resources available to the "Corporate Core" to support our improvement programme	Budget proposition includes re-allocated posts to form Corporate Core Budget approved Feb.06	To be confirmed in structure of Organisational Development & Support service area. Report in June or July
37.	RS	TS/AS	Draw up action plan from the Procurement Health Check carried out in 2004 and implement new Procurement Strategy	Have engaged IDEA to work up action plan with us. Action Plan adopted Oct. 05	New Procurement Strategy to be approved by Council in May 06. Ready in draft form. Now July 06
38.	RS	TS	Review, integrate and implement our risk and project management and procurement processes	Preliminary work commenced June 05	Pending re-structure & procurement & contracting post – May 06 Recruitment to post commenced.
39.	RS	TS/ST	Improve performance management by rolling out performance review meetings to all service areas	Audit in Nov. 05 Report to SMG on effectiveness etc. Feb.06	To review terms of reference in light of review – April 06. Completed CLOSED
40.	RS	TS/ST	Publish a guide for staff and	Being printed February 06	Distributed with Team Brief

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
			members to Performance Management in the Vale		March 06. CLOSED MAY 06
41.	RS	TS/AS	Update our Information and Communications Technology Strategy to support themes and priorities of the Council	Consultants identified. Project commenced May 06	Draft report – June 06
42.	JP	TS/AS	Review our Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in light of Procurement Strategy	Initial work underway. Consultation with other neighbouring Councils complete	Work now being taken forward by Ann Sadler and Tim Sadler with IDEA support. Will follow as part of Strategy May 06
43.	TDV	SB	Meet the earlier statutory timetable for accounts to close down 2004/05 by 31.7.05 and make preparations to ensure close down of 2005/06 by 30.6.06 (31.7.05 target achieved)	2005-06 closedown	Completed 2004/05 closedown on time. On target to achieve 2005/06 closedown by 30.6.06
44.	RF	TS/TB	Complete the Investors in People Re-assessment in the autumn of 2005	Investors in People (iIP) Planning meeting completed. Agree revised standard. iIP assessment February 06	iIP Re-assessment completed and action plan drawn up for implementation prior to re-assessment in October 2006.
45.	RF	TS/TB	Implement our Human Resources computer system to improve workflow	Gateway review completed. Decided to proceed.	Project started May 06

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
46.	RF	TS/TB	Resolve Pay and Grading competency bars	Working group met 3 rd May to consider options.	Awaiting response from staff side/UNISON
47.	RF	TAS/TB	Review our appraisal scheme to contribute to improvements in performance management	Review completed by sub-group and being confirmed as basis for consultation.	New schemes "commitments" for senior managers and PDP for others introduced – Training underway
48.	RS	TS/ST	Devise a 5-year Audit Plan to meet current needs of the Council		Report to Scrutiny Feb.06 Report to Executive Mar 06 COMPLETED – CLOSED
49. DELIVER THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN	TDV	SB	Co-ordinate & report on the delivery of the Service Prioritisation Plans approved in the budget	Formal reporting of SPP achievements & transfer of saved budgets to Contingency	Quarterly Reports due in 2006/07
53.	JH	TS	Transfer Halls managed by Council to Non Profit Distributing Organisation	Tendering failed to provide required savings	Decided not to proceed at this time. CLOSED MAY 06
56.	RS	SB/BF	Ensure the Direct Services Organisation reduces its deficit	Undergoing investigation and realignment of organisation and financial management – initial report on viability due in Aug 05	Review position at year-end and produce business plan – July 2006. (Half year review resulted in £50k annual budget saving).
58.	TDV	SB	Reduce support costs	Notify Assistant Directors of service saving targets in 2006 Budget-setting process	CLOSE (Support service savings achieved in the Budget approved in Feb 06)
59.	JH	SB/HG	Reduce subsidy grant paid	Terms being negotiated	Decide whether to proceed

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
			to SOLL (Vale) through development of gym and fitness extension at Tilsley Park	with SOLL (Vale)	Shortlist of option being assessed August 06
60.	MDV	SB	Implement Action Plan from Best Value Review of Revenues and Benefits Services (now incorporated into Vale-South Oxon District Council Financial Shared Service project)	Implement Action Plan after procurement decision	Superseded by No.24
61.	MDV	SB	Achieve additional benefit fraud income to at least match all costs arising from additional fraud officer	Monitor financial performance to ensure cost neutral appointment	Year-end cost benefit review indicates net 'surplus' of £23K in 8 months to March 06. Grant changes reduce incentives but still expected to generate surplus. Will be superseded when Fraud sections merge (linked to No.24
62.	RJ	SB/AM	Continue to seek to increase investment income through sound commercial property investment	Canterbury & Hatfield completed. Will continue to monitor market for golden opportunities	Identification of a "golden" opportunity. CLOSED
63. IMPROVE BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION	JP	TS/NM	Review both internal and external communication strategies	Officer in post 24 th October 05 Service Plan approved April 06	Action Plan drafted June 06

Programme	Lead Member	Lead Officers	Comment	Milestones	Next Milestone
64.	JP	TS/NM	Develop and implement action plans	To follow agreement to work programme.	August 2006

	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME- SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT Quarter 4 2005 - 06
1.1	JP / TAS	Refine and simplify vision, aims, and objectives	Review vision	Nov 04	Completed. New Vision adopted Nov 2005.
			Identify Community Strategy themes for Council to lead on.	Nov 04	Agreed by VSP Sep 2004. Completed.
			Produce a Corporate Plan linked to priorities(TS)	Feb 05	Completed. Corporate Plan Issued Dec 2005.
			Link priorities into the Integrated Service and Financial Planning process	Feb 05	Completed. Reflected in 05/06 budget – influencing service planning and will underpin budget 06/07. Specific links to priorities are identified in individual Service Plans.
			Identify Management Values		Management Values approved by PRAC March 2005. Completed.
			Build understanding & commitment	Oct 05	To be linked into development programme *
1.2	JP / TS	Identify resources to support and facilitate the remaining strands in the Community Strategy led by other partners	Other partners volunteer		Completed
			Partners propose structure and work programme		Some evidence of leads being taken. We are providing support and guidance to support leads. We are examining future role of VSP in light of Local Area Agreements. A Best Value Review of LSP and partnerships has been agreed*
			ISFP Process	Feb 05	Will feed into ISFP 06/07.*

SHADING = COMPLETED ACTION OR MILESTONE

* = sections for deleting after 4th quarter report

	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME- SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT Quarter 4 2005 - 06
1.3	JP / TAS	Implementation of Communication Strategy	Ensure approved Consultation and Communication Strategies, in which feedback requirements are explicit, are delivered. Structure and Staffing of Communications & Consultations posts needs to be determined. Appointment of Communications officer(s).	From Nov 04 Nov 04 Nov 04	New communications officer started 24/10/05. Review of communications function and vacant posts underway * Taken into account in new structure proposals approved in Nov 2005. Completed.
2.1	TAS	Improve internal leadership through alignment of Portfolios and service areas and the working of Executive and Directors	Portfolios linked to service areas. SMG created to provide focus on medium to long term issues. Re-consider management structure post leisure trust	Completed May 04 Completed May 04 Completed Oct 04	Completed.* Completed * New Structure implemented 1 March 2006.*
2.2		Review working of & resourcing the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Review of constitution and decision making arrangements Introduction of Strategic Review Committee (SRC)	Completed Apr 04 Sep 04	Completed. Completed
			Review working of SRC/Scrutiny Need to conclude Audit Commission report Action Plan	Sep 05 Oct 05	Reviewed by Audit Commission Nov 2004. Final Report rec'd Feb 2005. Scrutiny Cttee explicitly identify packages of work & resources which includes time & skills of Scrutiny Cttee members. Recommendations and responses were reported to Council July 05. Outstanding actions remain e.g. * amendments to the constitution. *

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	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME- SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT Quarter 4 2005 - 06
			Resourcing of SRC and Scrutiny Committees to be addressed through ISFP.	Feb 05	SRC model is less well developed. Will be exploring how work of this committee can more explicitly support the agenda of the council and what support it in turn requires. Development programme – review role & engagement of wider membership*
2.3		Priorities for planned service improvements need to be clear	Executive to assign priority order to planned service improvements.	Feb 05	Reviewed in detail at SMG. Reflected in BVPP & Service Plans. Reflected in Corporate Plan.
			Cut off on priorities needs to be realistic to allow time both to develop skills and to address strategic issues	Feb 05	Reflected in Service Plans signed off by AD, Director and Portfolio Holder. Reviewed at monthly performance review meetings.
3.1	TS	An effective change management process needs to be embedded	Ensure an appropriate level of Project Management is utilised for all projects.	Sep 05	Expected timescale Apr 06. Project Manager posts made permanent November 05 Exec. During 2005/06 we are working on clarifying links between project management and service planning. Not completed due to resource constraints.*
			Ensure Risk Management methodology is fully applied.	Sep 05	Risk Registers complete. Review of most risk registers completed in May/June 05. Risk Registers reviewed as part of service and budget planning. Strategic Risks reviewed 6 monthly at SMG.*
			National Procurement Strategy adopted and implemented.		In Progress. E.g. SPPO (strategic procurement partnership for Oxfordshire); Joint stationery tender; alternative service provision being actively explored ("Appendix F").*
			IDEA procurement Healthcheck action plan approved	Oct 05	IDEA Healthcheck complete. Procurement strategy being drafted.

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* = sections for deleting after 4th quarter report

	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME- SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT Quarter 4 2005 - 06
3.2	BMcA	Sharing lessons learnt	Tie internal and external lessons learnt into performance management.	Feb 05	Development programme commenced May 06*
4.1	TAS	Ensure sufficient and appropriate staffing resources are available to deliver agreed priorities	Pay and Grading completed	Nov 04	Expected timescale Nov 05. "main" P&G completed. Consequential actions incl. competency criteria are ongoing. Turnover being monitored through corp gov reporting. 2002/03 19.07% 2003/04 15.99% 2004/05 15.41% 2005/06 *
			Restructuring report.	Oct 04	New Structure approved by Council November 2005.*
4.2	BMcA	Management skills not developed	Management training being planned, programme established	Feb 05	Interim Director in place. Mgt Devt programme to follow. Assessment of senior managers complete March 06 *
4.3	BMcA	Capacity of key staff needs to be appropriate	Capacity planning to be linked to ISFP and identified priorities	Feb 05	This is expected to be addressed through the new structure and whole organisation development programme.*
5.1	TS	Performance Management Culture needs to be embedded	CEO, Directors & Executive Members to take greater leadership in performance management through Corporate Governance process at SMG and Executive	Implemented	Report from Audit Commission on Performance Management imminent.*

	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME- SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT Quarter 4 2005 - 06
5.2	Directors Group.	Use management information to manage	Cascade use of Corporate Governance information throughout the management of the Council.	Dec 04	Completed. Regular monitoring in place. Format agreed for Exec Member involvement in regular performance reviews. Commenced June 05. Performance Management IT Project – standard format for presenting data completed. Implemented in Corp Gov report 4th Qtr 2004/05. Evidence of data driving decisions. Improving BVPIs.
5.3	TS/ST/RW pending restructure	Best Value of Challenge, Consult, Compare & Compete, need to be more consistently applied	Review approach to Best Value.	Dec 04	Report to Jan Exec approved review programme & approach. BVR of waste mgmt completed. Action Planning commenced. BVR of Revenues and Benefits. Joint review. Reported to Exec June 05. BVR of LSP commenced July 05 as part of Revenues and Benefits Review. Revised review programme approved by March 2006 Executive. Service Reviews approved by Executive May 06.

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN 2005 - 06

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
1. Paul Staines	Gaps in the Council's Data on some groups such as elderly, black, minority & elderly (BME)	Updated HNS	Resources approved Brief drafted Providers sought Provider chosen Start Completion	Dec 04 Dec 04 Dec 04 Jan 05 Jan 05 Mar 05	Bid completed Draft produced. Commissioned refreshed version of 2000 survey Vale is part of a County bid to be a pathfinder for carrying out Housing Market assessments in the central Oxon area. In addition, Vale has been acting as consultant for Fordham Associates working up a viable BHM framework in Oxon.
		Update House Condition Survey	Starts Completed Review policy, objectives and targets	Oct 04 Jan 05 Feb 05	Refreshed assessment completed March 05 House Condition Survey (HCS) – Completed draft March 05
2. Paul Staines	Outdated housing needs and private sector stock condition surveys	Consider revising frequency surveys carried out	Cost benefit analysis on more up-to-date data.	Dec 04	No clear advice from Government Office of the South East (GOSE) or Housing Inspectorate on 'correct' frequency. Will be picked up as part of work to develop a new

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
3. Paul Staines	Affordable housing is not an explicit aim	Update Council priorities against community strategy - Affordable Housing becomes explicit priority	Consider at Executive Reflect affordable housing as a priority in ISFP Reflected in budget	June 05	approach to housing market assessment. Affordable Housing now a Corporate Aim.
4. Rodger Hood	Slow development of the Local Plan	Ensure sufficient resources to prevent slippage of local plan timetable Consider refocusing and increasing resources in development policy teams to give greater priority to the local plan/development plan. Improved project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry date for current local plan to 2011 fixed for May 2005 • Bid to Executive (November 2004) to use Planning Delivery Grant to provide additional resources for local plan inquiry • Adopt Local Plan to 2011 • Prepare Local Development Scheme (LDS) for submission to Secretary of State by 31st March 2005 LDS will specify Local Development Framework 	<p>May 05</p> <p>Nov. 04</p> <p>July 06</p>	<p>Inquiry completed Sept 05</p> <p>Portfolio holder agreed to retention of £50K of Planning Delivery Grant award as contingency sum to ensure sufficient resources available for the Local Plan inquiry. Consultants used during inquiry session dealing with affordable housing to help present the Council's case.</p> <p>Inspector's report received. Proposed modifications to Local Plan on deposit March – May 06 Target for adoption of Local Plan July 2006</p> <p>Local Development Scheme (LDS) submitted to GOSE end of Feb 2005 and now</p>

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
			(LDF) for preparation of future planning policy documents and will allocate resources, set out project management methods and timescales. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review 2005 LDS and re-submit to GOSE 	Autumn 06	agreed by GOSE. Work on Local Plan and LDF documents in progress in accordance with the LDS milestones No Action required until Autumn 06
5. Rodger Hood		Ensure that service planning adequately reflects the desired compromise between timescales, quality and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Service Plan to reflect the Local Plan and LDS requirements 	April 06	Latter stages of Local Plan 2011 process and Initial stages of new Local Development Framework (as set out in the LDS) included as the core service objective in the 2006/07 service plan with resource implications spelt out. Service Plan agreed by Portfolio Holder, and signed off April 06. Work on LDS programme in progress
6. Rodger Hood		Consider reduction in scope of consultation to reduce pressure on staff resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation on LDF to be determined through preparation of the 		

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
		and decision making processes to enable speedier progress	Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) required by Planning Regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive considered revision to the SCI in the light of consultation responses 3.2.06 Revised SCI to be submitted to Secretary of State May 06. 	Dec 05 May 06	
7. Katie Barrett	No Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on affordable housing	Draft SPG to be published for consultation Consider responses – publish revised draft, then final version when Local Plan to 2011 adopted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised draft to be published after inspector's report received Final SPG to be adopted July 06 	May/June 2006 July 06	Revised draft out to public consultation April/May 06
8. Rodger Hood	Currently behind Structure Plan 2003 targets for the delivery of affordable housing	Apply new District affordable housing targets following receipt of Local Plan Inspector's report and final adoption of the Local Plan Implement affordable housing SPG and linkage to Social Housing Grant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek maximum possible affordable housing provision through development control process, in the interim, using the targets and thresholds recommended by the inspector in his report. Local performance indicators for 	Oct. 04 onwards	Ongoing. Dev. Control staff negotiating with Developers as appropriate. Joint liaison meetings between housing officers to optimise performance and broaden understanding of key issues.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
Rodger Hood/ Katie Barrett		More Explicit monitoring against current targets. From Local PI to incorporate in service delivery statement and corporate governance report.	achievement of affordable housing	Jan 06	Final targets and indicators to be set following adoption of the Local Plan Interim local indicators implemented for 2 nd quarter 2005/06.
Rodger Hood/Katie Barrett					
9. Tim Sadler		Strengthen Housing Services input into the development control team approach to advise on the amount and type of affordable housing needed (see review below)	Report to Executive This to be developed following the joint training	Dec 04 Nov 05	Monitor performance with new Local Performance Indicators
10. Tim Sadler/ Paul Staines	No strategic response to loss of Local Authority	Strategic response to loss of LASHG in place - Report to Executive stating our position	Identified three strands to strategic approach		Capital fund approved in budget. Reviewing

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
	Social Housing Grant (LASHG)	in time to feed into integrated service and financial plan	<p>1. Capital funding</p> <p>2. Appropriate local plan policies</p> <p>3. high level of joint working between housing and planning officers</p> <p>Report to Executive</p>	<p>Nov. 05</p> <p>April 06</p> <p>Nov/Dec 05</p> <p>Dec 04</p>	<p>potential of PFI.</p> <p>Draft SPG on affordable housing presented to SLAG. Will now be reviewed in light of Inspector's report and other developments.</p> <p>Following joint training, monitoring performance through LPIs.</p> <p>Staff resources found from existing to develop comprehensive database. Project and SDP to be developed for 2006/07.</p>
11. Tim Sadler/ Paul Staines	Limited mechanisms in place to maintain information base	Review enabling role as part of report to Executive on loss of LASHG. - Enabling role re-focused to provide relevant and up-to-date information to support bids, planning and negotiations on individual sites			
12. Tim Sadler/ Paul Staines	Worst quarter performance on Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's)	<p>Implement existing Service Development Plans for BVPI's for 62, 64, 183a (Vale Value Proposition (VVP))</p> <p>Re-consider position in respect of 183b</p>	<p>BVPI's monitored monthly</p> <p>Improve understanding of calculation and what indicator sensitive to.</p> <p>Review targets etc for BVPI 62 following HCS in Feb 05</p> <p>Report to Executive on managing</p>	<p>Done</p> <p>Feb 05</p> <p>June 05</p>	<p>BV64- No of vacant private sector dwellings returned into occupation - out of bottom quartile</p> <p>BV62- Number of empty homes bought back into use - improvement takes us out of bottom quartile</p> <p>BV 183a Average length of stay in B&B - out of</p>

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
			BV 183b		<p>bottom quartile.</p> <p>Report to Executive on managing BV 183b</p> <p>Average length of stay in a hostel - out of bottom quartile July 2005.</p> <p>Second quarter performance (YTD) out of bottom quartile.</p> <p>Third quartile in bottom quarter due to raising of bottom quartile nationally and one case involving arrears of service charge which we intend to discount from our figures.</p>
<p>13. Katie Barrett</p> <p>14. Rodger Hood/Katie Barrett</p>	Failing to deliver against the targets set in Structure Plan	Implement action plan for housing delivery and monitoring framework agreed with GOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action Plan first revision to be completed by November 2004 Review revised action plan with Government Office for South East, as required 	Nov 05	<p>Action plan agreed with GOSE January 05.</p> <p>Monitoring in progress.</p> <p>Monitoring meeting with GOSE held Nov.05.</p> <p>Action plan & housing trajectory revised.</p>

PUBLIC SPACES DIAGNOSTIC ACTION PLAN 2005 - 06

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
Rodger Hood	Slow to finalise Local Plan	Consider adjusting priorities or allocating more resources	Strengthen Local Plans team and speed up Local Plan See Housing Diagnostic Action Plan	March 2005	CLOSED
1. David Stevens	Service Standards not well developed or communicated	Develop and publish service standards for key environmental services	Standards published	March 2005 Sept 05	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Health (EH) Services all described on website EH Standards table under development, due Dec. 05 Delayed, new estimate June.06
2. Steve Bishop	Little focus on wider sustainability issues	Consider the wider sustainability role sustainability should play in environmental issues	Resolve its future role	March 2005	Preliminary work completed. Incorporated in current services e.g. Planning
3. David Stevens	Street cleaning an area of dissatisfaction	Work with new contractors to direct resources at key areas	Improved satisfaction	March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractor performance improved. Satisfaction tested Jan 06 Results to inform Environmental Cleanliness Action Plan June 06
4. David Stevens	Longer term plans for refuse collection unclear	Develop and agree plans for refuse collection	Clearer plans and better services	June 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued participation in County-wide strategy

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
					through Member and other groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of joint service provision research as a service priority for 05/06 • Contractor recommendations discussed by Scrutiny Committee • Recycling Plan 2005/06 confirmed by Nov. Executive • Recycling Plan 2006-08 due June 06
5. David Stevens	New (Waste Management) contract does not provide incentives for improvements	Negotiate and agree incentives with contractor	Improved performance through clear incentives	June 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some improvement identified through negotiation • Bulky Waste PI amended to improve customer satisfaction • Liaison with Leisure Services on contract improvements
6. David Stevens	No focus on enforcement	Develop and publish enforcement strategy for key areas	Reduced complaints through more effective enforcement	March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Warden post created • Principal Environmental Health Officer (EHO) transferred to Environmental

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection team EH Public Spaces Programme constructed and in progress Prosecution presumption for fly tipping adopted by Council FPN powers under Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act delegated. Enforcement Strategy due June 06
7. Paul Staines	Community safety not embedded	The Council will consider the relative priority of community safety as part of its reflection on the actions contained within the Vale Community Strategy and the implications for service areas and action plans	New Community Safety Strategy drafted. New Strategy communicated internally	March 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy adopted by Executive May 05. S17 Crime & Disorder Act seminar held for Members and Senior Officers June 05 First twice-yearly community safety briefing produced
8. Toby Warren	No needs analysis undertaken and no strategy for youth provision	Carry out needs analysis and develop and publish a youth strategy	June Consultation	April 2005	With the advent of the need for a County-wide Children and Young People's Plan a revised timescale has yet to be

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4
					determined due to the County work. A draft Children and Young People's Plan has been produced. This will allow revised timescale to be determined.
9. Chris Webb	No playground strategy	Develop and publish a playground strategy	Improved playground provision and use through production of strategy PPG17 Survey Policy approved	Sept. 2005	Survey due to be completed Oct 06.
10. Tim Barnett	No overall child protection policy	Develop and publish a child protection policy		December 2005	Training and embedding required

Pay & Workforce Strategy High Level Actions

Note: a new People Strategy has been developed and the table of actions will be revised to reflect this once it has been approved by Council.

PWS Priorities

- a) **Developing Leadership Capacity** –among both officers and members, including attracting effective leaders into local government from outside the sector.
- b) **Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce** – across the corporate centre of authorities, specific services, management and the frontline workforce.
- c) **Developing the organisation** – to achieve excellence in people and performance management, partnership working, equality and diversity and the efficient delivery of services.
- d) **Resourcing local government** – ensuring that authorities recruit, train and retain the staff they need.
- e) **Pay and Rewards** – Having pay and reward structures that attract, retain and develop a skilled and flexible workforce while achieving value for money in service delivery.

Actions	Milestones	Target date	Owner	CPA Ref	CPA Action quarter 4 2005 - 6
PWS Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All authorities should have assessed the implications of the Strategy for their future workforce development and have plans in place to address priority issues. • Strategy agreed - post restructuring • Strategy has necessary resources for its preparation and delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed • Completed - January 2006 • Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exec/PRAC • Exec/PRAC • Exec 		The People Strategy has now been approved. This underpins the Pay and Workforce Strategy and the detailed supporting actions are being developed for each of the policy areas as part of the service planning process.

Pay & Workforce Strategy High Level Actions

Actions	Milestones	Target date	Owner	CPA Ref	CPA Action quarter 4 2005 - 6
Developing Leadership Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Development Project- post restructuring and embracing new VWHDC Management values • Expanded Member Development Programme • External recruitment following restructure • Develop Member Skills Profiles • Skills and capabilities of senior HR leaders improved leading to more effective people management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting Senior Management restructuring • For implementation April 2006 • March 2006 • April 2006 • March 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TB/TdV • TB/BMc/RF • PRAC • TB/DQ/RF • TB/RF 	2.1 4.2	<p>Improve internal leadership through alignment of Portfolios and service areas and the working of Executive and Directors</p> <p>Management skills not developed</p>

Pay & Workforce Strategy High Level Actions

Actions	Milestones	Target date	Owner	CPA Ref	CPA Action quarter 4 2005 - 6
<p>Developing the skills and capacity of the workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanded In-House Training Programme based on performance appraisals • Establishment of e-skills training programme • Production of 3-year Workforce Development Plans - post restructuring and embracing new VWHDC Management values • Conduct a skills audit to include skills for financial management, performance management, project management, procurement, partnership working, strategic thinking and change management • Improve workforce planning information • Introduce succession planning and have systems to identify and bring on 'high fliers' for future leadership positions • Define any further career grades • Develop Competency-bar criteria • Adopt agreed framework of leadership skills and competencies for officers. • Review and relaunch of Performance Appraisal Scheme to include fair but robust arrangements to deal with poor performance where it occurs • Consider extending flexible working arrangements • Implement actions in Stress Risk Assessment Action Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2005 • March 2006 • March 2006 • March 2007 - if still required after senior management restructuring • March 2007 • Part of organisation development programme • March 2006 • March 2006 • Completed January 2006 • February 2006 • March 2008 • October 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JP / TB • RF / TB • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB / BMc • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB • PRAC / TB 	<p>4.3</p>	<p>Capacity of key staff needs to be appropriate</p>

Pay & Workforce Strategy High Level Actions

Actions	Milestones	Target date	Owner	CPA Ref	CPA Action quarter 4 2005 - 6
Developing the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investors in People Re-assessment • Review and relaunch of Performance Appraisal Scheme • Equality Action plan re Workforce monitoring • Equal Pay Audit • Communications Strategy to be formulated • Structure and Staffing of Communications & Consultations posts needs to be determined • Appointment of Communications officer(s) • Exploration of Partnership working • Exploration of new ways of working using the BV 4 Cs • Extended production of management information and access to employee data via Employee Self-Service Module of HR System • Develop stress risk action plans • Introduce succession planning and have systems to identify and bring on 'high fliers' for future leadership positions • 100% capability in electronic delivery of priority services by 2005 in ways that customers will use • Identifying efficiency savings in the ways the Council organises, procures and delivers services in line with the Government's Efficiency Review • Redesigning internal workflow processes to improve efficiency and accuracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feb 2006 • February 2006 • April 2007 • October 2006 • April 2006 • From November 2004 • Completed Oct 2005 • Annually with service plans • Annually with service plans • October 2006 • Post-restructuring • March 2007 Part of organisation development plan • December 2005 • Annually with the budget • October 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exec/PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • NM/Exec • JP / TAS • TAS • Exec • Exec • PRAC/TB • JP/TB • PRAC/TB/BMc • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • TB/ Project Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 1.3 2.1 2.3 3.1 3.2 5.1 5.2 5.3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine and simplify vision, aims, and objectives Implementation of Communication Strategy Improve internal leadership through alignment of Portfolios and service areas and the working of Executive and Directors Priorities for planned service improvements need to be clear An effective change management process needs to be embedded Sharing lessons learnt Performance Management Culture needs to be embedded Use management information to manage Best Value 4Cs need to be more consistently applied

Pay & Workforce Strategy High Level Actions

Actions	Milestones	Target date	Owner	CPA Ref	CPA Action quarter 4 2005 - 6
Resourcing local government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-consider management structure post leisure trust • Consider recruitment & retention initiatives • Review Managing Organisational Change Procedures • Produce People Strategy embracing new VWHDC Management values • Address staff turnover (LPI HR1) • Equal Pay Audit • Improve sickness absence procedures • Increased diversity of senior management and workforce • Improved employee satisfaction rates • Resource local development framework for Planning • Consider recruitment difficulties arising from a shortage of affordable housing • Develop on-line recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 2006 • March 2007 • Completed • January 2006 • March 2006 • October 2006 • March 2007 • April 2006 • April 2007 • Considered Feb 2005 • March 2007 • Completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAS/ PRAC • JP/TB • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • RF/TB • PRAC/TB • Exec • Exec • TB 	<p>1.2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4.1</p>	<p>Identify resources to support and facilitate the remaining strands in the Community Strategy lead by other partners</p> <p>Ensure sufficient and appropriate staffing resources are available to deliver agreed priorities</p>
Pay and Rewards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider whether to become Employer of Choice • Equal Pay Audit • Define any further career grades • Develop Competency-bar criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2006 • October 2006 • January 2006 • January 2006 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB • PRAC/TB 		

Tim Barnett
Assistant Director (Human Resources)
28.11.04

Revised 22.07.05, 04.11.05, 02.02.06, 03.05.06, 23/5/06

IEG CPA Actions Report: April 2006
Jeremy Beach

Appendix 1e

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	WEAKNESSES IDENTIFIED	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	MILESTONES	TIME-SCALE	PROGRESS AS AT QUARTER 4 2005-06
Jeremy Beach	<p>BVPI 157 score is in lower quartile (national rankings) at 87.6%, though the actual differences between authorities are extremely small.</p> <p>Specific weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of online transactional licensing presence • Limited e-procurement • Limited card payments via telephone / face to face • No online payments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of pro-active work on: • Online licensing presence • Online forms for various processes, including payments where appropriate • Telephone acceptance of card payments for appropriate services 	No further milestones for this indicator as it has been deleted.	CLOSED	BVPI 157 = 87.6%
Jeremy Beach	<p>ODPM IEG Priority Outcomes.</p> <p>The following Outcomes that are entirely within the control of VVHDC and have not had an explicit decision not to proceed are currently AMBER (in other words under way but not complete)</p> <p>R9 E-Procurement R10 Online payments G13 Parking online forms G20 Website conformance with AA accessibility rating R28 Automated email responses and unique reference numbers R29 Responses to emails within</p>	<p>R9 – implement as part of FSR</p> <p>R10 – technical delays now overcome and due for launch spring 2006</p> <p>G13 – part of online services project, will deliver late</p> <p>G20 –on track and due summer 2006</p> <p>R28 – very tricky for whole organization: needs a proper approach</p> <p>R29 – ditto</p> <p>G25 – can create online form but most work to be done behind scenes, will be late</p>	Completion of each of these	<p>'R' outcomes should have been completed by 31/12/05 and 'G' outcomes by 31/03/06.</p> <p>Most of these 'amber' projects are now expected to be implemented from March through to August 2006.</p>	<p>See IEG6 Statement on our web site at http://valeweb/Images/IEG6Statements/10April06_tcm4-9891.pdf</p>

**IEG CPA Actions Report: April 2006
Jeremy Beach**

Appendix 1e

	one working day G25 Single notification of change of address				
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Addendum to CPA Actions IEG Update May 2006

1. Directors will be aware that the national 'e-government' agenda came to an end on 31st March 2006. This was marked by the submission of a final IEG Statement in April 2006 which reported progress against a number of factors:
 - a. ODPM Priority Service Outcomes (mandatory);
 - b. Change Management (expected);
 - c. BVPI 157;
 - d. Take-up;
 - e. Expenditure;
 - f. Efficiency Gains.
2. In summary, the Vale has achieved a lot in the last 4 years. It has raised its BVPI 157 score from 25% to 88%, with the majority of the remaining points within striking distance. It has ensured that it has either achieved or has active work streams for all of the mandatory outcomes under its direct control. It has also addressed the vast majority of non-mandatory outcomes. It has driven take-up of online and telephone call-centre channels beyond initial expectations and the Council is now in an excellent position to use these as building blocks for further service delivery improvements. The Council has matched ODPM expenditure and should expect to see modest efficiency gains in 2006-7, with the opportunity for considerably increased efficiency gains in 2007-8 and onwards.
3. There is no longer a requirement to report against the ODPM outcomes or BVPI 157. However, it would be foolish if the Council was to run-down its work related to e-enabling services and re-engineering processes. There are two main reasons to continue or even increase the pace of e-government reform:
 - a. The national 'Transformational Government' agenda, which has been launched as a replacement for e-government. This picks up and refocuses on the same themes as before. However, there is no longer the carrot of funding, but the probability of the stick of assessment and censure.
 - b. Local necessity. This authority is under continuing pressure to deliver efficiency gains and provide services in the ways which customers want to use them. These two aims are complimentary, not conflicting, as online services are both customer-orientated and efficient.
4. 'Transformational government' outcomes should be incorporated into the strategic direction of the authority, and cascaded down to become concrete service development aims for individual departments. A separate paper will be presented to Directors outlining practical examples for incorporation into strategic plans for the Council.
5. 'E-government' has been accorded a special place in the council's planning and monitoring hierarchy through the IEG Steering Group. It has been suggested that this be disbanded. If this is going to be the case, then it is imperative that the on-going 'T-government' agenda is represented through a presence on another key strategic group, such as customer services or performance development. This sort of work cuts across departmental silos and can deliver real long-term improvements in terms of expenditure and customer service delivery – it is crucial that the Council does not lose its commitment to such an agenda at a time when it could benefit from it the most.

Jeremy Beach
2nd May 2006

Quarterly Governance Report
Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Key: N/a = Not Applicable
Trend arrows: compares fourth quarter performance with the third quarter 2005/6 (not possible for all BVPIs)
Quartile 04/05 column: actual 04/05 against 04/05 quartile performance data
T = top; B = bottom; M = middle quartile



BVPI	Indicator Description	Tgt/ Ind	TQ 04/05	BQ 04/05	Actual 04/05	Quartile 04/05	Target 05/06	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	on/off Tgt	Comments	Performance Trend
Corporate Health														
2a	Equality Standard for Local Government (Level 0 - 5)	T	0	0	2		2	2	2	2	1		Housing Inspectorate challenged the claim to level 2. Review of standard and implementation of impact assessments by several depts has been delayed during organisational change.	↓
2b	The duty to promote race equality checklist score (%)	T	72	42	53	M	68	53	53	53	47		A reduction in the number of claimed standards by 2. (a) The Auditors challenged statistics about staffing levels (provided by HR). (b) The slippage in review of the Race Equality Scheme is now significant, and 'reviewed regularly' is not being claimed as an achievement, as it has been previously, while organisational changes were awaited.	↓
8	0	T	95.97	88.65	91.05	M	100	94.13	94.8	93.98	92.88		Bottom quartile performance in January and February 2006 dragged down annual performance	↓
9	0	T	98.3	96.36	99.5	T	99.3	29.8	58.19	86.72	99.1		Lower targets for 2006/7 due to service disruptions arising from market testing exercise and outsourcing decision - per service plan as for BVPI 9	↑
10	0	T	99.14	98	99.7	T	99.4	29.26	59.7	90.83	99.2			↑
11a	0	I	40.23	19.63	16.67	B	20	13.33	13.33	13.33	14.29			↑
11b	0	I	3.48	0	0	B	1.75	7.14	7.14	7.14	7.14			→
11c	0	I	0	0	0		7	7.14	7.14	7.14	7.69		New indicator	↑
12	0	T	8.4	11.1	9.22	M	9	9.32	8.08	8.4	10		See comment in 'Staffing Issues' section of the corporate governance report	↓
14	0	I	0.16	0.84	1.53	B	0.25	0	0	0	0			→
15	0	I	0.12	0.44	0	T	0.25	0	0	0	0			→
16a	0	I	3.73	1.49	4.3	T	4.1	4.66	4.69	5.45	5.9			↑
17a	0	I	4.6	0.9	2.4	M	2.4	2.47	2.17	2.24	2.58			↑
157	0	T	87.5	66.59	69.1	M	100	74.5	76.1	78.8	87.6		The main reasons for not meeting the target were: (a) Licensing not having an online transactional presence; [this is being dealt with pro-actively right now] (b) Lack of e-enabled payment facilities for a range of other services; [this is subject to roll-out of online forms and telephone credit card payments across relevant services] (c) Lack of council-wide e-procurement. [this is delayed due to the Financial Services procurement].	↑
Housing														
64	0	T	56.25	4	11	M	4	0	3	4	5			↑

Quarterly Governance Report
Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

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Top and Bottom quartile data is against all England Authorities
Trend arrows: compares fourth quarter performance with the third quarter 2005/6 (not possible for all BVPIs)
Quartile 04/05 column: actual 04/05 against 04/05 quartile performance data
T = top; B = bottom; M = middle quartile



BVPI	Indicator Description	Tgt/ Ind	TQ 04/05	BQ 04/05	Actual 04/05	Quartile 04/05	Target 05/06	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	on/off Tgt	Comments	Performance Trend
183a	0	T	1	5	4.46	M	6	2.71	4.38	3.14	3.26		2004/05 YE figure recalculated further to External Audit (was initially calculated as 5.73 weeks) New Guidance from ODFM restricts eligibility of certain applicants within this calculation. Any stays in B&B prior to 01/04/2004 should be discounted. This new guidance was issued in Q3 and the year end calculation reflects this change.	↓
183b	0	T	0	18	27.89	B	20	12.36	12.36	23.23	12.32			↑
202	0	T	0	0	1		1	0	0	0	0			N/a
203	0	T	-6.94	28.31	-15.77	T	5	0	0	0	-14.2		The successful homelessness prevention work has led to a significant decrease in the number of households (and families) in temporary accommodation placing us in the Top Quartile again.	N/a
213	Number of households considered homeless for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation.	I	0	0	0	T	0	0.1	0.37	0.79	2	N/a	Target not required for 2005/6. Number is based on number of households assisted through successful casework and dividing this figure by the number of thousand households in the Vale (current household figure - 48,624). New Prevention officer in place since September 2005. Figure of 3.33% relates to 90 successful prevention cases completed in the 2005/06 FY.	N/a
214	0	I	0	0	0		0	0	0	1.49	3.33	N/a	Target not required for 2005/6. 3 Repeat homelessness applications during the year.	N/a
Benefits														
76a	0	T	282.16	155.86	269.55	M	273	68	152.92	217.43	283.7		Well above target	↑
76b	0	T	0	0	0.18		0.19	0.19	0.38	0.38	0.38		Above target	→
76c	0	T	53.4	24.01	82.59	T	89	25.82	48.93	77.68	118.65		Above target	↑
76d	0	T	5.31	2.06	12.45	T	10	2.5	5.56	9.16	15.02		Well above target	↑
78a	0	T	29.38	44.55	25	T	36	27	34	24	26		Above target	↓
78b	0	T	7.4	14.9	5	T	9	8	8	6	6		Above target	→
79a	0	T	99	96.2	99	T	99	98.4	100	100	99		On target	↓

Quarterly Governance Report
 Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Key: N/a = Not Applicable
 Trend arrows: compares fourth quarter performance with the third quarter 2005/6 (not possible for all BVPIs)
 Quartile 04/05 column: actual 04/05 against 04/05 quartile performance data
 T = top; B = bottom; M = middle quartile

	Red - off target
	Yellow - on target
	Green - above target

BVPI	Indicator Description	Tgt/ Ind	TQ 04/05	BQ 04/05	Actual 04/05	Quartile 04/05	Target 05/06	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	on/off Tgt	Comments	Performance Trend
79b(i) 0		T	49.93	33.13	0	T	105	89.24	96.9	97.4	99.1		Greatly improved and top quartile, although this PI is below initial target	↑

Quarterly Governance Report
Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Key: N/a = Not Applicable
Top and Bottom quartile data is against all England Authorities
Trend arrows: compares fourth quarter performance with the third quarter 2005/6 (not possible for all BVPIs)
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BVPI	Indicator Description	Tgt/ Ind	TQ 04/05	BQ 04/05	Actual 04/05	Quartile 04/05	Target 05/06	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	on/off Tgt	Comments	Performance Trend
79b(ii) 0		I	0	0	0		57.5	49.17	54.4	54.1	49.1		The Strategic Director (CFO) is examining arrears in order to improve recovery and BVPI performance	↓
79b (iii) 0		I	0	0	0		5.5	0.66	0	0	1.8		Linked to BVPI 79(ii), activity has commenced to reduce the amount of static debt. But substantial improvement being planned.	N/a
Environment														
82a 0		T	17.89	11.78	21.3	T	24	21.3	22	21.58	22.1		Roll out of Green Box scheme delayed. Deployment of mini recycling centres delayed. Both due to concentration of resources on Brown Bin scheme and vacancy of Waste Promotion Officer post.	↑
82aii 0		T	0	0	0		10179	2214	4488	6999	9038		see 82a	↑
82b 0		T	9.8	1.53	0.02	B	1	0	0.17	1.59	1.7			↑
82bii 0		T	0	0	0		407	0	34	494	699			↓
84 0		I	397.7	491.6	348	T	351	89.39	176.8	267.7	352		1% above target - reflects additional material collected under Brown Bin scheme during second half of the year.	↑
84b 0		T	0	0	0		0	2.97	1.0	-0.2	1.09	N/a	Target not required for 2005/6	N/a
86 0		T	35.31	48.13	41.15	M	41.9	0	0	0	0	N/a	Annual reporting - calculation not yet complete	N/a
166a 0		T	97	79.1	56.25	B	73	56.25	56.25	56.25	66.25		05/06 target not achieved due to revised priorities. However, Middle Quartile performance will be achieved in 06/07	↑
199 0		T	11	24	22	M	18	0	0	0	12		Annual reporting	N/a
Planning														
106 0		T	94	57.14	92	M	60	0	94	0	95		6 monthly reporting	N/a
109a 0		T	68.9	46.88	51	M	60	29	31	42	50		These latest quarterly figures show the Council achieved the targets for Major, Minor and Other applications. This is part of the Council's process of continuing improvement in performance, and has been particularly helped by a revised Scheme of Delegation which came into operation in July 2005	↑
109b 0		T	75.4	61.12	51	B	65	60	65	69	71		As for 109a	↑
109c 0		T	88	80	77	B	80	85	86	88	87		As for 109a	↓
179 0		T	100	96.96	99.6	B	100	99.87	99.6	99.72	99.79		Slightly below target	↑

Quarterly Governance Report
Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

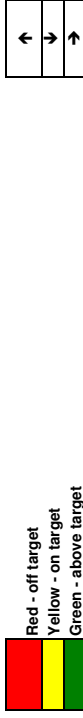
Key: N/a = Not Applicable

Top and Bottom quartile data is against all England Authorities

Trend arrows: compares fourth quarter performance with the third quarter 2005/6 (not possible for all BVPIs)

Quartile 04/05 column: actual 04/05 against 04/05 quartile performance data

T = top; B = bottom; M = middle quartile



BVPI	Indicator Description	Tgt/ Ind	TQ 04/05	BQ 04/05	Actual 04/05	Quartile 04/05	Target 05/06	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	on/off Tgt	Comments	Performance Trend
200a	0	T	0	0	0		yes	0	yes	0	yes	N/a	Annual reporting	N/a
200b	0	T	0	0	0		yes	0	yes	0	yes	N/a	6 monthly reporting	N/a
200c	0	I	0	0	0		yes	0	yes	0	yes	N/a	Annual reporting	N/a
204	% appeals allowed against authority's decisions to refuse planning permission	T	25	37.5	32	M	35	0	17	0	0	N/a	6 monthly reporting - awaiting results	N/a
205	0	T	88.9	72.2	72	B	80	0	78	0	0	N/a	6 monthly reporting - awaiting results	N/a
219a	0	I	0	0	0		52	0	0	0	0	N/a	Annual reporting - awaiting results	N/a
219b	0	I	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	N/a	Annual reporting - awaiting results	N/a
219c	0	I	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	N/a	Annual reporting - awaiting results	N/a
Community Development														
126	0	I	6.9	14.23	5.38	T	5.36	1.54	3.24	4.97	5.94		Police report increased activity identified and being addressed.	↑
127a	0	I	3	8.71	0	M	10.46	2.97	6.19	9.22	12.39		Police report increased activity identified and being addressed.	↓
127b	0	I	5.96	12.7	0	T	0.24	0.05	0.06	0.11	0.16			→
128	0	I	7.77	15.04	6.1	T	6.9	1.64	3.12	4.48	5.88			↓
156	0	T	0	0	83		100	83	83	83	83		Completion of the Charter Car Park is scheduled for June of this year. This should take this indicator up to 90% plus - assuming no changes in the definition.	→
174	0	I	0	0	0		0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86		1 Incident reported during the year	→

Quarterly Governance Report
 Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Key: N/a = Not Applicable
 Trend arrows: compares fourth quarter performance with the third quarter 2005/6 (not possible for all BVPIs)
 Quartile 04/05 column: actual 04/05 against 04/05 quartile performance data
 T = top; B = bottom; M = middle quartile

Red - off target
 Yellow - on target
 Green - above target

↑
 ↓
 →

BVPI	Indicator Description	Tgt/ Ind	TQ 04/05	BQ 04/05	Actual 04/05	Quartile 04/05	Target 05/06	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	on/off Tgt	Comments	Performance Trend
175	0	T	0	0	N/a		100	100	100	100	100		All incidents have been actioned in the year	→

Quarterly Governance Report
Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Key: N/a = Not Applicable

Top and Bottom quartile data is against all England Authorities

Trend arrows: compares fourth quarter performance with the third quarter 2005/6 (not possible for all BVPIs)

Quartile 04/05 column: actual 04/05 against 04/05 quartile performance data

T = top; B = bottom; M = middle quartile



BVPI	Indicator Description	Tgt/ Ind	TQ 04/05	BQ 04/05	Actual 04/05	Quartile 04/05	Target 05/06	Actual Q1	Actual Q2	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	on/off Tgt	Comments	Performance Trend
225	0	I	0.82	0	0		0	0	0	0	45.5	N/a		N/a
226a	Advice and guidance services - total spent £'000	I	100	29.7	0	M	200	200	200	200	200		This is an estimated figure. Actual 2005/06 awaiting final calculation	
226b	0	I	0	0	0		75	75	75	75	75		This is an estimated figure. Actual 2005/06 awaiting final calculation	
226c	Advice and guidance services - direct provision £'000	I	0	0	0		450	450	450	450	450		This is an estimated figure. Actual 2005/06 awaiting final calculation	

Quarterly Governance Report
 Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Better
 Worse
 Stable

Target
 06/07

2	78	100	99.0	99.0	23.5	1.95	7	9	0.2	0.25	4.1	2.4	100	3
---	----	-----	------	------	------	------	---	---	-----	------	-----	-----	-----	---

Quarterly Governance Report
 Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Better
 Worse
 Stable

Target
 06/07

6
22
1
5
N/a
N/a

273
0.38
89.5
12
36
9
99

Quarterly Governance Report
Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Better
Worse
Stable

Target
06/07

105

Quarterly Governance Report
 Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Better
 Worse
 Stable

Target 06/07	57.5	5.5		25	10325	3	1239	353	0.5	42.56	83	15		60	60	65	80	100
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Quarterly Governance Report
 Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Better
 Worse
 Stable

Target 06/07	yes	yes	yes	35	85	52	10	4		5.36	10.1	0.23	6.5	100	0.86
-----------------	-----	-----	-----	----	----	----	----	---	--	------	------	------	-----	-----	------

Quarterly Governance Report
Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Better
Worse
Stable

Target
06/07

100

Quarterly Governance Report
Best Value Performance Indicators. Our current performance in 2005/06.

Better
Worse
Stable

Target
06/07

0
200000
75
450000

QUARTERLY CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REPORT - Fourth Quarter 1.4.05 - 31.3.06
Local Performance Indicators Supporting Corporate Aims 2005/06 (cumulative year to date)

LPI	Indicator Description	Target 05/06	Actual Q3	Actual Q4	Comments
To Help Facilitate the Provision of Affordable Housing					
LI H2	Number of units of affordable housing completed / provided	60	78	131	Split by tenure - Shared Ownership - 61 (46.56%) Social rented - 70 (53.44%)
LI H2a	Number of affordable housing units provided through S106 agreements	Indicator	66	114	New indicator
LPI TP5	% of dwellings permitted on sites above the Council's local plan affordable housing policy thresholds which fall within the definition of affordable housing	30%	23%	26%	6 monthly reporting (the Q3 result is the position at the end of the second quarter). Within the percentage are two McCarthy and Stone developments for sheltered housing. These were above the threshold due a higher than average density so consequentially did not yield affordable housing
LPI TP6	% of affordable dwellings permitted which are in the social rented category	60%	91%	61%	6 monthly reporting (the Q3 result is the position at the end of the second quarter)
LPI TP7	% of total house building completions against annualised adopted Structure Plan targets	New indicator	117%	162%	Annual reporting - Annualised target based on Target of 5,750 completions by 2011 (1996-2011). This translates into an annual straight line target of 383 per full year. There were 621 completions (yet to be confirmed with County) in April 05 to March 06. When compared to the annual structure plan target of 383 it makes makes 162%.
To Improve and Modernise Access to Services					
CS3	% of enquiries resolved during the same working day at the LSP Wantage	97%	not available	95.32%	
CS4	% of enquiries resolved during the same working day at the LSP Abingdon	97%	not available	97.20%	
CS5	% of satisfied customers at the LSP Wantage	95%	90%	94.75%	
CS6	% of satisfied customers at the LSP Abingdon	95%	100.00%	100.00%	
CS9	% of calls to be answered within 20 seconds	90%	87.00%	87.00%	below target but high performance against industry standards
CS10	% of calls unanswered	6%	2.00%	2.00%	very good achievement

SUMMARY OF TURNOVER 2005-06

	Q1		Q2		Q2 Target		Q3		Q3 Target		Q4		Total No Leavers	Cumulative Turnover
	Av. No. employees left/mth	Av. Turnover/mth	Av. No. employees left/mth	Av. Turnover/mth	Av. No. employees left/mth	Av. Turnover/mth	Av. No. employees left/mth	Av. Turnover/mth	Av. No. employees left/mth	Av. Turnover/mth	Av. No. employees left/mth	Av. Turnover/mth		
Audit & ICT	0.33	1.67%	0.33	1.75%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.67	3.92%	4	22.22%		
Benefits	0.33	1.39%	0.33	1.39%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	8.33%		
Building Control (inc DSO)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.33	1.39%	0.33	1.39%	0	0.00%	1	4.17%		
Contact Services	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.67	1.88%	0.67	1.88%	1	2.97%	5	15.63%		
Democratic Services	0	0.00%	1	1.75%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.67	1.96%	1	5.26%		
Emergency Planning	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0		
Environmental Health	0.33	1.11%	1.33	4.64%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	5	18.52%		
Finance	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.67	2.57%	0.67	2.57%	0.33	1.39%	3	12.50%		
Housing & Community Safe	0.67	2.38%	0.33	1.23%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.67	2.34%	5	17.86%		
Human Resources	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0		
Legal Services	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0		
Leisure	0.33	0.69%	0.67	1.46%	1	2.26%	1	2.26%	0.33	0.78%	7	16.28%		
Planning	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.33	0.68%	0.33	0.68%	0.33	0.74%	2	4.44%		
Property & Estates	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.33	4.16%	1	12.50%		
Strategic Directors Offices	0	0.00%	0.33	0.33%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.67	7.41%	3	37.50%		
Totals	1.99	0.58%	4.32	1.28%	3	0.90%	3	0.90%	5	1.55%	39	12.23%		
Comparison figure for 2004-2005	8.34	2.38%	7.63	2.23%	2	0.63%	2	0.63%	3.33	1.06%	55	15.41%		

Turnover has remained fairly consistent this year. It is comparatively much lower in Q1 and Q2 in 2005/06 as compared to 2004/05 as 2004/05 was the year of Pay and Grading which seemed to cause an increase in turnover. Turnover is up between Q4 and Q3 and this could be the impact of outsourcing to Capita. The next two quarters will help to clarify this.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANNING & COMMUNITY STRATEGY)
TO THE STRATEGIC AND LOCAL PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP AND THE DEVELOPMENT
CONTROL COMMITTEE
24 MAY 2006

Response to formal consultation on the Proposed Modifications to the Local Plan 2011

1.0 **Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 Members will recall that following the consideration of the Inspector's Report on the Local Plan 2011 the Council's statement of decisions on the Inspector's recommendations and its proposed modifications to the Local Plan were published for comment between 23 March and 4 May.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to consider the representations received and decide whether any further modifications should be made before the Local Plan is formally adopted.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 to this report contains a schedule of representations received together with the officers' responses and suggested recommendations to Executive and Council. Appendix 2 contains a list of policies subject to proposed modifications where no objections have been received. The Council at its meeting on 22 March agreed that such policies could be given full weight when considering planning applications.
- 1.4 The contact officer for this report are Katie Barrett, Section Head: Planning Strategy, contact Tel No: 01235 540339 and Grant Audley-Miller, Section Head (Environmental Planning & Conservation), contact Tel No. 01235 540343.

2.0 **Recommendations**

- 2.1 *That the Advisory Group and the Development Control Committee recommend the Executive to recommend Council to:*
- i) note the representations received on the Council's decisions on the Inspector's recommendations and the proposed modifications to the Local Plan and agree the officers' observations and recommendations;*
 - ii) accept there is no justification for making further substantive changes to the Local Plan which would require the publication of further proposed modifications;*
 - iii) delegate authority to the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) to make minor editorial changes and up-dates to the Local Plan prior to adoption;*
 - iv) adopt the Local Plan as proposed to be modified and authorise officers to give notice of this decision and take the remaining necessary steps in accordance with the regulations.*

3.0 **Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies**

- 3.1 This report complies with the Council's vision and aims. The Local Plan will guide development in the District to 2011 and beyond.

4.0 **Overview of the Representations Received**

- 4.1 A total of 276 representations were received on the Council's proposed modifications from 138 individuals and organisations. 33 representations supported the proposed modifications, 233

objected and there were 10 informal comments.

- 4.2 No objections were made to the proposed modifications in the following chapters: introduction, the future of the Vale, historic environment, natural environment and tourism. 185 of the representations (mainly objections) related to the allocation of the two sites at Botley recommended by the Inspector. The site at Tilbury Lane was the main focus of the objections and a further 17 objections were received to the loss of safeguarded land at Botley. 10 objections related to the strategic housing allocation at Grove, 2 to the Chilton Field allocation and 1 to the increased number of dwellings at the former Dow Agro site (from Letcombe Regis Parish Council).

5.0 **Consideration of the Representations**

- 5.1 Members will be aware that the Council accepted all but five of the Inspector's recommendations to change the Local Plan and three of these were minor changes to the Inspector's wording which the Council proposed for clarity. The majority of the proposed modifications arise from the Inspector's recommendations to make specific changes to the plan to ensure consistency or to update the plan. Given that the Inspector has carefully considered all the objections to the Local Plan and the detailed evidence put forward at the Inquiry and given the late stage in the local plan process, officers are of the view that further substantive changes to the Local Plan would only be justified if significant additional information comes to light which alters the Council's judgement on a particular policy or proposal. However, minor wording and editorial changes and up-dates to the plan can be made without a need to advertise them as further proposed modifications. Having examined the representations received officers are of the view that no substantive changes to the plan are necessary as outlined in Appendix 1.

- 5.2 If Members believe substantive changes are necessary at this stage – such as adding or deleting a site proposed for development, or introducing, deleting or significantly amending criteria in policies – these would need to be advertised as further proposed modifications to the Local Plan. This would mean that the Local Plan could not be adopted before 22 July 2006. After this date all plans and strategies adopted by councils must be subject to an environmental assessment in accordance with Government regulations unless it is not feasible to do so. The Council at its meeting in May 2005 considered it would not be feasible to carry out an environmental assessment in accordance with the regulations at this late stage in the process and has published a statement to that effect on its web site and placed notices in the local press. Although the Council has taken Counsel's opinion and done all it can to safeguard the Local Plan in the event that it is not adopted by 22 July, there is no guarantee that it would be able to successfully defend its position if the 'not feasible' approach were tested through a high court challenge. If the court did not support the Council, the Local Plan could not be formally adopted and the Council would have to rely on the plan in its draft form until local development documents were adopted. Policies in a draft plan would not carry as much weight at a planning appeal as those in an adopted plan. Having to rely on a draft Plan would be likely to encourage planning applications on greenfield sites not allocated for development. While the requirement for an environmental assessment does not preclude substantive changes being proposed, members should be aware of the consequences of doing so.

6.0 **The Next Steps**

- 6.1 The recommendations of the Advisory Group and the Development Control Committee will be considered by the Executive at its scheduled meeting on 2 June and a special meeting of Council on the 14 June. If no substantive changes are proposed requiring the advertisement of further proposed modifications a notice of intention to adopt the Local Plan will be published in the local press. After a period of four weeks the Local plan will be adopted (13 July). A further notice has to be published and a six week period given within which legal challenges can be lodged with the high court.
- 6.2 Comments on the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance, which will give more detail on policies

and proposals in the Local Plan and which were also available for comments between 25 March and 4 May, will be considered at a meeting of the Advisory Group on 26 June; Development Control Committee on 3 July; Executive on 7 July and Council on 19 July for adoption on 20 July.

RODGER HOOD
Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)

TIM SADLER
Strategic Director

Background Papers: None

CHAPTER 3 – GENERAL STRATEGY

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
PM MAP8 – Policy GS1 Development in Existing Settlements	
<p>Support</p> <p>330/PM/1 Cranfield University support the inclusion of Sudbury House within the development area of Faringdon as logical as it uses previously developed land and is contiguous with the existing development boundary.</p>	Noted
PM 3.6 – Para 3.14 Development in the Oxford Green Belt	
<p>Support</p> <p>489/PM/1 Oxford Brookes University remains appreciative of the support of the District Council as expressed in the Plan and as such supports the Proposed Modification.</p>	Noted
PM 3.8 – Policy GS5 Safeguarded Land	
<p>Support</p> <p>291/PM/8 University of Oxford support deletion of policy GS5 in light of the Inspector's recommendation and in relation to the allocation of land for housing at Botley.</p> <p>Objections</p> <p>902/PM/1 Dr Paul Sutton, 950/PM1 Mrs C Trafford and Mr L Trafford, 949/PM1 M Nash, 989/PM1 Mrs M Hayle, 954/PM1 Mr Peter A Harper-Smith, 995/PM1 Mr & Mrs Hall, 901/PM1 Maureen Elliot, 906/PM1 Mrs S Dyson, 913/PM1 V Campo, 912/PM1 NJ Campo, 943/PM1 Mr G Allsworth, 947/PM1 Mr T Foster, 907/PM1 AJ O'Leary, 992/PM1 K Neller, 904/PM1 Mr S Waite & Ms K Alderson made the following objections:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land should remain safeguarded, • It is not a sustainable location for housing, • Development will increase congestion on Botley Rd/A34/A420, • Modification is a bad compromise destroying safeguarded land because land in Grove can't be developed as quickly, • No evidence that alternative sites will not be developed in time, • Land not needed as other areas of Cumnor/Botley are already to be developed (Timbmet), • There has been no proper risk assessment, • Agricultural land will be lost, • Biodiversity and local wildlife will be harmed • It will lead to flooding • Sewerage system is not adequate, • Schools/Nurseries do not have enough places • Health provision is already inadequate, • Car parking in the area is already at capacity, • Development will increase local traffic/parking 	<p>Noted</p> <p>Land was safeguarded for development and was excluded from the Green Belt under policy GS5 in the draft Local Plan. The land was therefore considered to be suitable for development and had been previously excluded from the Green Belt for that reason. Indeed the Council's Sustainability Appraisal showed that the sites at Tilbury Lane and Lime Road Botley were sustainable locations for development. However, because of the capacity of other allocations in the draft Local Plan, the Council considered that the land did not need to be developed to meet the Vale's housing allocation and should remain safeguarded for development beyond the plan period.</p> <p>The Inspector considered that sites allocated in the draft Local Plan at Grove and Faringdon would not be developed sufficiently quickly to meet the Vale's housing requirements and therefore considered that other allocations were required. In reaching this conclusion he considered evidence in relation to the likely speed of development on the allocated housing sites. Given the results of the Council's Sustainability Appraisal in relation to the safeguarded land the Inspector further considered that land at Tilbury Lane and Lime Road Botley might be suitable for allocation as housing sites to meet the expected shortfall on other sites. The representations which relate to the suitability of the safeguarded land for housing development were then dealt with under policy H3 in the Inspector's report. Similarly the representations made in response to the proposed modification allocating land at Tilbury Lane and Lime Road Botley for housing which are listed opposite are dealt with</p>

Response to the Proposed Modifications to the Draft Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011

Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group and Development Control Committee - 24th May 2006

CHAPTER 3 – GENERAL STRATEGY

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
<p>problems and decrease road safety/lead to more accidents,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current residents' quality of life will be reduced, • Development will affect Human Rights via loss of views, • Anti-social behaviour and crime will increase, • Mixing private and local authority housing will cause problems, • New houses will be affected by overhead power lines, • Effect on OAP housing in Seacourt Rd, • Unsuitable cycle/pedestrian access arrangements, • Hazel Rd is unsuitable for access, • No sports facilities for children, • Loss of greenfield land, • Health and safety risks, • Loss of Green Belt, • Land should be a nature reserve, • Effect on water table, • Loss of allotments, • Increase in noise, particularly during construction, will disturb residents, • Public transport is not adequate, • Using Hazel Rd, Seacourt Rd, Poplar Rd or Elms Rd will cause problems, • Alley off Hazel Rd is not suitable for pedestrian or cycle access, • Development will lead to short cutting along existing roads, • Taxis will drop off fares at alley late at night, • Hazel Rd will be used as a car park, • Hazel Rd will not be safe for children to play in, • Flooding of roads will increase, • Development should be kept to the Fogwell Road side of Tilbury Lane. • Vandal proof fencing will be needed between the development and existing housing. 	<p>under policy H3 elsewhere in this schedule.</p> <p>The Inspector considered that the one remaining area of safeguarded land did not justify the retention of the policy. The Council agreed with this recommendation and policy GS5 has been deleted from the draft Local Plan via a modification. None of the objections which have been made justify continuing to safeguard the sites for development against the Inspector's recommendation or retaining the policy in the draft Local Plan.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change</p>

CHAPTER 4 – GENERAL POLICIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
PM 4.8 – Para 4.20 – Provision of Infrastructure and Services	
<p>Objection</p> <p>1004/PM/1 George Wimpey UK Ltd and Taylor Woodrow Developments Ltd. This is a joint objection that Local Plan para 4.20 does not fully reflect the guidance in Circular 5/2005 (para B18-B19) that the requirement for maintenance in perpetuity only applies to facilities which are predominantly for the benefit of the users of the associated development and where assets are intended for wider public use, the costs of maintenance should normally be borne by the body in which the asset is to be rested. Additions to para 4.20 are proposed to clarify this distinction</p>	<p>This objection correctly points out that Circular 5/2005 makes this distinction and para 4.20 states that improvements will be secured through planning obligations in accordance with Circular 5/2005. Para 4.20 adds that maintenance “may be required in perpetuity” and if this is qualified as suggested below it will give clarity in accordance with the Circular and refer to the distinction that the objectors are seeking.</p> <p>Recommendation: Para 4.20, penultimate sentence, after “in perpetuity” add “where the facilities are predominantly for the users of the associated development.”</p>
PM 4.9 – Policy DC8 – Provision of Infrastructure and Services	
<p>Objection</p> <p>1003/PM/1 Thames Water comments that legal agreements cannot be made to secure water and waste water infrastructure upgrades, but that it is essential that upgrades are in place to avoid unacceptable impacts on the environment such as sewage flooding and low water pressure. Thames Water is therefore seeking to modify policy DC8 to clarify that a planning condition will be used to ensure that infrastructure is provided ahead of development.</p>	<p>Local Plan para 4.20 notes Structure Plan policy G3 which states that development will not be permitted unless the necessary infrastructure is available. Government advice in PPS12 explains that one purpose of the planning system is to co-ordinate new development with the infrastructure it demands (para B4). Local Plan policy DC8 provides in summary, that development will only be permitted where the necessary infrastructure can be secured in time to serve the needs of the development and it requires that infrastructure must be provided to ensure co-ordination with development. In some cases this may be before development starts. The policy as worded therefore covers Thames Water’s concerns.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>
PM 1.12 – Policy DC13 – Flood Risk and Water Run-off	
<p>Support</p> <p>403/PM/1 Environment Agency</p>	<p>Noted</p>

CHAPTER 5 - TRANSPORT

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
PM5.5 – Policy TR1A Integrated Transport Strategy	
<p>684/PM/1 Maurice and Patricia Hyde reiterate their opposition to a new road from Mably Way to the A417 east of Wantage.</p>	<p>The new road was examined in detail at the local plan inquiry and the Inspector who was fully aware of all the objections concluded that removing direct reference to the A417 either side of Wantage would permit wider consideration of all possible opportunities to relieve Wantage town centre and through traffic in the review of this plan in the near future. Policy TR1A now refers to a 'relief road scheme for Wantage' as recommended by the Inspector and not to a new road from Mably Way to the A417 east of Wantage.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>
PM5.6 - Paras 5.21-5.24	
<p>Objection</p> <p>323/PM/1 Williams F1 object to the deletion of the reference to the road north of Grove following a route south of Bellinger's Garage. This route is preferable to an alignment north of Bellinger's Garage and the reference should be retained as an indication of such preference.</p>	<p>The Inspector at the Local Plan Inquiry concluded that the reference would restrict highway design options in the light of the WAGASTS Phase 2 outcome and saw no need for references to 'the south of Bellingers Garage' to be added to the plan. The modification is in accord with his recommendation and there is no reason to modify the plan further.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>
PM5.2 - Para 5.13	
<p>Comment</p> <p>815/PM/2 Gloucestershire County Council noted that since the consultation began Local Highway Authorities have had to submit their second LTP's 2006-2011 and the plan should reflect this.</p> <p>1002/2 Mr M Hocken objects that this modification needs to be updated as a result of the submission of the full LTP.</p> <p>Mr Hocken goes on to conclude that the final paragraph of the proposed amendment PM5.2 para 5.13 is factually incorrect in a number of respects and a new concluding paragraph should be added along the lines:</p> <p>"The Local Transport Plan recognizes that measures taken to date will be insufficient to address exceedences of airborne pollutants resulting from traffic emissions in central Abingdon. As a result, consultation on the declaration of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Abingdon town centre has begun, with a view to the adoption, within a 12-18 month timeframe, of an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) for integration into the new Local Transport Plan. This Action Plan will be required to set "ambitious but realistic"</p>	<p>Agreed. A minor change to the wording would correct and update the plan. It would not be a substantive change and it is not necessary to advertise it as a further proposed modification.</p> <p>Recommendation: Second Deposit Draft Local Plan incorporating the Proposed Modifications March 2006, page 62, para 5.13, first sentence: delete 'produced' and insert 'submitted'.</p> <p>The Local Plan re-iterates the agreed ambitions of the Transport Plan which the Proposed Modifications correctly include. This as set out in para 5.14 is purely to set the framework for planning decisions affecting land use. The text suggested by Mr Hocken is a level of detail not appropriate for inclusion in a land use plan.</p> <p>Development proposals which would unacceptably harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and their wider environment will be considered in the context of policy DC9.</p>

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Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
<p>targets to reduce exceedences and show that all appropriate traffic management measures to bring about such reductions have been considered. As a consequence of the AQMA declaration, the authority will be required to assess the impact of any proposed development on air quality levels within the AQMA, and ensure that <u>both</u> air quality <u>and</u> traffic assessments/travel plans will be required in respect of all development plans that could adversely affect air quality within the AQMA (see section 5.64 and 65 and TR7 [which should be amended accordingly]). The relevant development and planning guidance will be strictly enforced by the authority (in particular PPS13, PPS23 and DC10). All sustainability appraisals conducted under the Plan will need to factor in this material consideration. Should it moreover transpire that there was no public advertisement of the May 2005 decision by the Executive not to conduct an environmental assessment of the emerging Local Plan, the legal implications thereof will need to be elucidated before the Plan is finalised."</p>	<p>Public notices were displayed in the local press and Mr Hocken has been advised of this.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>
PM5.4 - Para 5.19	
<p>815/PM/3 Gloucestershire County Council comment that this modification needs updating due to the submission of the LTP.</p>	<p>Agreed. A minor change to the wording would correct and update the plan. It would not be a substantive change and it is not necessary to advertise it as a further proposed modification.</p> <p>Recommendation: Second Deposit Draft Local Plan incorporating the Proposed Modifications March 2006, page 65, para 5.19, first sentence delete: 'provisional' and insert 'submitted'.</p>
PM5.5 - Para 5.24	
<p>Objection</p> <p>276/PM/1 Grove Parish Council consider that the latter part of paragraph 5.24 is not consistent with PM8.24 and PM8.29 and should be reworded.</p>	<p>Agreed. A minor change to the wording would make the Proposed Modifications consistent. This is not a substantive change and it is not necessary to advertise it as a further proposed modification.</p> <p>Recommendation: Second Deposit Draft Local Plan incorporating the Proposed Modifications March 2006, page 67 para 5.24 amend final sentence to read 'The Council will also require the development to fund the construction of a new road from the strategic housing site west of Grove to join the A338 north of Grove to be started early in the second phase of development and completed before any more than 1500 dwellings in total have been built on the site.'</p>
PM5.17 and PM 5.18 – Policy TR9 Lorries and Roadside Services	
<p>Support</p> <p>333/PM/1 Mr J Bray supports the clearer definition of roadside facilities.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
PM 7.3 – Para 7.27 – The Need for Ecological Appraisals	
<p>Support</p> <p>403/PM/2 Environment Agency</p>	<p>Noted</p>

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Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
PM8.8 - Table 8.2	
<p>815/1 Gloucestershire County Council comments that it would be clearer if the second column were changed to read 'Dwellings constructed 31/3/96 – 31/3/2005 and sites with planning permission at 31/3/05.</p>	<p>It is accepted that the heading to the column could be clearer and it would be a minor change that would not need to be advertised as a further proposed modification.</p> <p>Recommendation: Page 127 of the second deposit plan incorporating the proposed modifications, table 8.2 column 2: amend to read "Dwellings built since 01.04.96 and dwellings permitted at 01.04.05".</p>
PM8.14, PM8.15 & PM8.16 – Policy H3 iv) – Housing on Land South of the A420 (both sides of Tilbury Lane)	
<p>Support</p> <p>291/PM/2-6 University of Oxford</p> <p>Objection</p> <p>943/PM/2-5 Mr Allsworth, 961/PM/1 Mr Amor, 924/PM/1 Mr Asker, 925/PM/1 Mr Aspel, 981/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Barrett, 983/PM/1 E Beaves, 964/PM/1 Miss J Bolder & Mr Coates, 999/PM/1 Mr Bowell, 920/PM/1 Mrs Bragg, 922/PM/1 Mr Bragg, 956/PM/1 Mr Bunt, 919/PM/1 Mrs Byford, 912/PM/2-5 N J Campo, 913/PM/2-5 V Campo, 914/PM/1-4 Z Campo, 968/PM/1 A Carter, 935/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Cartwright, 985/PM/1 Mr Carver, 917/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Crampton, 285/PM/1 Cumnor Parish Council, 966/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Durham, 406/PM/2-5 Mrs Dyson, 962/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Edwards, 901/PM/2-5 M Elliott, 955/PM/1 M Erskine, 938/PM/1 M R Evans, 900/PM/1 Dr P Fisher, 930/PM/1 A Ford, 947/PM/2-5 T Foster, 948/PM/1 Mrs Gardner, 931/PM/1 G Goble, 987/PM/1 Cllr J Godden, 958/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Gordon, 942/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Griffiths, 995/PM/2-5 Mr & Mrs Hall, 954/PM/2-5 Mr Harper-Smith, 934/PM/1 M Harris, 989/PM/2-5 Mrs Hayle, 1000/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Hayward, 997/PM/1 Hazel Road Kids, 973/PM/1 A Herbert, 908/PM/1 M Holroyd, 929/PM/1 S Harper, 936/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Jackson, 909/PM/1 Mr Jones, 959/PM/1 T Lee & D Rescarle, 960/PM/1 L M & V E Lee, 967/PM/1 H Millar & J McGrath, 957/PM/1 P Milton, 972/PM/1 M G & J A Maloney, 963/PM/1 Mr & Mrs P Maloney, 932/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Moore, 926/PM/1 Mr J Murphy, 928/PM/1 I & H Naqib, 949/PM/2-5 M Nash, 939/PM/1 Dr M Neil, 992/PM/1 K Neller, 945/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Newport, 965/PM/1 M Nicks, 107/PM/1-3 North Hinksey Parish Council, 998/PM/1 Mrs O'Dell, 940/PM/1 Mr & Mrs O'Donoghue, 982/PM/1 G Ogle, 907/PM/2-5 A O'Leary, 915/PM/1 K O'Rourke, 911/PM/1 Oxford Association of Hotels & Guest Houses, 933/PM/1 C Pearson, 952/PM/1-4 S & R Pickles, 988/PM/1-5 J Porter, 977/PM/1 A Poynter, 980/PM/1 A & P Pritchard, 916/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Puffett, 937/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Purbrick, 976/PM/1 E Rankin, 903/PM/1-3 Dr A Reeve, 991/PM/1 Mrs R Reid, 986/PM/1 Mrs Rivers, 984/PM/1 B Roberts, 923/PM/1 M G & J M Roberts, 970/PM/1 C Ross, 944/PM/1-3, C & S R Ryde, 941/PM/1</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Many of the objections cover matters that the Inspector considered in detail at the local plan inquiry and reported in his report, e.g. the sustainability of the site, the landscape and visual contexts of the site and whether the site should continue to be safeguarded (paras 8.7.11-8.7.18). Evidence submitted by the Council to the inquiry confirmed that major service providers had no objections to the principle of development on the H3 Botley sites. These major service providers have been reconsulted following the Inspector's recommendation to allocate the Botley sites. None objects to the principle of development subject to further comment on the details of the housing schemes. Many of the objections relate to detailed concerns that will be examined in more detail at the planning application stage.</p> <p>The objections have been listed in the left hand column. In order to structure the Council's response, a number of issue headings have been set down below.</p>

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<p>V Sadler, 921/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Seggin, 918/PM/1 G Sheppard, 946/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Smith, 978/PM/1 D Stevens, 927/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Sutherland, 902/PM/2-5 Dr P Sutton, 979/PM/1 M Swain, 993/PM/1 C Tasker, 975/PM/1-3 P & L Terry, 910/PM/1 Tilbury Lane Neighbourhood Watch, 950/PM/2-5 Mr & Mrs Trafford, 904/PM/2-5 S Waite & K Alderson, 990/PM/1 J & M Walker, 905/PM/1-3 Mr & Mrs Webb, 951/PM/1 JD Webb, 996/PM/1 K & T Weston, 969/PM/1 Mr & Mrs Woodley, 971/PM/1 C Wortham, 994/PM/1 J Wright, 974/PM/1 Mrs B E Young made the following objections:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land should remain safeguarded; • It is not a sustainable location for housing; • Development will increase congestion on Botley Road/A34/A420; • Modification is a bad compromise destroying safeguarded land because land in Grove can't be developed as quickly; • No evidence that alternative sites will not be developed in time; • Land not needed as other areas of Cumnor/Botley are already to be developed (Timbmet); • There has been no proper risk assessment; • Agricultural land will be lost; • Biodiversity and local wildlife will be harmed; • It will lead to flooding; • Sewage system is not adequate; • Schools/nurseries do not have enough places; • Health provision is already inadequate; • Car parking in the area is already at capacity; • Development will increase local traffic/parking problems and decrease road safety/lead to more accidents; • Current residents' quality of life will be reduced; • New development will reduce the value of existing houses; • High density housing will be out of character with the area; • Development will affect Human Rights via loss of views; • Antisocial behaviour and crime will increase; • Mixing private and local authority housing will cause problems; • New houses will be affected by overhead power lines; • Effect on OAP housing in Seacourt Road; • Unsuitable cycle/pedestrian access arrangements; • Hazel Road is unsuitable for access; • No sports facilities for children; • Loss of greenfield land; • Health and safety risks; • Loss of Green Belt; • Land should be a nature reserve; • Effect on water table; • Loss of allotments; • Increase in noise, particularly during construction, will disturb residents; • Public transport is not adequate; • Using Hazel Road, Seacourt Road, Poplar Road 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarded Land: This land has never been part of the Green Belt. Its location between the built-up area and the edge of the Green Belt meant that it was safeguarded for future development to be released for development through the development plan process at the appropriate time. The Inspector has taken the view that this site should now be released for development (para 8.7.17). • Sustainability: In his report the Inspector accepts that this is a sustainable site (para 8.7.11) and accordingly, it can be allocated. • Land Supply: One of the reasons the Inspector allocated the site was because he concluded that more land needed to be identified to meet the strategic housing requirement. In coming to this conclusion the Inspector sets out, principally in paras 8.2.6, 8.2.7 and 8.2.8, his reasoning with regard to the development of these sites and other sites such as Grove. Further comment with regard to this matter is set out in the Council's response to PM3.8 on policy GS5. • Highways: The County Surveyor accepts that there is no objection to the principle of 150 dwellings on the site subject to a transport assessment and technical and safety audits. These assessments and audits would, in total, cover technical issues with respect to the design of the junction and access issues in the wider area. When a more detailed housing scheme has been prepared it will be possible to more critically assess how the site's footpaths and cycle paths should link to the surrounding area. It is not currently proposed that there would be any vehicular access to the site from Hazel Road, Seacourt Road, Poplar Road or Elms Road. Vehicular access will be along Fogwell Road. During the construction phase there will be some disturbance and the Council will use its planning and other powers to ensure that this is kept to a minimum and that no construction work takes place outside agreed times. • Local Infrastructure: In commenting on the site's sustainability, the Inspector noted its proximity to a range of services and facilities (para 8.7.12). As referred to above, none of the major service providers has an 'in principle' objection to the development. One of the purposes of the planning system is to enable those responsible for the provision of infrastructure and facilities to plan on the basis of a clear picture of development in the community. Where new infrastructure is required, local plan policy DC8 seeks to ensure the coordination of its provision with the needs arising from the development. • Pylons: National Grid, which is responsible for these overhead power lines, has commented that the balance of scientific evidence is against the electric and magnetic fields from the power lines resulting in adverse health impact although it recognises that there are concerns about this issue. The Council's Environmental Health Officers do not disagree with this view. The proposed

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<p>or Elms Road will cause problems;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alley off Hazel Road is not suitable for pedestrian or cycle access; • Development will lead to short cutting along existing roads; • Taxis will drop off fares at alley late at night; • Hazel Road will be used as a car park; • Hazel Road will not be safe for children to play in; • Flooding of roads will increase; • Development should be kept to the Fogwell Road site of Tilbury Lane; • Vandal proof fencing will be needed between the development and existing housing; • Notification of this proposed development to local residents was unsatisfactory. 	<p>housing is the same distance from these power lines as the Fogwell Road housing estate to the west.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foul and Surface Water Drainage and Water Supply: These matters are all the responsibility of Thames Water. As referred to above, Thames Water has no "in principle" objection although together with the Environment Agency it will investigate these matters in more detail at the planning application stage. The identification of these sites in the local plan will enable Thames Water to plan on the basis of a clear picture of development in the community. • Parking: The County Council, as the Highway Authority has published parking standards which the Council will apply to the new development. Indiscriminate parking is always a possibility in the neighbourhood but it would be unreasonable to require the new site's parking to be in excess of the County Council's standards. • Density: A development of 150 dwellings on this site is approximately 40 dwellings to the hectare. This is consistent with the advice in Government guidance (PPG3) and with policy H14. • Character of Area: In his report the Inspector took into account many factors, including the existing character of the site and the surrounding area and the agricultural quality of the land (para 8.7.13-15) and his recommendation to allocate the site was a balanced view of all these factors. The Inspector concluded that the land on both sides of Tilbury Lane was required to help meet the strategic housing requirement. The Government believes it is important to create inclusive communities. It does not accept that different types of housing and tenures make bad neighbours. The Local Plan's policies need to provide dwellings that will meet the needs of existing and future residents. Other local plan policies seek a high standard of design which will have regard to the existing character of the area and neighbouring amenities and the provision of landscaping and open space for outdoor play and informal recreation. • Crime: As referred to above, the development will be designed to a high standard, and the Council has a policy which seeks to reduce crime through careful design (DC3). • Wildlife: The land is not identified as having any special nature conservation value and consultation with the County Ecologist has not revealed anything that would preclude development. Policy NE1 can require an ecological appraisal to be carried out if necessary. • Water Table: The Environment Agency notes that the site lies above a minor aquifer, but has no "in principle" objection to the development. A flood risk assessment will be required with any planning permission. • House Values: The end result of the local plan includes provision for additional development in the most sustainable way. How new development may or may not affect property values is not a material consideration in the allocation of land for housing. • Scheme Design: The Inspector's recommendation to allocate this site establishes the principle of housing. The details of the development will be the subject of public comment when the planning application is submitted to the Council.

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Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
<p>Objection to H3 iv) allocation boundary</p> <p>291/PM/1 University of Oxford objects that the north-eastern boundary of the allocated land is not consistent with the northern most extent of the existing housing in Hazel Road to the east of the site, as recommended in the Inspector's report (para 8.7.18).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Rights: As referred to above, the Inspector's recommendation to allocate the site was a balanced view having taken into account all the factors involved. The landscape surrounding the settlement was one of the factors considered. The Local Plan has been prepared accordingly to the legal context. Notification: In the earlier stages of the Local Plan's preparation, no housing development was proposed on this site. It is only as a result of the Inspector's recommendations that the site is now allocated. The feelings of the local residents that such a significant change should not take place at such a late stage in the plan making process are recognised. However, the publication of the proposed modifications was an opportunity to inform the public of this change to the Local Plan in accordance with the appropriate legal procedures. <p>Recommendation: No change.</p> <p>In allocating this land the Inspector did refer to consistency with the northern most extent of the existing housing. However, the Inspector also explained that this land should be released (from its safeguarded status) to meet housing needs (Report para 8.217). The north-eastern boundary of the allocated land is exactly the same as the former boundary of the safeguarded land and the boundary of the Green Belt. To change the allocation as the objector suggests would encroach on land currently designated as Green Belt. As the Inspector did not recommend that land should be released from the Green Belt, it is considered that the Inspector's recommendations have been properly interpreted.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change</p>
PM8.14, PM8.15 & PM8.16 – Policy H3 v) – Land south of Lime Road	
<p>Support</p> <p>137/PM/2-5 Bovis Homes</p> <p>Objection</p> <p>943/PM/1 G Allsworth, 956/1 D Bunt, 912/2-5 N J Campo, 913/2-5 V Campo, 914/2-5 Z Campo, 406/2-5 Mrs S Dyson, 901/2-5 M Elliott, 955/1 M Erskine, 900/1 Dr P Fisher, 947/2-5 T Foster, 987/1 Cllr J Godden, 985/2-5 Mr & Mrs Hall, 954/2-5 P Harper-Smith, 989/2-5 Mrs M Hayle, 949/2-5 M Nash, 939/1 & 2 Dr M Neil, 992/2-5 K Neller, 107/1-3 North Hinksey Parish Council, 907/2-5 A O'Leary, 988/1 J Porter, 977/1 A & M Poynter, 903/1-3 Dr A Reeve, 944/1 C & S Ryde, 941/1 V Sader, 902/2-5 Dr P Sutton, 950/1 C & L Trafford, 904/2-5 S Waite & K Alderson, 905/1-3 Mr & Mrs Webb, 970/1 & 2 C Wortham</p> <p>Objections</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>These objectors made representations to the proposed modifications which referred to both the Lime Road and Tilbury Lane sites. Technically, therefore, they made objections to the Lime Road site. However, having looked at these objections in detail, it is clear that none of these objections is to the allocation at Lime Road. Their objections to the Tilbury Lane site are considered in the section above.</p> <p>Recommendation: To note that these objections have been addressed in the section dealing with H3 iv) above.</p>

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<p>987/PM/1 Cllr J Godden, 939/PM/1-2 Dr M Neil, 107/PM/1-3 North Hinksey Parish Council object to the allocation at Lime Road for the reasons which are summarised below;</p> <p>Highways: The site is at the inner end of a suburban residential estate & development could have an adverse effect on the existing pleasant residential roads which are inadequate to support such a large number of additional houses.</p> <p>Local Facilities / Infrastructure: Botley is not a sustainable area for development in terms of local facilities, which are already stretched and an increase in housing would over- burden them.</p> <p>Foul Drainage: The existing foul drainage infrastructure is already under pressure in the Botley area. The system will be further stretched with the additional dwellings.</p> <p>Surface Water: The drainage infrastructure is already under pressure in the Botley area. The system will be further stretched with the additional dwellings especially after heavy rain.</p> <p>Bridle Path: Concern that the proposed development would cause the loss of the bridle path which links to Lime Road.</p> <p>Parking: There are already parking problems on the roads near the proposed development. It will be important that the proposed development includes adequate off-street parking.</p> <p>Density: The proposed density of the development (total 130 dwellings) is considered to be excessive.</p> <p>Landscape: The Inspector noted that the hedgerows and woodlands provided visual containment which screened the site to the west. However, some of these trees have</p>	<p>Highways: Oxfordshire County Council's 'Residential Road Design Guide' notes that a major access road (a type 3 road) is one of the principal access roads into a neighbourhood. A minor access road (type 4) may take access from a type 3 road and, as a loop, may serve up to 200 dwellings. The guide also prescribes the design of the junction of the two roads (by reference to the 'X' & 'Y' distances). The objector's evidence to the local plan inquiry included a drawing which showed the proposed access arrangements to the site. Lime Road is a major access road (type 3) and the minor access road into the site is a type 4 road. The objector's access arrangements comply with the guidance given in the County Council's guide.</p> <p>Local Facilities/Infrastructure: In commenting on the site's sustainability, the Inspector noted its proximity to a range of services and facilities (para 8.7.4). The Council is not the providing agency for these services but, by identifying the site in the local plan, the various agencies will be able to plan on the basis of a clear picture of development in the community. There have been no objections in principle from the service providers to housing development on this site.</p> <p>Foul and Surface Water Drainage: Thames Water has a legal duty to receive and treat the foul drainage in its area and to provide surface water drainage. The identification of the site in the local plan will enable Thames Water to plan on the basis of a clear picture of development in the community. There has been no objection from Thames Water to the principle of 130 dwellings on this site.</p> <p>Bridle Path: A public bridleway runs along the north western boundary of the site. This bridle way lies outside the site and will not be lost when the site is developed.</p> <p>Parking: The County Council, as the Highway Authority has published parking standards which the Council will apply to new development.</p> <p>Density: Government guidance (PPG3) on residential densities encourages development at between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare. The objector's evidence to the local plan inquiry explains that the site has an area of some 3.8 ha and that, in line with the government advice, it would yield between 160 -200 dwellings. However, given the site's irregular shape and the need to provide a landscaped context, the objectors proposed a site capacity of 130 dwellings. This is the figure that the Inspector has chosen. It represents a density of just over 34 dwellings per hectare.</p> <p>Landscape: The Council's Arboricultural Officer visited the site in mid 2003 and again following the reports that some of the trees were being felled. In 2003 he reported that none of the trees was worthy of a Tree Preservation Orders and recommended to the planners that the outer fringe of growth around the site should be</p>

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<p>been cut down. The proposed development should be conditioned to ensure that the associated trees are preserved.</p> <p>Consultation: Objection on the basis that the proposal for the development has been made without proper consultation.</p>	<p>left. At a recent visit, he observed that a lot of activity had been going on but that no trees had been felled that he would have objected to and the outer row of trees had been retained. When the detailed proposals for the site's development are submitted, the Council will require a landscaping scheme to be submitted as part of the application.</p> <p>Consultation: The proposed modification allocating the site has been made following the Inspector's recommendation. The publication of the proposed modifications has been carried out in accordance with the appropriate legislation. The Council is satisfied that it followed the legally required procedures.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>

PM8.17 – 8.19 - Policy H4 – Housing Sites in Faringdon

<p>The Former Nursery</p> <p>882/1 Bernadette Disborough objects to development as the existing Folly Park with its beautiful wild flowers, birds, badgers and muntjacs will become a walk through area with litter and noise. It will lose its beauty, tranquillity and wildlife. The new residents will not work in Faringdon, there is poor public transport, the doctors surgery is full and water pressure is poor. More business units are not needed as half the existing ones are empty and people don't want to lose the existing cricket ground. The Council should tidy up the entrance to Faringdon which is unwelcoming.</p> <p>Land at Winslow and Coxwell House</p> <p>339/1 Mr & Mrs Knapp support the allocation of land at Winslow and Coxwell House as a residential site and its inclusion within the development boundary of the town. It will provide a sustainable urban extension to the town.</p>	<p>The Inspector considered that the major extension to Folly Park would significantly improve the availability of public open space and protect the environmental and ecological interest of the area for future generations. He also considered that the part of the site identified for employment development was suitable for that use and that additional land would help arrest the town's relative economic decline and retain its role as a service centre. He also considered the relocation of the cricket ground should result in a material enhancement of local sporting facilities. Although people walk on the land allocated for housing and leisure use there is no public right of access except the permissive path from Nursery View to the existing Folly Park.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
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PM8.20-8.32 – Policy H5 – Housing West of Grove

<p>PM 8.20 Para 8.23</p> <p>Support</p> <p>397/PM/4 Persimmon Strategic Land (Western) and 291/PM/1 University of Oxford support PM 8.20</p> <p>PM8.23 Para 8.29</p> <p>Support</p> <p>334/PM/1 Crown Technology and 406/PM/1 Grove 2000 plc support PM 8.23</p> <p>Objection</p> <p>1001/PM/1 Grove RFC consider the proposed modification is in contradiction with policies DC8; DC9; NE10; H9; CF1; L1; L3; L13 and to the intentions behind other relevant</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>The local plan Inspector considered that the first phase of new housing at least ought to be served principally from the south to Mably Way. He concluded that the realignment of Denchworth</p>
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<p>paragraphs of the plan.</p> <p><u>PM8.24 Para 8.29a</u></p> <p>Support</p> <p>397/PM/6 Persimmon Strategic Land (Western) support PM 8.24</p> <p>Objection</p> <p>276/PM/1 Grove Parish Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask that attractiveness is defined in the first sentence. • what improvements are envisaged to the Mably Way /A338 junction/roundabout because they have concerns on the traffic management and the ability to improve access to this junction. 	<p>Road south or a suitable alternative road, as suggested in the Council's pre-inquiry change to para 8.29, to facilitate a safe and satisfactory main vehicular access into the site from Mably Way would be an essential component of the first phase of development, rather than any increased use of Newlands Drive or Cane Lane. The Inspector did not recommend the specific line that has been proposed by the developers and other options can be considered.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>This is clarified in paragraph 3.3 of the SPG for the site which makes it clear that the attractiveness of the link from Grove to Mably Way to vehicular traffic will help to reduce the tendency for traffic to access the site through Grove village.</p> <p>The precise improvements to be carried out are too detailed for the local plan. They will be considered in the Traffic Impact Assessment and form part of the planning application for the site. The Inspector fully endorsed the need to increase the attractiveness of the southern link to the A338 via Mably Way but did not consider it necessary to specify the exact nature of such improvements. There is no reason to disagree with the Inspector's recommendation.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change</p>
<p><u>PM8.25 Para 8.33</u></p> <p>Support</p> <p>397/PM/1 Persimmon Strategic Land (Western) supports the deletion of the requirement for the payment of commuted sums for 25 years.</p> <p>Objection</p> <p>397/PM/2 Persimmon Strategic Land (Western) objects to the requirement that "in the case of outdoor playing space this may be required in perpetuity".</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>See response to Rep No 1004/PM/1 under the General Policies for Development Section of this schedule.</p>
<p><u>PM8.26 Para 8.33</u></p> <p>Support</p> <p>397/PM/5 Persimmon Strategic Land (Western) support PM 8.26</p> <p><u>PM8.29 – Policy H5 – Strategic Housing Site West of Grove</u></p>	<p>Noted</p>

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Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
<p>Objection</p> <p>397/PM/3 Persimmon Strategic Land (Western) object as they do not consider that policy H5 needs to refer to the commencement date for the road but just the deadline by which it must be completed. They consider there are no benefits in specifying an early start date if completion is not required until 1,500 dwellings are built. Practically, this means the road would be built in its entirety and building it in phases will only add to disruption during construction. For practical purposes the road is likely to be built in one phase, which will be determined by the planning and construction programme, and is more properly dealt with in the Environmental Statement. This might determine that the road should be built early for other reasons but the only policy requirement should be when the road is completed. The policy should be amended to read “xiv) A new road from the site to the A338 North of Grove to be completed before any more than 1,500 dwellings in total have been built on the site.”</p> <p>684/PM/2 Maurice & Portia Hyde reiterate their opposition to the new road from Mably Way to the A417 east of Wantage.</p> <p>PM8.32</p> <p>Objection</p> <p>317/PM/7 Persimmon Strategic Land (Western) object because they do not consider it reasonable to seek contributions towards an unquantified, unplanned and uncosted road until there is a defined timed, published route and programme in place.</p> <p>1007/PM/1 Mr Wooster in commenting on the proposed modifications raises the following points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Local Plan does not include a whole site sustainability plan for the UKAEA Harwell site, and considers it important because the County Council has allocated another 1,400 dwellings to Grove. The area for future industrial expansion at UKAEA Harwell does not need the large area north, about 47 hectares. Will the Council explain the use of the other brownfield sites too. 	<p>The Local Plan Inspector felt that in the interests of clarity and certainty for all concerned for the policy and text to also refer to a specific number of new units being built before the new road link from the site to the A338 is completed. He was essentially content that reversion to the revise deposit version of part xiv a) should ensure that the provision of the new road to the north of Grove would come at a time before the development of the new housing to the west creates significant highway safety or congestion issues within the existing built up area of the settlement or at the A338 junction to the east. He considered for a number of reasons that no more than 1,500 dwellings should be built before the new road is completed. This he concluded would place start of construction squarely within the (amended) second phase of development from 2011 to 2016. The start date ‘early in the second phase’ is not specific and flexible. Given the land ownership issues, and particularly the Common Land it is important that these issues are addressed as early as possible. There is therefore no reason to disagree with the Inspector’s recommendation which gives clarity to the plan by giving some flexibility to the start date but clearly setting out the timing for the completion of the road.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change See response to Rep No 684/PM/1 under the Transport Section of this Schedule.</p> <p>The Inspector was satisfied that the reference in para 5.23 to the hoped for relief road for Wantage is appropriate as a long term objective, providing that it remains a general reference to a scheme, rather than to any specific route or proposal. It was his view that it is reasonable in the circumstances to have a policy seeking contributions towards such provision as a result, even if construction does not commence within the plan period, so that all new development in the locality may be assessed for pro-rata contributions, in accordance with the levels of additional traffic to be generated. The Council has no reason to disagree with the Inspector’s recommendation.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change</p> <p>The Inspector gave consideration to the proposition put forward by Mr Wooster and other objectors that new housing should be located at empty employment sites outside settlements, such as the Harwell Campus rather than on the edge of Grove. He concluded ‘Overall I have no doubt that such a dispersed distribution of new housing would lead to a less sustainable pattern of development’ (para 3.1.10. of his report). The Council understand that UKAEA is intending to have an approach where the views of all the landowners of the site can be taken into account in producing a whole site approach for the future of the site. There is however, no reason for this local plan to contain a sustainability appraisal of that site.</p> <p>The County Council has not allocated another 1400 dwellings to Grove. The draft South East Plan proposes 3,400 dwellings at</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The planning windfall at St Mary's School will provide another massive development area within Wantage. <p>Mr Wooster shares the concerns of the 286 members of the public listed by BDOR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Flooding concerns 2 Respect for the canal 3 Connections between main roads and the development site 4 General increase in numbers and congestion 5 Access from the South East 6 Need to improve transport infrastructure 7 There being no economic linkage to where people might work 8 Concerns about supporting funding 9 Shared sports facilities 10 People having too many bad experiences left from the past when you have been involved with developers promising and then not delivering on the other two large housing estates built at Grove 11 There is a serious issue of lack of public trust in what is taking place <p>Concern that the SPG for Grove reads that the land slopes to the south, while the reverse is true.</p> <p>The Minister of State does not support opening more main line stations nor is any rail operator interested in this proposition.</p> <p>The planning officers have never visited Steventon to monitor the existing impact current rail operators have on this village and the likely impact additional traffic could have on the operation of two level crossing gates.</p> <p>Contributions towards off site strategic road building cannot be justified and within S106 contracts.</p> <p>Questions the lack of connection the major development at Grove will have to appropriate employment prospects, whilst water customers cannot be expected to pay for a road to connect Grove to the A34, there is no certainty of a reservoir its drainage or location. This project (at Grove)</p>	<p>Grove and Wantage over the next 20 years which is 900 more than the allocation on the airfield.</p> <p>The Inspector also had before him the concerns of Mr Wooster and his views on the potential of St Mary's School and UKAEA Harwell, as well as many alternative sites put forward by other objectors but he endorsed the allocation at Grove.</p> <p>Except for items 10 and 11 all these matters were considered in depth by the Inspector at the Local plan Inquiry.</p> <p>Only part of the site slopes to the south and the officers will be recommending changes to the draft SPG to reflect this.</p> <p>The Inspector recognised that the station was not a pre-requisite of the H5 allocation scheme proceeding, as Grove is a sustainable location in its own right. The Inspector was fully aware of the uncertainty surrounding the re-opening of the station but recognised that the allocation of the land for the station does not require or assume that it will be completed within the plan period to 2011. Similar conclusions were reached by the Panel at the EiP into the Oxfordshire Structure Plan 2016.</p> <p>No technical reasons have been raised either by Network Rail or the County Council as Highway Authority to the allocation of land for the station and any potential impacts that it may have on these level crossings. It is unlikely that the opening of Grove Station would result in an increase in the number of trains because the line is already operating at capacity.</p> <p>The Inspector confirmed the transport improvement required in policy H5. Notably the Inspector confirmed that it was reasonable in the circumstances to have a policy requiring a link road to the A338 north of Grove and seeking contributions towards a relief road scheme for Wantage. The Inspector in his report at para 8.11.7 stated "In conclusion I accept the Council's judgement that the proposed urban extension to the west of Grove is in a sustainable location in PPG3 terms. I also agree with the EIP Panel that major housing development here would help serve the needs of the expanding employment base in southern Oxfordshire, eg at H/C, MP and Didcot."</p>

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<p>questions both the validity of sustainability credentials along with the survey methodology used to select this site for development in the first instance, rather than the abundant brownfield land available.</p> <p>The amount of flood water from a large Grove development is of no use to a canal, the land drains in the opposite direction towards the railway and Hanney village.</p>	<p>The Inspector having had considerable evidence put before him at the Inquiry about flooding, relating to both on site and off site drainage concerns considered at para 8.12.4 of his report, 'that there need therefore be no objection in principle to the development of the site for new housing.'</p> <p>The Council has previously agreed with the Inspector's recommendations as they relate to Mr Wooster's comments and as all the matters raised by the objector now have been put to the Inspector there is no reason to amend the plan at this stage.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change</p>
Policies H5 and H5 – Proposed Housing at Didcot and Grove	
<p>299/1 GOSE comments that for these two large sites to be developed successfully the plans of other organisations will have to be aligned. This includes the Local Transport Plan recently submitted to the Department of Transport and GOSE which should be explicit about what it will do to enable the proposals to be fully implemented. All parties should work together in a pro-active and co-ordinated way.</p>	<p>Noted. The Integrated transport strategies should help ensure that all parties work together in a co-ordinated way.</p>
PM8.44 - Policy H8A – Housing on the Harwell/Chilton Campus	
<p>837/1 Ken Messer and 1006/1 Dilys Messer object to housing at Chilton Field as it is mainly greenfield, encroaches on the AONB and will be very visible from the Ridgeway. It is not advisable to bring so many houses close to a nuclear establishment, the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory and the Diamond Synchrotron. Would like to see a risk assessment or health and safety report.</p>	<p>The Inspector considered that providing the eastern part of the site is retained as open space the development would be no more harmful to the landscape of the AONB than the original scheme and from the Ridgeway would be seen against the back drop of the extensive buildings on the Harwell Campus. Accordingly he endorsed the revised siting of the scheme proposed in the second deposit plan. An Environmental Impact Assessment for landscape impact is being carried out as part of the current planning application. Moving the allocation further south from that in the adopted and first deposit plans puts a greater distance between the housing and the Rutherford/Appleton Laboratories and the licenced nuclear site. The Health and Safety Executive has not objected to the application for 275 dwellings on the site.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change</p>
PM8.45 - Policy H8B – The Former Dow Agro Sciences Site in Letcombe Regis	
<p>166/1 Letcombe Manor Estate supports the allocation of the former Dow site for up to 100 dwellings in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation. It meets the minimum density requirement of 30 dwellings a hectare and is on previously developed land which could be re-used for employment purposes. The Inspector concluded that it would not harm the character or appearance of the settlement, the conservation area, listed buildings, AONB, the amenities of neighbours or the interests of highway safety.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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<p>284/1 Letcombe Regis Parish Council objects to policy H8B and its related text which should be removed from the Local Plan. It considers that the proposed modification for 100 dwellings has been based solely on the Inspector's recommendation and the Council has failed to take account of more detailed technical information.</p> <p>Traffic – When considering the application for 99 dwellings the County Council objected because the site could generate between 787 and 1049 trips a day. This is significantly more than the previous use which generated about 635 trips a day.</p> <p>Fallback position – The fear of the Inspector that the site would fall into decay is unlikely to materialise given the investment made to purchase it. If permission for 99 dwellings was refused there would be another application for a lower number or a residential care village.</p> <p>The site has been vacant for a number of years and a legal position could be taken that the employment use has been abandoned. The buildings do not lend themselves easily to an alternative or more intensive business use. In any application to redevelop the site for business use matters such as operational practices, job numbers and traffic generation could be controlled so as not to cause undue harm. The Inspector's concern that the site could be used for a more intensive employment use is unlikely to materialise.</p> <p>Landscape – The Inspector noted that the site was not prominent within the AONB because of the 'berm' along the southern boundary. However, the applicants propose to remove the 'berm'. The AONB officer objected to the application for 99 dwellings and its likely impact on the AONB was one of the reasons for refusal.</p> <p>The Call In – The Inspector noted that the application for 44 dwellings was called in mainly because of the low density proposed. This is not strictly the case as the call in letter refers to a number of issues.</p> <p>Perceived benefits – The Inspector notes that a large scheme would be more likely to support local facilities, but that additional residents might not prevent further losses, let alone reverse recent trends. The Parish Council considers the retention of open spaces would exist whether</p>	<p>The Council carefully considered the Inspector's recommendation and the concerns of the Parish Council before taking its decision. Most of the points made by the Parish Council were fully debated by members in March when decisions were taken on whether to accept the Inspector's recommendation.</p> <p>During the local plan inquiry the County Council as highway authority was sent the objector's traffic assessment relating to some 100 dwellings on the former Dow site. The County Council accepted the evidence was sound and although there were concerns about the level of growth proposed in a small village with very few services and facilities no objections were made by the County on transport grounds. In response to the subsequent application for 99 dwellings an objection was lodged on transport grounds. When the County Council was asked to clarify its position it considered that a B1 use could generate some 1547 trips a day - significantly more than 100 dwellings, and that even if the business traffic was halved the difference between it and the trips that could be generated from 100 houses would not be of such significance that a refusal could be confidently sustained. The Highway Authority advised they would not object to the allocation of up to 100 dwellings in a letter dated 10 March 2006.</p> <p>The Council did not base its decision on whether to accept the Inspector's recommendation of up to 100 dwellings on a belief that the site would otherwise fall into decay. An application for a residential care village has now been made, however the proposed allocation of the site for housing development should be considered on its own merits.</p> <p>The site has been vacant for about four years, but its use has not been abandoned. Further advice will be given on this at the meeting. In view of the existing buildings on the site and their previous use the Council considered that it would not be possible to refuse an application for a well designed office scheme of about 8,000 square metres. On a floorspace for floorspace replacement basis a requirement to restrict job numbers and traffic generation on the site could not be justified. It may also be possible to refurbish and adapt the existing buildings for employment use without the need for planning permission.</p> <p>The retention or removal of the berm is a detailed matter that could be resolved at the planning application stage. Its retention as part of a landscaping scheme could be required and would not preclude the development of 100 houses on the site.</p> <p>It is accepted that the call in related to a number of matters. However, in relation to the density issue, after careful consideration, the Inspector concluded the site would be suitable and appropriate for a well designed housing scheme at the PPG3 minimum density of 30 dwellings a hectare.</p> <p>The Inspector and the Council did not base their decisions solely on the perceived benefits referred to by the Parish Council. The Inspector also took into consideration the benefits of: resolving the future of a vacant site and the removal of a number of unsightly structures through a redevelopment that makes a positive contribution to the conservation area, the AONB and the</p>

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<p>this development went ahead or not and the provision of additional affordable housing should not over-ride the principle of developing at a smaller scale.</p> <p>Historic Buildings – The Inspector considered the Manor House and stables were not worthy of retention, but he did not have available to him documents from Dow suggesting that these buildings make a positive contribution to the conservation area and should be retained.</p> <p>The Appeal – Allocating the site for 99 dwellings would destroy the Council’s chance of successfully arguing against the development, possibly to such an extent that costs would be claimed by the appellants.</p>	<p>character of the village as a whole; making the best use of previously developed land; retaining the Lodge; contributions to improving local bus services and cycling and walking links to Wantage; and identifying a site that could make an early contribution to the dwellings requirement in the district. The Council took into these factors into account when reaching its decision and also the Inspector’s view that achieving the PPG3 minimum density need not be harmful to the character or appearance of the settlement, the conservation area, the AONB, the setting of listed buildings, the amenities of neighbours and the interests of highway safety.</p> <p>The Manor House and stables are not listed buildings. A scheme for 100 dwellings could be developed to incorporate these buildings. It is a detailed matter that does not preclude an allocation for 100 dwellings on the site.</p> <p>If the residential care village is permitted the applicants have stated that this appeal will be withdrawn. If the appeal goes ahead and if the Local Plan is adopted with policy H8B as proposed to be modified, the Council would alter its reasons for refusal, making an award of costs against it unlikely.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>
PM8.47 – 8.48 - Policy H10 – Development in the Larger Villages	
<p>342/1 DPDS Consulting supports the increase from 9 to 15 dwellings and the deletion of criterion i) as both will allow best use to be made of previously developed and unused land.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
PM8.50 – 8.51 - Policy H11 – Development in the Smaller Villages	
<p>342/2 DPDS and 3 Consulting supports the increase from 1 or 2 dwellings to 4.</p> <p>342/7 and 8 DPDS Consulting objects to all the dwellings in smaller villages having to be small dwellings, which according to the definition in policy H15 would have one or two bedrooms. This is inflexible, could have design implications where the site is surrounded by larger properties and may not give choice where there are already a good number of such properties. It is inconsistent that four dwellings in an H10 village do not have to be small, but they all do in an H11 village. Both large and small dwellings could support the social and economic well-being of these villages. The policy could lead to land and buildings remaining unused. It is an over complicated interference in the housing market and expecting all dwellings to be of one type is unreasonable. Even without the reference to ‘small’ dwellings there may be circumstances where small dwellings would be provided. Rather than defining ‘small’ in this context it would be preferable to delete the references to small in paragraph 8.58 and policy H11 and the sentence in 8.58 referring to it being consistent with the housing needs survey.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>In the context of this policy small need not necessarily mean having one or two bedrooms. The Inspector considered that limiting a site to one or two dwellings would tend to encourage the provision of large detached properties when the site was capable of taking more and this would not meet the need for smaller units. He considered the approach to the size of dwellings in this context should take account of site specific factors including comparability with nearby properties. It is considered that further advice could be given in the lower case text to say that in the context of this policy ‘small dwellings’ will include up to three bedroom properties. This change is a minor clarification which is not necessary to advertise as a further proposed modification.</p> <p>Recommendation: Page 155 of the second deposit plan incorporating the proposed modifications, paragraph 8.58: change the sentence starting “This is consistent with” to read “In the context of this policy schemes may include dwellings which are not overly large of up to three bedrooms where this is consistent with the objective of</p>

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widening housing opportunity and choice”.	
PM8.52 – 8.54 - Policy H12 – Development Elsewhere	
<p>342/4 DPDS Consulting supports allowing 1 or 2 dwellings within the built-up areas of the smallest villages.</p> <p>342/9 and 10 DPDS Consulting objects to the inclusion of the word ‘small’ in the policy and supporting text for the reasons given in relation to their objection to policy H11 above.</p> <p>815/4 Gloucestershire County Council note a spelling mistake in ‘equestrian’.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>See response to objection 342/7 and 8 to policy H11 above.</p> <p>Noted. This will be corrected.</p>
PM8.55 – 8.59 - Policy H15 – Widening Housing Opportunity	
<p>342/5 and 6 DPDS Consulting supports the replacement of ‘requirement’ with ‘expectation’ and the deletion of the proposed removal of permitted development rights.</p> <p>342/11 DPDS Consulting objects to setting the threshold for small dwellings with 1 or 2 bedrooms on sites as small as 5 dwellings. The threshold should be increased to 10 dwellings. This would give a sufficient critical mass to be amenable to notions of dwelling mix.</p> <p>137/1 Bovis Homes the requirement for 50% of the dwellings to have two bedrooms or less is contrary to PPG3 which requires mixed and balanced communities and a choice of housing. Each application should be negotiated on a site by site basis at the planning application stage. The policy should be amended to accord with paras 9 and 10 of PPG3. Failing this the words ‘where appropriate’ should be inserted at the start of the criterion for small dwellings.</p> <p>299/2 GOSE comments that the policy and text do not clarify which settlements have a population greater or less than 3,000 people.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>In the interests of achieving one and two bedroom dwellings in villages (principally those in policy H10) the Council considered that a five dwelling threshold was appropriate. The objector has not put forward any sound evidence as to why this is not feasible.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p> <p>The policy is proposed to be modified so that the ‘requirement’ for 50% one and two bedroom properties is an ‘expectation’ which gives more flexibility. The policy will help to achieve mixed and balanced communities and is in accordance with the housing needs survey which shows a significant shortage of one and two bedroom dwellings in the coming years. The Inspector specifically supported the inclusion of a policy seeking that around 50% of new dwellings are of two bedrooms or less in principle. The rewording of the policy suggested by the objector does not accord with the Inspector’s recommendation and would not give certainty and clarity.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p> <p>This could be included as a footnote to the policy for information. As it is not a substantive change but a matter of fact it would not need advertising as a further proposed modification.</p> <p>Recommendation: Page 161 of the second deposit local plan as proposed to be modified, policy H15: add a footnote against ‘3,000’ to say ‘Those settlements with more than 3,000 people are Abingdon, Botley, Faringdon, Grove, Wantage and Kennington’.</p>
Policy H16 – Affordable Housing	
<p>299/3 GOSE comments that there is also a need for clarification with this policy regarding those settlements with more or less than 3000 people.</p>	<p>Recommendation: Add a footnote to policy H16 as for policy H15 above.</p>

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PM9.6 Para 9.36	
Objection	

CHAPTER 9 – COMMUNITY SERVICES & FACILITIES

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
<p>838/PM/1 Mono Consultants Ltd object to the retention of the first line in para 9.36 as a means of making clear the Council's attitude to telecommunications development on its own land. They point out that the Inspector in his report made it clear that policies relating to the Council's own land should not form part of a development plan. The policies should relate to all new development.</p>	<p>The Inspector in his report recommended the deletion of the whole of para 9.36. The remaining line in para 9.36 however is merely a statement of fact regarding the Council's corporate policy for telecommunication development on its own land and is retained for completeness.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>
PM9.7 Para 9.37	
<p>Objection</p> <p>838/PM/2 Mono Consultants Ltd object to the retention of the last line in para 9.37 to make clear how the Council will scrutinise proposals that site telecommunications equipment near children. They point out that the Inspector in his report recommended the deletion of the entire paragraph as PPG8 states that Councils should not impose their own precautionary policies and that para 9.35 adequately addresses the issue of health and sensitive locations.</p>	<p>The Inspector in his report did recommend the deletion of the whole of para 9.37. The remaining line in para 9.37 (now at the start of para 9.38) however usefully explains to Local Plan users that the Council will carefully scrutinise proposals for the installation of telecommunication equipment near children. It is not a precautionary policy but complements the health information set out in para 9.35.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>

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PM10.7 – Para 10.71 – Use of Canal to Alleviate Drainage Problems in the Area	
<p>Objection</p> <p>403/PM/3 Environment Agency object to using the canal to alleviate drainage problems because of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • drainage problems and increased risk of flooding elsewhere; • difficult maintenance and management of water levels and flood flows; • water levels having a negative effect on wildlife and ecology (wildlife and habitat on the banks and ecologically sensitive areas); • pollution from surface water run-off; • erosion of banks causing bank instability 	<p>The Inspector in his report considered the Environment Agency's objection to the statement that the Wilts and Berks Canal could be investigated to alleviate local drainage problems. He concluded that as the Environment Agency would be a formal consultee in relation to any such proposals it need not therefore be concerned that any potentially negative impact on the land drainage network, including ecology, pollution, erosion or flooding would or could be ignored. He therefore proposed para 10.71 of the local plan should remain.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change.</p>
PM10.8 – Paragraph 10.72a	
<p>403/PM/4 Environment Agency support this proposed modification.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
PM10.9 & PM10.10 – Development Close to the Canal will be expected to contribute to its restoration	
<p>403/PM/4, 403/PM/5 Environment Agency object to these proposed modifications for the same reasons as to 10/7 above.</p>	<p>See response to PM 10.7 above.</p>

CHAPTER 11 – THE ECONOMY OF THE VALE

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
PM 11.6 – Policy E4 Grove Technology Park	
<p>Support</p> <p>406/PM2 Grove 2000 plc supports the deletion of the restriction on single users occupying more than 2.4ha of Grove Technology Park from para 11.41 and Policy E4.</p>	Noted
PM 11.7 – Para 11.59 Harwell/Chilton Campus	
<p>Support</p> <p>398/PM2 UKAEA, CLRC, NRPB & MRC support the deletion of paragraph 11.59.</p>	Noted
PM 11.9 – Policy E7 Harwell/Chilton Campus	
<p>Support</p> <p>398/PM3 UKAEA, CLRC, NRPB & MRC support the deletion of criteria i) from policy E7.</p> <p>Objections</p> <p>406/PM1 Grove 2000 plc objects to the deletion of criteria i) from policy E7 on the basis that the removal of the 240,000m² floorspace limit would be unsafe and unsatisfactory given that the council has yet to conduct an Employment Land Review and there is no evidence base for making decisions about either the scale or location of employment sites.</p> <p>321/PM1 MEPC Ltd objects to the deletion of criteria i) from policy E7 on the basis that the removal of the 240,000m² floorspace limit would be unsafe and unsatisfactory given that the council has yet to conduct an Employment Land Review and there is no evidence base for making decisions about either the scale or location of employment sites.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>The Inspector was fully aware of the need to conduct an Employment Land Review but considered that he had sufficient evidence before him in relation to employment to make recommendations about the scale or location of employment sites. The modification is in accord with his recommendation and the council has no reason to disagree with the Inspector's recommendation. Recommendation: No change</p> <p>The Inspector was fully aware of the need to conduct an Employment Land Review but considered that he had sufficient evidence before him in relation to employment to make recommendations about the scale or location of employment sites. The modification is in accord with his recommendation and the council has no reason to disagree with the Inspector's recommendation. Recommendation: No change</p>
PM 11.17 – Policy E12 Main Single User Employment Sites at Grove and Wantage	
<p>Support</p> <p>406/PM3 Grove 2000 plc supports the deletion of policy E12 but considers that there is no case for inclusion of the employment sites in policy E10. Such sites should only be included under policy E10 following an Employment Land Review which the Council has yet to carry out.</p>	<p>The Inspector was fully aware of the need to conduct an Employment Land Review but considered that he had sufficient evidence before him in relation to employment to make recommendations about employment sites. The modification is in accord with his recommendation and the council has no reason to disagree with the Inspector's recommendation. Recommendation: No change</p>

Response to the Proposed Modifications to the Draft Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2011

Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group and Development Control Committee - 24th May 2006

CHAPTER 11 – THE ECONOMY OF THE VALE

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
PM 11.18 - Policy E14	
<p>Support</p> <p>321/PM3 MEPC Ltd supports the deletion of the phrase “AND NOT TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF THE WIDER AREA” from criteria i) as otherwise the policy would be unwieldy and impractical.</p> <p>398/PM1 UKAEA, CLRC, NRPB & MRC support the deletion of the final 10 words of criteria i) of policy E14.</p>	<p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p>
PM 11.20 – Policy E16 Steventon Storage Facility	
<p>Objection</p> <p>321/PM2 MEPC Ltd objects to the deletion of the reference to relocation of the storage facility to another site within policy E16, as it provides the policy basis for moving forward with the idea of relocation. It would be much harder to achieve this with no policy framework. Also the modification countenances the loss of 44,540m² of employment floorspace without the evidence from an Employment Land Review.</p>	<p>The Inspector was fully aware of the need to conduct an Employment Land Review but considered that he had sufficient evidence before him in relation to employment to make recommendations about employment sites. The modification is in accord with his recommendation and the council has no reason to disagree with the Inspector's recommendation.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change</p>
<u>Informal Comments</u>	
PM 11.7 – Policy E7 Harwell/Chilton Campus	
<p>479/PM1 The Highways Agency is concerned about the deletion of the floorspace limit from criteria i) of policy E7. However the Agency considers that these concerns may be better addressed as part of the development of the Local Development Framework. The Agency agrees that there is merit in expanding employment in this area but considers that work is needed to ensure that the campuses transport needs can be serviced in a sustainable manner and that there is a local balance between housing and employment. Phasing of one or both may be required.</p>	<p>The concerns of the Highways Agency are noted. The Agency will be consulted as part of the development of the Local Development Framework in relation to the Harwell/Chilton Campus.</p>

Summary of Representations	Observations and Recommendations of the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)
PM12.1 - Para 12.8	
<p>Objections</p> <p>1005/PM/1 W M Morrison Supermarkets Plc object that the wording does not correctly reflect the guidance in PPS6.</p>	<p>Agreed. A change to the wording of para 12.9 would update the plan. As it is merely a description of PPS advice it would not be a substantive change and it is not necessary to advertise it as a further proposed modification.</p> <p>Recommendation: Draft Local Plan March 2006, incorporating the Proposed Modifications, page 268, para 12.8 from the second sentence to end of paragraph substitute ‘ PPS6 emphasises the role of existing town centres, clearly stating that the government’s key objective for town centres is to promote the vitality and viability by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • planning for the growth and development of existing centres; and • promoting and enhancing existing centres, by focusing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all. <p>There are other Government objectives which need to be taken into account in the context of the key objective above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing consumer choice and allow genuine choice to met the needs of the entire community; • supporting efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity; and • improving accessibility, ensuring good access by a choice of means of transport.’
PM12.3 - Para 12.17	
<p>Objections</p> <p>1005/PM/2 W M Morrison Supermarkets Plc object as the paragraph should be updated to reflect the update of the 1996 retail study.</p>	<p>Agreed. A further change to the wording of para would correct and update the plan. As it is merely a factual description of the completion of the study it would not be a substantive change and it is not necessary to advertise it as a further proposed modification.</p> <p>Recommendation : Draft Local Plan incorporating the Proposed Modifications March 2006 page 271, para 2.17: delete the paragraph and replace with ‘In 2004 the Council commissioned Nathaniel Lichfield to carry out a review of their 1996 study. This, together with the recent town centre composition study, underpins the shopping policies in this chapter, as set out below.’</p>

Policies proposed to be modified where no objections have been received.

GS1
GS2
GS7
DC1
DC3
DC13
DC18
TR1
TR3
HE2
NE12
H1
H2
H6
H7
H9
H10
H16
H17
H23
H24
CF5
L1
L13
L19
E1
E4
E10
E11
E12
E15
E16
T4

The only policies where there are outstanding objections are:

GS5
DC8
TR1A
H3
H4
H5
H8A
H8B
H11
H12
H15
E7
E14

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANNING & COMMUNITY STRATEGY)
TO THE STRATEGIC AND LOCAL PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP AND THE DEVELOPMENT
CONTROL COMMITTEE
24 MAY 2006

Formal Consultation on the draft South East Plan Submitted to the Government

1.0 Introduction and Report Summary

1.1 The South East England Regional Assembly (SEERA) submitted the draft Plan for the South East to Government in March this year. It is the Regional Spatial Strategy for the South East and sets out how the region will develop to 2026. It follows extensive public consultation – this Council having commented on the emerging plan in March 2005 and the draft housing figures in October 2005. When approved, the South East Plan will replace current regional guidance (RPG9) and the Oxfordshire Structure Plan, and will become part of the development plan for the district. It will form the context within which the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) will be prepared and will be a significant material consideration when planning applications are determined. It will provide the context for other key regional strategies and incorporate the regional transport strategy. The closing date for comments is 23rd June 2006.

1.2 All Members of the Council have been sent an Executive summary of the draft South East Plan. Copies of all the documents submitted including the full draft plan, pre-submission consultation statement, sustainability appraisal, implementation plan and monitoring framework are available in the local services points in Abingdon and Wantage, the Council Office in Faringdon and the Members Lounge in Abbey House.

1.3 This report summarises the key features of the draft plan as they affect the Vale and outlines a proposed response from the Council. Section 4 of this report outlines and comments on the main features of the region-wide policies and section 5 focuses on the policies for Central Oxfordshire and the housing figures for the Vale of White Horse. A report on the South East Plan incorporating where appropriate the views of the Advisory Group and Development Control Committee will be considered by Executive on 2 June and Council on 14 June. Relevant sections of the draft Plan have been circulated to assistant and deputy directors and a workshop of officers held to help formulate the Council response.

1.4 The Key dates for the next steps of the South East Plan are as follows:

31 August 2006	-	the Panel publishes matters to be discussed at the Examination in Public and the participants to be invited
End of September	-	comments on matters and participants due
23 October	-	final list of matters and participants published
9 November	-	participants' statements to be submitted
28 November	-	Examination in Public starts
28 November-15 December	-	regional and general matters to be discussed
16 January 2007–30 March	-	sub-regional matters to be discussed
27 February – 9 March	-	Gatwick, London Fringe, Western Corridor, Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale sub regions to be discussed
End of July 2007	-	Panel Report due.

1.5 The contact officer for this report is Katie Barrett, Section Head (Planning Strategy) telephone number 01235 540339

2.0 **Recommendations**

2.1 *It is recommended that the Executive recommends Council to make representations on the South East Plan as set out in Sections 4 and 5 of this report.*

3.0 **Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies**

3.1 This report complies with the Council's vision and aims. The South East Plan will have a significant bearing on all the Council's strategies and including those related to land use planning.

4.0 **The Main Features of the Draft Plan with Officer's Comments**

General Comments

4.1 Overall the main aims and objectives of the draft plan and the thrust of the core strategy are welcome, and officers believe it should generally be supported. However, on a practical note the policies in the main are too long, repetitive and are a mixture of aspiration, process and policy. While this is understandable to some extent as it is a spatial rather than a traditional land-use plan, greater clarity is needed in defining what specifically is intended as policy as the document will become part of the development plan for the district within which local development documents must fit and against which planning applications will be determined. It is somewhat surprising that the Vision and Core Strategy sections of the plan (Section C) contain no specific policies to enshrine the preferred spatial approach and agreed scale of development to be achieved. There would be greater clarity if the core strategy section contained appropriate, focussed and concise policies: these would not need repeating elsewhere in the Plan. To implement the proposals in the draft Plan effectively will have significant implications for the future work of this Council and the resources needed to carry it out (see particularly paragraphs 4.8, 4.12, 4.15 and 4.20 below). **Officers consider these general comments should be forwarded to the Panel.**

The Scale of Development and the Preferred Spatial Strategy (Section C pages 28-39) of the draft Plan

4.2 **Headlines** -The strategy proposes an annual average growth level of 28,900 dwellings a year and assumes an economic growth rate of 3% per annum gross value added (GVA) for the first ten years of the plan. A growth figure for the economy after 2016 will be incorporated in a review of the plan.

4.3 The preferred spatial strategy is to

- promote sustainable development in all parts of the South East
- ensure development only takes place when necessary infrastructure is available or will be provided in time
- address intra-regional disparities
- support strategic development at the growth areas (Thames Gateway, Ashford, Milton Keynes) and in South Hampshire
- support economic growth which minimises pressures on land and labour
- use existing Green Belt designations to control urban growth.

As stated in paragraph 4.1 above, there are no specific policies included to give clarity and focus to the spatial strategy.

4.4 **Comment** – It is understood that central Government considers that the South East should be accommodating significantly higher levels of growth than proposed in the draft plan and GOSE has commissioned consultants to assess a housing distribution based on higher levels of growth. This Council previously endorsed a growth figure of 32,000 dwellings a year. However,

Members should be aware that 45% of respondents to the previous consultation supported growth at 25,500 dwellings a year or less. In reaching the overall figure the Regional Assembly also took account of housing need, the impact of development and its deliverability. Taking account of the need for major investment in infrastructure and affordable housing, your officers would not dissent from the scales of growth proposed provided the assumptions about economic growth beyond 2016 are updated and included in a revised Plan in the next 5-6 years. The spatial strategy should be broadly supported, particularly the commitment to maintain existing Green Belt designations and to address intra-regional disparities which should help to reduce pressures on the increasingly congested western parts of the region. **Officers consider that the proposed levels of growth and the spatial strategy should be broadly supported, subject to adequate infrastructure being provided and the assumptions about economic growth beyond 2016 being updated and included in a revised plan in the next 5-6 years.**

Cross Cutting Policies (Section D1, pages 42-54)

- 4.5 **Headlines** - There are cross cutting policies to promote sustainable development and mitigate and adapt to climate change, reduce resource use, promote sustainable construction methods, provide infrastructure, use public land, ensure inter-regional connectivity, focus development in urban areas and regional hubs (including Oxford), reduce inter-regional disparities, retain Green Belts and identify strategic gaps, support an aging population and conserve and enhance the environment and quality of life.
- 4.6 **Comment** – These policies are broadly welcomed, particularly the emphasis on protecting existing Green Belts (policy CC10a), the conservation and enhancement of the environment and quality of life (policy CC12); the intention to keep the scope for further links with the South West Region under review as this is particularly important for this Council in view of the proposed expansion of Swindon (policy CC7); the aim to concentrate development within the urban areas and seek 60% of development on brownfield land (policy CC8a); and addressing intra-regional disparities (policy CC9).
- 4.7 The emphasis on development not proceeding until the infrastructure is available or will be provided in time (policy CC5) is welcome having been a consistent concern of this Council. There will be a key role for the local strategic partnerships to inform and co-ordinate the plans and strategies of the separate organisations to support the growth proposed in the Plan. However, your officers have concerns that the funding gap that too often exists between what the development industry can provide through legal agreements and the total investment needed to provide sustainable communities will not be filled by central Government or local taxation. If there is a funding gap the Planning Inspectorate will have to be prepared to refuse applications at appeal solely on this basis if we are not to experience growth and development without the infrastructure local authorities consider necessary. The objective of achieving sustainable development is welcome (policy CC1), but the criteria to achieve it, including good governance and using sound science responsibly, do not relate directly to the definition of sustainable development and lack clarity on implementation. The policy to prevent the coalescence of settlements by defining strategic gaps (policy CC10b) is potentially useful but it is regrettable that it will only apply to settlements each with a population of 10,000 or more as it is often the rural character and separate identity of villages that need protecting from nearby urban growth. As an example Wantage and Grove have populations of approximately 11,000 and 7,500. The population of Grove is unlikely to exceed 10,000 until around 2013/14.
- 4.8 The policies to reduce the region's 'resource footprint' (CC2-CC4) are important but they are likely to have a significant impact on the future work of local authorities through the measures highlighted including improving the energy efficiency of new and existing buildings, promoting carbon sinks, encouraging the development and use of renewable energy, reducing the amount of biodegradable waste land filled, ensuring the new and existing buildings stock is resilient to the impacts of climate change, incorporating sustainable drainage measures and high standards of water efficiency in new and existing building stock, and increasing flood storage capacity. Policies relating to the increased efficiency of resource use are a key feature, including promoting energy

and water efficiency standards that exceed current building regulations and new buildings that provide a proportion of energy demand from renewable resources and are built using low-impact materials. Many of these policy 'requirements' for new developments go beyond existing building regulations and Government planning guidance and it is difficult to see how they can be implemented effectively and speedily through the development control process. Building regulations would be a more efficient way improving the quality of new development and representations should be made accordingly to Government. **Officers consider the cross cutting policies should be broadly welcomed and policies CC7, CC8a, CC9, CC10a and CC12 specifically supported. Policy CC5 on infrastructure should be supported and the need for it to be implemented effectively and for major investment from central government highlighted. Comments should also be made on policies CC1 and CC10b as set out in para 4.7 above and policies CC2-CC4 as set out in paragraph 4.8.**

Economy (Section D2, pages 55-71)

- 4.9 **Headlines** - The draft plan has a range of policies to promote important business sectors and clusters, provide a good range of sites and premises, improve skills and training, promote the development of ICT enabled sites, maintain and enhance the most economically successful parts of the region (including Central Oxfordshire) and address the structural economic weakness of the under performing areas.
- 4.10 **Comment** – The employment policies promote economic development with insufficient reference to achieving this through sustainable economic growth, instep with the labour force of the area. This is particularly important as employment grew faster than population between 1991 and 2001 resulting in a tightening of the labour market. Policy RE1 for example supports regionally important clusters but with no reference to achieving this in a sustainable way. Criterion i) of the policy requires local development documents to ensure land and premises are available to meet their requirements without reference to other factors. Members will be aware that Harwell and Milton Park contain important business clusters. Indeed the Government announced in the 2006 budget its decision that the Harwell site should be developed as the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus. Given the concentration of science based enterprises at Harwell and the major investment in Synchrotron, pressure for further economic growth building on the current successes of the area can be expected especially as the Inspector recommended, and the Council accepted, the removal of the 1986 floorspace limits. Significant investment in public transport and other non-car modes will be needed to these sites, but even with this the single largest constraint to the development of Harwell and Milton Park will be congestion on, and the capacity of, the A34. Clear guidance is needed at an early stage from Government as to what measures will be taken, or whether congestion on the A34 will inhibit growth in the area generally. It should be noted that the A34 is designated in the plan as an inter-regional corridor (See Communication and Transport section).
- 4.11 There are two specific points of concern with policy RE2 which contains a list of criteria for identifying employment land. One of the criteria refers to intensifying the use of existing sites. This could be used to justify and promote unsuitable rural sites and should be reworded to refer to 'existing sustainable sites'. The policy also supports non-land based businesses on farm sites which could result in the construction of new buildings for commercial purposes in the countryside. This would be contrary to PPS7 which states that new buildings in the open countryside away from existing settlements should be strictly controlled. It should refer instead to 'existing rural buildings'. Policy RE5, which seeks to reduce intra-regional disparities and promote smart economic growth (defined as maximising the productive value of the workforce, land and natural resources) should be supported. However, the definition of smart growth needs more clarity and explanation, particularly with the reference to natural resources, and it should refer to "employment land" rather than just "land".
- 4.12 Members should be aware that if such policies are taken forward local authorities will be expected to be involved in future work that could have significant implications for staffing and

resources, including regular employment land reviews, developing delivery mechanisms to unlock sites with economic development potential, promoting business clusters, developing skills and promoting advances in ICT and changing work practices. **Officers consider that objection should be made to the lack of reference to sustainability issues in the employment policies (particularly policies RE1 and RE2). Concern should be expressed that the development of the regionally important business clusters at Milton Park and Harwell could be inhibited by congestion on the A34 and this needs resolving at an early stage. Objection should be made to the last part of policy RE2 which refers to supporting non-land based businesses on farms. Policy RE5 on reducing intra-regional disparities should be supported but clarification sought on the definition of smart growth.**

Housing (Section D3, pages 72-91)

- 4.13 **Headlines** - The draft South East Plan policies provide for an average annual building rate of 28,900 dwellings in the South East between 2006 and 2026. This figure includes an allowance for the backlog of current housing need in 2001 and local authorities will have to say specifically how this has been addressed. The Vale is given an annual build rate of 575 dwellings equating to a total of 11,500 dwellings over the 20 years. The figure assumes that the 3,000 dwellings proposed at Didcot in addition to the current provision in local plans will be split equally between the two districts. The plan states that further advice will be given by the County Council as part of this consultation exercise. Any over or under delivery to 2006 in relation to RPG9 levels should be addressed in LDDs. The focus of development will be on previously developed land. There should be a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures, 25% should be social housing for rent and 10% other forms of intermediate housing. Densities should achieve a regional average of 40 dwellings a hectare. There is an emphasis on high standards of design and making better use of the existing housing stock. There will be an early partial review of the Plan in the light of local gypsy and traveller assessments.
- 4.14 **Comment** – The housing figures for the Vale are discussed in more detail in section 5 of this report. Putting this issue on one side it is considered that the bulk of the other housing policies should be generally supported particularly the requirement that LDDs should specify housing tenure (policy H4) the emphasis on raising the quality of design (policy H5) and improving the existing stock (policy H7). However, it is not considered necessary to adjust the figures in policy H1 to take account of any over or under supply to 2006 in the context of the 20 year plan as the completion figures for 2005 were available to the Assembly. In any event it is not possible to relate the district housing figures to those in RPG9 as they are on a county wide base only. Similarly it is difficult to see how the Council can demonstrate that the backlog of unmet need is being met (policy H1) as some 60% of the need cannot be disaggregated to the district level.
- 4.15 Members should also again be aware of the resource implications of the future work that local authorities are expected to undertake if the plan is to be implemented as currently proposed. Work will include housing delivery action plans, urban potential studies, housing need and market assessments which identify the full range of housing needs in their areas, comprehensive policy guidance on financial viability of affordable housing, empty homes strategies, guidance for the design of new housing that encourages sustainable construction methods and address the implications of changing lifestyles and incentives for small households to move from large to smaller dwellings. Gypsy and traveller accommodation assessments are currently being undertaken by ACTVAR. Oxfordshire currently has a relatively high number of caravans on authorised sites (318) and a relatively low number on unauthorised sites (26). **Officers consider that policies H4, H5 and H7 should be supported and concerns should be expressed about policy H1 for the reasons given in para 4.14.**

Communications and Transport (Section D4, pages 92-103)

- 4.16 **Headlines** - This chapter forms the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) within which other strategies, including those of the Highways Agency and the rail industry and local transport plans, should be developed. Policies promote managing the transport system to make the most of

existing capacity (including road pricing and charging, more demanding yet flexible parking standards and a requirement that all major travel generating developments as identified in local development documents must have travel plans by 2011) and investment in non-car modes of access (walking, cycling, public transport and ICT). The transport system is to be upgraded to support the international and inter-regional movement corridors (including the A34) and regional hubs and spokes (Oxford is a regional hub with the A420 to Swindon one of its spokes). The Plan suggests there should be no further growth at Heathrow and Gatwick beyond that already agreed and encouragement is given to Southampton airport to enhance its role as an airport of regional significance. Similarly there is a policy to enhance the role of Southampton port for car ferries and deep sea containers. Up to three locations for rail freight inter changes are to be identified and submissions are likely to be made at the Examination in Public.

- 4.17 **Comments** – The policies are based largely on the existing RTS which the Council has previously supported. However, there are concerns that significantly enhancing the port at Southampton could increase the use of the A34. While its designation as an international and inter-regional corridor (policy T1) is both welcomed and is to be supported as it may justify additional investment, it must be recognised that the road is an important local artery in Oxfordshire which supports development of regional significance including the important business clusters at Harwell, Milton Park and Oxford. **Officers consider that the identification of the A34 as an inter-regional movement corridor in policy T1 where investment will be prioritised should be supported subject to the caveat above. Comment should be made that policy T1 should specifically support and promote investment in the transport infrastructure necessary to support the growth proposed in the sub-regional strategies. The identification of the A420 as a regional spoke should be supported (policy T2). An objection should be lodged as there are no policies to promote the east-west rail link or rail passenger travel, and concerns should be expressed at policy T11 which proposes enhancing the role of Southampton port.** The Council will also have to be aware of the proposals for rail freight interchanges which, depending on their location, could have an impact on the Vale.

Natural Resource Management (Section D5, pages 104-136)

- 4.18 **Headlines** - Policies aim to improve water quality and management, safeguard land for new reservoirs (including one in the Upper Thames by 2019/20), reduce the risk of flooding, improve biodiversity, enhance woodland cover, energy efficiency, promote the use of combined heat and power, district heating and renewable energy.
- 4.19 **Comments** – The previous consultation draft Plan supported the creation of new reservoirs but the five were named in the lower case text, not the policy itself as now (policy NRM2). The Council already has criteria based policies in its adopted and emerging local plans against which any planning application for a new reservoir would be considered. It would be premature to safeguard land for a reservoir until a convincing case has been made for a reservoir in the Upper Thames Valley and its location in a particular district. The Council should object to this policy and suggest it is reworded to confirm that only where the need for additional water resources is established should local development documents allocate and safeguard sites. As water resources can be proposed through a compulsory works order the last sentence of NRM2 should say 'when considering proposals' (not applications).
- 4.20 Again, Members should be aware of the increasing impact of the policies on local authorities which will have implications for staffing and resources. These include seeking measures to achieve high levels of water efficiency BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology) standards, identifying infrastructure needs of water and sewerage companies and the Environment Agency, requiring energy efficiency and use development of renewable energy to contribute to the regional targets. **Officers consider that objection should be made to policy NRM2 as set out in paragraph 4.19 above).**

Waste (Section D6, pages 137-161)

- 4.21 **Headlines** – Policies seek a reduction in the growth of waste, the re-use of construction and demolition materials, and layouts that provide adequate space for the storage and re-use of waste (including composting). Authorities are expected to manage the waste generated within their areas. Oxfordshire is to provide landfill capacity of 4.4 million tonnes of waste from London. There are regional targets to reduce the amount of landfill and increase recycling and composting. Policies enable new facilities for recycling and recovery, giving priority to safeguarding and expanding existing suitable sites with good transport connections.
- 4.22 **Comment** – The policies in this section appear to be consistent with the targets set by DEFRA and with the strategy for the collection and disposal of municipal waste currently being prepared by the Oxfordshire authorities. In 2015 Oxfordshire will have a surplus capacity of 1.6 million tonnes in existing sites. Members should be aware that the need to reduce landfill will result in a requirement for other facilities including waste transfer, separation, recovery, diversion, management and possibly incineration. **Officers consider that no representations need to be made on this subject.**

Minerals (Section D6, pages 162-173)

- 4.23 **Headlines** – The use of recycled and secondary aggregates is encouraged to reduce the demand for primary aggregates and Oxfordshire is to provide 0.9 million tonnes of recycled and secondary aggregates a year. Recycling facilities will not be precluded from Green Belts but will only be allowed in AONBs in very exceptional circumstances. Oxfordshire is to maintain a seven year land bank for sand and gravel on the basis of producing 1.82 million tonnes a year (policy M3).
- 4.24 **Comments** – Although the amount of sand and gravel to be produced in Oxfordshire is to reduce by 9% from that agreed in 1994 it is significantly less than the region-wide reduction of 20%. This fails to take into account that Oxfordshire is poorly located to the main areas for growth and that the aggregate resources are affected by environmental constraints. **Officers consider that objection should therefore be made to policy M3.**

Countryside and Landscape Management (Section D7, pages 174-178)

- 4.25 **Headlines** – The South East Plan gives priority to protecting and enhancing the New Forest National Park and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: elsewhere high quality management of open countryside should be encouraged. Local authorities through rights of way improvement plans should encourage access to the countryside.
- 4.26 **Comments** – The policy to encourage high quality management of the countryside (policy C3) refers to supporting local economies through small scale development to meet local needs. For a development plan policy this is not sufficiently rigorous and could be used to justify inappropriate and potentially unsuitable development in the countryside. It needs to be linked specifically to development needed to support land management systems in ways that maintain and enhance local distinctiveness as referred to in para 1.12 of section D7. **Officers consider that objection should be made to policy C3 as it could enable new buildings for business development in the countryside.**

Built and Historic Environment and Town Centres (Sections D8 and D9, pages 179-202)

- 4.27 **Headlines** – There are policies for the significant improvement of the urban environment and managing the urban – rural fringe. Local Development Documents should set out overall strategy and incorporate clear design guidance for the intensification of residential neighbourhoods. In

addition they should support the role of small rural towns through small scale development and plan positively for limited small scale growth in villages to meet defined local needs. The Plan identifies a network of primary and secondary regional centres as a focus for large-scale development (Oxford and Banbury are the two regional centres in Oxfordshire). Further large-scale out-of-centre regional shopping centres will be discouraged.

- 4.28 **Comment** – Although paragraph 1.35 of section D9 refers to the expansion of Bicester and Didcot there is no clear policy direction for the market towns of Oxfordshire which fall between the definition of regional centres (policy TC2) and small rural towns (policy BE5). **Officers consider that concern should be expressed at this omission.**

Tourism, Sport and Recreation (Section D10, pages 203-217)

- 4.29 **Headlines** – Policies promote tourism and recreation based rural diversification, seek to upgrade and develop new regionally significant sports facilities, improve existing tourist accommodation and attractions and develop new regionally significant attractions where they can be easily accessed by public transport. Oxford and the River Thames are identified as priority areas for tourism.
- 4.30 **Comments** – The recognition that joint working between Oxford and neighbouring authorities to encourage visitors to stay in the area longer is welcomed (policy TSR7 iii) as is joint working along the River Thames to achieve the potential for informal recreation and sporting uses (TSR7 iv) and resist the loss of tourism infrastructure such as public open spaces, car parks, moorings and access points (para 8.8 of section D10). **Policy TR7 should be specifically supported.**

Social, Cultural and Health (Section D11, pages 218-232)

- 4.31 **Headlines** – Local planning authorities should have policies that target areas of social deprivation; support healthy communities; ensure land is available to meet the health care and educational needs of local communities; increase participation in sport, recreation and cultural activities especially of socially disadvantaged and socially excluded groups; and encourage mixed use community facilities.
- 4.32 **Comments** – The Plan places the responsibility for ensuring adequate social, cultural and health facilities with local authorities, even where they are not the primary providers. This is misleading and puts an unreasonable requirement on local authorities to ensure the provision of services over which they have no control. The plan makes no reference to and should take more account of regional recreation strategies prepared by Sport England and London 2012. **Concerns should be expressed to this section on this basis.**

5.0 Central Oxfordshire and the Housing Figures for the Vale of White Horse District Council (Section E7, pages 314-321)

Headlines

- 5.1 **General Policy Approach** – Central Oxfordshire, one of the ten sub-regions, is focussed on Oxford and includes land in all five districts. Abingdon, Botley, Wantage and Grove are within the Central Oxfordshire area. The core strategy provides for development in ways which will protect and enhance the environment and the setting of Oxford, make best use of previously developed land and concentrate development where the need to travel particularly by car can be reduced. The main locations for development will be Bicester, Didcot, Wantage & Grove and within the built up area of Oxford. A Green Belt will be retained around Oxford and 50% of all new housing should be affordable. Priority is to be given to economic development which supports educational, scientific, technological and emerging business clusters. Access to Oxford from major towns in the sub-region and neighbouring sub-regions is a priority. Future development is contingent on the delivery of infrastructure to support it.

5.2 **Housing Requirement for the Vale** – 11,500 additional homes are required in the Vale between 2006 and 2026 (policy H1) with some 10,500 dwellings to be provided in the Central Oxfordshire part of the Vale (policy CO2). The lower case text to policy CO2 states that the housing distribution allows for about 7,300 homes at Didcot and 3,400 at Wantage and Grove (para 2.4 of section E7). This latter figure is 900 more than the allocation in the emerging local plan for 2,500 homes on the former airfield at Grove. It is also noted that the 3,000 dwellings at Didcot proposed between 2016 and 2026 have been split equally between South Oxfordshire and the Vale for illustrative purposes only, until more detailed work (including a crucial strategic flood risk assessment) establishes the most appropriate location.

Comment

5.3 The approach of focussing development in the larger settlements without compromising the Green Belt is similar to that in the adopted Structure Plan and is consistent with the Vale's Local Plan and can be broadly supported. Policy CO1 names Didcot and Wantage & Grove as main locations for development in the south of the county which again reflects the adopted Structure Plan and the emerging Local Plan for the district. However, the reference to the increase of 18,300 jobs by 2016 should be omitted (para 2.13) given the considerable degree of uncertainty that applies to the forecasts. It is also considered that the transport policy (CO6) which prioritises access to Oxford should also include a priority to promote investment in the Grove/Wantage and Didcot corridor as included in the adopted Structure Plan 2016. This would also give a sound basis for the transport schemes listed in the Implementation Plan. Policy CO7 on infrastructure should be strongly supported. Members should note that the policy to achieve 50% affordable housing in Central Oxfordshire may be difficult to achieve especially as this Council's local plan Inspector recommended an affordable housing provision of 40% rather than 50% based on a detailed analysis and appraisal of the level of local housing need at the local plan inquiry.

5.4 Members will recall that the Executive on 21 October last year supported the option of focusing the 8000 homes that may need to be provided on greenfield sites equally between Didcot and Bicester (rather than the option of a stronger focus in the south of the county), but

- i) considered that the housing requirement for Oxford should be increased and
- ii) given the difficulties in providing a satisfactory transport package to support the growth already planned in the Didcot area, advised that further growth should not be supported until the Council is satisfied that there will be a deliverable and funded transport solution to current traffic problems in the area, including a Harwell by-pass, improved public transport and measures to resolve problems in the A34 corridor.

The Executive also resolved that before any limited further growth at Wantage/Grove could be supported, central Government must commit to additional infrastructure including improvements to the A417 and public transport. An extract of the Minutes of the Executive are in Appendix 1 to this report. The Council did not support the option of a stronger focus of development in the south of the county with 11,500 dwellings for the Vale, which was the second of the two options proposed.

5.5 The 11,500 dwelling requirement for the Vale is a significant increase in the building rate from that in the Structure Plan 2011 (within which the emerging local plan was prepared) and the currently adopted Structure Plan to 2016 as the figures below show:

Structure Plan 1996-2011	-	380 dwellings a year
Structure Plan 2001-2016	-	477 dwellings a year
Draft South East Plan 2006-2026	-	575 dwellings a year

It is the eleventh highest growth rate in the South East Region out of 69 authorities. What this may mean in terms of development in addition to existing commitments at 1 April 2006 on the basis of the draft figures for dwellings with planning permission and potential within existing

settlements is shown below:

	Central Oxfordshire	Remainder of the Vale	Total
Dwellings with permission ¹	1245	295	1540
Dwellings allocated ²	3550	550	4100
Potential in settlements ³	2540	410	2950
Potential supply	7335	1255	8590
Requirement 2006-2026	10,500	1000	11500
Balance to find	3165	+255	2910

¹ As at 1 April 2006 – the figures are draft only

² Including all the allocations in the draft local plan as proposed to be modified (with the full 2500 at Grove)

³ Assumes large sites (10 or more dwellings) at 75% of the rate expected 2001-2011 between 2011 and 2016 (i.e. 750) and 50% between 2016 and 2026 (i.e. 1000)

- 5.6 The figures for the potential in settlements are general estimates only, as even with a reasonably up to date urban capacity study it is difficult to predict how many dwellings will be built within existing settlements as most will be developed on land in an existing use. The figure for the remainder of the Vale outside Central Oxfordshire is particularly sensitive given there are a small number of villages and Faringdon is the only town. Members should consider whether the figure for the district outside Central Oxfordshire should be increased by 255 or 455

dwellings (the latter figure would allow a modest expansion of Faringdon) with a commensurate reduction in the Central Oxfordshire area of the Vale.

- 5.7 The 3165 dwellings to be found on sites outside the existing built-up areas of settlements in Central Oxfordshire (as indicated in the above table) includes a figure of 1500 dwellings for Didcot in addition to the allocations in the emerging Local Plan (discussed below). This leaves 1665 to be found outside Didcot in the Central Oxfordshire part of the district, if no adjustment is made as suggested in para 5.6 above. Members will be aware from the work carried out on the emerging Local Plan of the difficulties in finding suitable development sites on the edge of Abingdon, and that most of the safeguarded land at Botley has now been allocated for housing on the recommendation of the Local Plan Inspector. Officers are concerned at the implications of accommodating this number of dwellings on greenfield sites, as this could ultimately result in a significant expansion of some villages which is not a sustainable option for growth.

- 5.8 **Grove** – Of the 3,400 dwellings proposed for the Wantage and Grove area in the lower case text supporting policy CO2 (para 2.4), 2,500 are already planned on the former airfield west of Grove. The redevelopment of St. Mary's School and possibly one of the King Alfred's campuses, plus existing permissions could yield an additional 500 dwellings. This would leave some 400 dwellings to be accommodated on sites outside the existing settlements. This could be reasonably manageable given the 20 year time horizon. However, the redevelopment sites are included in the urban potential figure in the table in para 5.5 above and would not therefore contribute to the 'greenfield' requirement. Members may consider that an increased building rate for Wantage and Grove above the 3,400 proposed would not be acceptable bearing in mind the need to see first whether public transport can be improved sufficiently to deter car use to access job opportunities and secondly the opportunities for job growth above that anticipated to 2016 at Milton Park and Harwell.

- 5.9 It is imperative that further growth at Wantage and Grove above that provided for in the emerging local plan is supported by the necessary infrastructure – secondary education and transport being particularly important. The implementation plan (accompanying the draft South East Plan) specifically refers to local road improvements in the Grove and Wantage area, the link road north of Grove, and the Wantage north east relief road: these should be welcomed. In this context policy CO7, which states that development will be contingent on the timely delivery of

infrastructure, should be supported. However, paragraph 2.18 of Section E7 should specifically refer to the infrastructure, requirements at Grove and Wantage. The Council will also have to ensure, particularly through local strategic partnerships, that the infrastructure requirements are picked up in the plans and strategies of relevant service providers (including the Local Transport Plan, Integrated Transport Strategies and strategies for health care, education and water for example).

- 5.10 **Didcot** – The County Council reduced the additional housing requirement from 4,000 to 3,000 dwellings after 2016 from that proposed last autumn, although the technical justification for this is not clear. The Councils are expected to give advice as to how the 3,000 dwellings should be apportioned between South Oxfordshire and the Vale. Although the two district council's have appointed consultants to look at future development at Didcot their work is not yet complete and an issue of flood risk on some potential areas for growth has been identified. This will not be a barrier to further growth at Didcot but may be a factor in identifying preferred locations. A strategic flood risk assessment is being undertaken and should be available to inform the Examination in Public.
- 5.11 The Council has always accepted that Didcot is potentially the most sustainable location for growth in the south of the county close to the major employment sites of Milton Park and Harwell. Further growth of the town may help to support additional services and facilities for the town and the recent development of the Orchard Centre is an example of this. However, it is crucial that there is investment in a wide range of facilities and, from this Council's perspective, particularly in transport to mitigate the problems of increased levels of traffic in nearby villages – most notably Harwell. In this context the references to the Harwell by-pass in the implementation plan are welcome.
- 5.12 Officers suggest that the number of dwellings to be accommodated in the Central Oxfordshire part of the Vale is too high and could result in the need to find some 1265 dwellings on 'greenfield' sites outside Didcot, Grove and Wantage. If an objection is made to the EiP Panel on this basis it is suggested that the Council should indicate what figure would be appropriate and where the balance should be found. An increase of 300 dwellings for the Vale outside Central Oxfordshire with a commensurate reduction in Central Oxfordshire, plus further reduction of 700 in Central Oxfordshire would be likely to give more reasonable figure for the district as follows:

	Central Oxfordshire	Remainder of the Vale	Total
Revised requirement	9500	1300	10,800
Potential supply	7335	1255	8590
Balance to find	2165	45	2210
less Didcot	<u>1500</u>		
	<u>665</u>		

The 700 dwellings not provided in the Vale could be reapportioned to Oxford or other towns in Central Oxfordshire, including Didcot. **Members are asked to give a view on whether this approach should be pursued in preparation for the EiP.**

- 5.13 Officers suggest the following response could be made to the Central Oxfordshire policies and the housing requirement for the Vale:
- the strategy to focus housing development in towns beyond the Green Belt and the Implementation Plan for the sub-region is broadly supported provided that development at Grove, Wantage and Didcot are accompanied by investment in the necessary infrastructure and services. Without it the Council will not grant planning permission for the major levels of growth proposed;
 - the housing requirement for the Vale should be reduced by 700 dwellings from 11,500 to

10,800 and the figures for Central Oxfordshire and the remainder of the Vale changed to 9,500 and 1,300 respectively;

- support policy CO3 protecting the Green Belt;
- policy CO6 on transport should also refer to priority to be given to improving transport infrastructure in the Grove/Wantage and Didcot corridor as in the approved Structure Plan 2016 to support the major levels of growth proposed;
- policy CO7 which states that development is contingent on the timely delivery of services should be strongly supported, but that reference should be made in the lower case text to the need for infrastructure in Grove and Wantage, particularly for secondary education;
- the split of the housing requirement for Didcot between South Oxfordshire and the Vale cannot be determined at this stage in view of the need for a strategic flood risk assessment but information will be provided in time to inform the Examination in Public;
- object to the reference to 18,300 jobs by 2016 in paragraph 2.13 as this is based on forecasts which are subject to considerable uncertainty.

RODGER HOOD

Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)

TIM SADLER

Strategic Director

Background Papers:

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR
TO THE STRATEGIC AND LOCAL PLANING ADVISORY GROUP
24 MAY 2006

**Local Development Framework: Response to the Statement of Community Involvement
Submission Document**

1.0 Introduction and Report Summary

- 1.1 The Statement of Community Involvement was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 10th March 2006 and placed on deposit until 21st April 2006. This report summarises the representations received during the deposit period and Appendix A sets out the recommended response of the Council to the representations for consideration by the Inspector at the Examination.
- 1.2 The Contact Officer for this report is Grant Audley-Miller, Section Head (Environmental Planning & Conservation) 01235 540343.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 *That the Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group recommend the Executive to:*

- 1) *Note the representations received in response to the submission of the Statement of Community Involvement,*
- 2) *Forward Appendix A to the Planning Inspectorate as the Council's response to the issues raised by the representations and possible changes to the final Statement of Community Involvement that would improve the document.*

3.0 Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies

3.1 This report complies with the Council's Vision Statement and aims.

4.0 The Statement of Community Involvement Submission Document

- 4.1 The Statement of Community Involvement submission document was placed on deposit from 10 March 2006 to 21 April 2006. It was sent free to all the Consultation Bodies contained in Appendix 1 and the List of Bodies and Organisations in Appendix 2 of the Statement. In addition over 200 individuals and other organisations who had previously expressed interest on being kept up to date on progress on the Local Plan were notified by letter of the publication of the Statement.
- 4.2 The document and the forms for making representations were available at the Local Services Points in Abingdon and Wantage and the Council's offices at Faringdon, at libraries throughout the district and at Didcot and the Westgate Centre, Oxford.
- 4.3 Notices were placed in the Oxford Mail and the Wiltshire Gazette and Herald at the start of the consultation period. A press release was sent out to the media identified in Appendix 2 of the Statement. In addition an informal notice was placed in Council News. The document and representation forms were also available at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy/LDF which

included a downloadable version of the document together with forms for making comments.

5.0 **Consultation Responses**

- 5.1 30 individuals and organisations made representations. 8 were representations in support and 7 were comments. 7 were submitted by e-mail.
- 5.2 16 representations were objecting to the SCI or part of the SCI. The majority were concerned with minor amendments to help improve the clarity of the document and requests that the representee was included on the LDF database and should continue to be kept informed on the preparation of local development documents. Only 1 individual has requested the examination to be in the form of a hearing.

6.0 **Next Steps**

- 6.1 The Planning Inspectorate are required to be sent a summary of the responses and the main issues raised. The representations have been forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate to arrange the Examination which will be carried out by Keith Holland BA (Hons) Dip TP, MRTPI ARICS.
- 6.2 The Planning Inspectorate also recommend that authorities can include a response to the main issues raised, offering where necessary, possible changes to the final SCI that would improve the document. It is intended that Appendix A be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate after consideration by the Executive.

RODGER HOOD
Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy)

TIM SADLER
Strategic Director

Background Papers: None

Summary of the representations received in response to Statement of Community Involvement Submission Document

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
SEEDA	All	Support	
Churches Together in Oxfordshire		Support	
East Hagbourne Parish Council	All	Support	
Oxford Green Belt Network	All	Support Pleased that they are included in Appendix 2	
WM Morrison Supermarkets Plc	Section 6	Support the proposals set out in SCI	
The Theatres Trust		Welcome their inclusion in Appendix 2 and look forward to commenting on next stage of LDF	
Oxfordshire Geology Trust		Support Would like reference to Oxfordshire RIGS Group deleted as no longer exists	The Council has no objection to the deletion of Oxfordshire RIGS Group from Appendix 2.
Learning and Skills Council		Support	
South West Regional Assembly		Noted the contents. Have no comments at this stage	
Gloucestershire County Council		No comments to make. Would like to be kept informed of future progress on LDF	
British Waterways		Satisfied it appears in the appropriate appendices and has no further comments to make	
Bellway Homes		Have no further comments to make but would like to continue being consulted in future	
First Great Western		Would like to be consulted on planning applications particularly around rail stations in addition to Network Rail	The Council currently consult Network Rail in appropriate cases but do not consider it would be practicable to consult rail operators as suggested.
Highways Agency		No further comments to make	

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
Cluttons		Note content, would like to be included on list of consultees to be consulted in future	The Council has no objection to the inclusion of Cluttons in Appendix 2.
Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society	Appendix 2 Appendix 1	Oxford Architectural and Historical Society should read as Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society The Council for British Archaeology should be included under Environmental Groups	The Council has no objection to amending Appendix 2 to read 'Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society'. Appendix 1 is an extract from PPS12: Local Development Frameworks, and contains a list of bodies and organisations which the Government has specified should be consulted. This list is not intended to be exhaustive and is included to show the range of organisations the Council should involve. The Council has developed its own database which contains many more consultees. The Council has no objection to the Council for British Archaeology being included in Appendix 2.
Oxford Field Paths Society	Appendix 2	Consider their group should be included under the Environmental Interest Group heading rather than the General Interest Group heading	The Council has no objection to amending Appendix 2.
Chilton Parish Council		Feels that the acid test will be whether community views have any influence on decision making	All comments will be taken into account but the weight given to them will depend upon whether they are material planning considerations and the need also to take into account Government and Council policy.
Harwell Parish Council	Para 6.10	Consider it is factually incorrect. The Development Control Committee meetings are proposed to be every three weeks in future, would like paragraph changed to reflect this.	From the 1 May Development Control Committee meetings will meet every 3 weeks rather than every 2 weeks. At the time of submission this had not been confirmed. The Council has no objection to updating the text to reflect this change in circumstances.
The Countryside		Consider the SCI should set out	The Council will try to involve as many sectors of

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
Agency		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ways of involving all sectors of the community including those in smaller settlements. Rural areas and areas in the rural/urban fringe who may have difficulty in accessing some methods used to engage communities; The particular approaches or techniques that will be used to ensure that rural communities have the opportunity to engage fully with the LDF process How will other community initiatives such as Town and Village Design Statements as well as other local evidence or survey work provided by local communities will be used to inform the LDF and the weight that such community initiatives will be given; How the influence of local community involvement on policy development will be monitored. 	<p>the community as possible but has to be mindful of the resource implications. Nevertheless, the SCI highlights that where the Council considers that it will add value to the consultation process and make it easier for the community to be involved it will use additional techniques at appropriate stages in the preparation of DPDs. These additional methods could be used in the rural areas if it was felt to assist the local community to become involved.</p> <p>Town and village design statements currently do not have any statutory status in the LDF process and many of the issues they raise do not fall within the scope of the LDF. The Council considers that the most appropriate way of making use of the valuable survey work and other information that such documents are likely to contain is to ensure that this information is fed into the early stages of the preparation of LDF documents.</p> <p>Section 7.0 of the SCI stresses that the Council intends to individually evaluate the main community involvement exercises, and assess the methods of consultation used, their appropriateness and effectiveness. The main method highlighted is the use of evaluation forms but this does not exclude the Council from using other methods.</p>
Oxfordshire County	Appendix 1	Pleased to be included in both appendices	Noted

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
Council	<p data-bbox="177 1686 209 1738">& 2</p> <p data-bbox="252 1621 284 1738">Para 6.5</p>	<p data-bbox="252 846 435 1559">Would like the paragraph changed to indicate that the County should also be consulted on issues regarding minerals and waste, service provision, developer funding, rights of way, ecology and landscape.</p>	<p data-bbox="252 159 435 842">The Council has no objection to amending the second sentence of paragraph 6.5 to read “..(highway, archaeology, strategic planning, minerals and waste, service provision, developer funding, rights of way, ecology and landscape)..”</p>
Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	<p data-bbox="475 1599 587 1738">Para 6.22-6.25</p>	<p data-bbox="475 846 587 1559">Would urge developers to contact the County for advice at an early stage of the application process.</p>	<p data-bbox="475 159 699 842">The Council has no objection to adding a new sentence after the second sentence of para 6.24, to read “The Council also encourages developers to undertake early consultation with the relevant statutory bodies and stakeholders including Oxfordshire County Council.</p>
		<p data-bbox="703 846 815 1559">Welcome Council's stated intention to aim for early involvement, clarity about opportunities for involvement and good feedback.</p>	<p data-bbox="703 159 815 842">Noted</p>
		<p data-bbox="855 846 1034 1559">No mention in the SCI is made to the fact that in rural area many of the population are 'hard to reach'. Would like to be assured that the Council will take particular note of access issues when conducting consultations.</p>	<p data-bbox="855 159 1034 842">See response to the Countryside Agency above.</p>
Mr M. G. Hocken	<p data-bbox="1038 1599 1114 1738">Sections 5 & 6</p>	<p data-bbox="1038 846 1114 1559">Considers the advertisement of formal notices for the SCI was made in inappropriate papers.</p>	<p data-bbox="1038 159 1331 842">In its attempt to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 the Council used the Oxford Mail and the Wiltshire Gazette for the publication of the statutory notices for the SCI. The Oxford Mail has the most comprehensive circulation across the District. The Council would have no objection to adding the Herald Series and the</p>

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
			<p>Oxford Times (and budgetary provision has been made for this) but it is still of the view that to comply with the spirit of the Regulations it will in future still need to advertise in the Oxford Mail and the Wiltshire Gazette.</p>
	Section 8	<p>There are inadequate resources to manage community involvement effectively in respect of air quality and environmental issues in general. The requisite staffing and other resource allocations should be reassessed and a risk analysis made of this particular aspect of the LDF Consultation and Community Involvement process.</p>	<p>The Council considers that the SCI is sound in this respect because sufficient resources exist in house in the context of the Local Development Framework and consultation on planning applications. It is clear that it can use external consultants if it can be demonstrated that this will enable consultation to be carried out more efficiently, or for specific projects if there is a lack of capacity or expertise in house. Furthermore the Council do not consider that resources for environmental controls fall within the scope of the SCI which is concerned with resources for managing community involvement.</p>
GOSE	Back Cover	<p>The inclusion of the text on the inside front cover is welcomed: however, it may assist further if text were added in each of the main locally relevant languages to explain what the document is about and why people should take an interest in it. Such text should be included on the cover of all LDF documents.</p>	<p>The Council has had no requests in the recent past to make documents available in other languages. However, the Council is currently investigating the possibility of using alternative languages, requests which if necessary could be included on the adopted document.</p>
	Contents	<p>Update to reflect inclusion of Appendix 5.</p>	<p>The Council has no objection to the inclusion in the contents section "Appendix 5: Some of the key</p>

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
	Para 2.6	You may also wish to add the web address of the SCI for those who may wish to have an e copy and to alert readers to the potential for the SCI to be updated in the future.	<p>organisations concerned with planning in England and Wales".</p> <p>The Council has no objection to the addition of "...and can be viewed at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy/LDF." to the end of the first sentence of para 2.6.</p>
	Fig 3	The Preferred Options Stage is commonly called Reg 26, while the Alternative Sites Stage is commonly called Reg 32.	The Council has no objection to amending Fig 3 as attached at Appendix A to overcome this inaccuracy.
	Para 5.58	The requirement to prepare an initial sustainability report was rescinded in the April 2005 ODPM Interim Advice on SA of RSS and LDFs and confirmed in the November 2005 final SA guidance.	This advice is noted and an amendment to Fig 3 as attached at Appendix A would overcome this inaccuracy.
	Para 6.9-6.18	You may wish to add text to inform readers that planning decisions will be based upon the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, and to briefly explain in the text or glossary the meaning of material considerations.	<p>The Council has no objection to the inclusion of text to para 6.9 that clarifies how planning applications are determined and to read "Decisions on planning applications will be in line with the regulations the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In general this means that decisions on applications will be based on their conformity with the development plan and/or other material considerations."</p> <p>It would further assist readers of the SCI to add to the glossary " Material Considerations: Something that should be taken into account when preparing</p>

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
	<p>Para 7.2</p> <p>Appendix 2</p> <p>General</p>	<p>You may wish to add text to the effect that reader should refer to the website version of the SCI that will comprise the most up-to-date version e.g. if non-significant changes such as a change of name or address/website address are necessary.</p> <p>You may wish to add ACTVaR to your list of consultees.</p> <p>We note the Council's intention to avoid consultation during school summer holidays. In the interests of avoiding delay in the implementation of the new planning system and the creation of an up-to-date LDF for the Vale, the Council should ensure that its LDS derived DPD timetables are not unnecessarily lengthened, for this or other reasons, beyond those indicated in PPS12 Figure 4.1 and 4.2.</p>	<p>Development Plan Documents or determining planning applications, but they must be genuine planning considerations eg the type of development, site, layout, siting, design, access and landscaping."</p> <p>The Council has no objection to the addition to the end of para 7.2 of the text "the most up to date version of the SCI will be on the Council's website at: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy/LDF."</p> <p>The Council has no objection to the inclusion of ACTVaR in Appendix 2.</p> <p>The Council recognise that the Local Development Scheme is an ambitious and tight programme. For this reason the words "Where practicable ... "were used when changing the SCI in response to an objection that was made at the draft stage. This recognised that the Council will, where practicable, and without prejudice to its Local Development Scheme attempt to avoid public holidays and the summer vacation.</p>
Harcourt Hill Estate Residents Association	Section 5	It is not clear who the Council might consider to be a relevant body to consult	At this stage in the LDF process it is not possible to identify precisely which groups will be consulted at various stages in the production of DPDs. This will depend on the type of DPD being produced. As advised in Creating Local Development Framework A Companion Guide to PPS12 the Statement of Community Involvement includes a 'long list' of the types of groups the Council proposes to involve.

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
	Section 5	The Oxford Times is read more in the district than a particularly issue of the Oxford Mail.	See response to Mr M G Hocken above.
	Para 5.46	It is not clear when supplementary planning documents will be produced, by whom and what status these will hold.	Supplementary Planning Documents will be produced by the Council. They will form part of the Local Development Framework and will expand on policies and proposals made in the Development Plan Documents. This is clearly set out in para 2.10 of the SCI.
	Para 6.3	It is not clear which properties will be notified of planning applications. Should change to notify local residents associations, those properties that adjoin or overlook.	The Council as a matter of course do not consult with resident associations because it is difficult to assess how representative they are, their accountability and longevity. The Council does however take account of comments received from residents associations and other groups if they are based upon material planning considerations. The Council consult all properties that adjoin an application site, but do not consider that they can undertake to consult properties that overlook because the term is too vague and imprecise and the degree of overlooking is subjective.
Fitzharry's Manor	Para 6.3	Applications which are in areas which are the subject of supplementary Planning Documents should be included in the matters for community consultation	Supplementary Planning Documents will not necessarily be area based. They will in most cases expand on policies that apply across the whole district. All planning applications regardless of location are subject to public consultation. See response in relation to Harcourt Hill Estate

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
Estate Residents Association		<p>paragraph to ensure, where applicable, that the appropriate residents association is aware of the planning application.</p>	Residents Association above.
Faringdon Town Council		<p>There is no indication of what happens to the consultation process once it has been carried through.</p> <p>No mention is made of the healthcheck or village equivalent in the entire document.</p> <p>Would like to suggest that there should be a separate Citizens Panel for each of the areas operated within the Council committee structure ie Abingdon Area, North East Area, South East Area and West Area.</p> <p>A large part of the consultation process in Faringdon depends upon the existence of the Faringdon Local Office, the future of which is at present uncertain.</p> <p>The Vale is asked to consider the implications of delegating minor planning application decisions, in the presence of planning officers, to parish and town councils.</p>	<p>The stages following on from formal public consultation periods is clearly stated in the SCI. The next stages of the SCI are set out at paras 3.9-3.10. Stages for the DPDs and SPDs are included at paras 5.14 – 5.57.</p> <p>The Council has no objection to the inclusion of the Faringdon Health Check in Appendix 2.</p> <p>The Citizens panel does have representative samples from each of the four areas. If necessary and appropriate the responses can be analysed accordingly.</p> <p>The District Council is already aware of the Town Council's concerns and is currently considering future options.</p> <p>The Council has only recently revised its scheme of delegation. The Council does not have the resources to make planning officers available to provide advice to town and parish councils and ensure that applications are determined within the Government's targets. In addition determination by town and parish Councils are likely to raise a higher number of probity issues than if dealt with</p>

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
Drayton Parish Council		<p>Consider the SCI is sound.</p> <p>Also have the following comments: It would potentially be very constructive if consultation process were to be applied in particular to guidelines for the consideration of planning applications in different communities.</p> <p>Not enough emphasis on role of parish council.</p>	<p>by the District Council.</p> <p>It is important that there is a clear and consistent approach to consultation on planning applications that is applied uniformly across the district. With regard to DPDs and SPDs the SCI makes it clear that consultation arrangements can be varied if this adds value to the process and makes it easier for the community to be involved.</p> <p>Parish Councils have a significant role. If their view is contrary to the officer recommendations and are based upon material planning considerations the application is referred to the Development Control Committee. The Parish Council has the opportunity to attend and address the Committee.</p>
Letcombe Brook Project	Appendix 2	Would like a number of local environmental interest groups set out in Appendix B of the representation to be added to Appendix 2 of the SCI.	The Council has no objection to the list of groups included in Appendix B being added to Appendix 2 of the SCI.
Persimmon Homes		Overall considered document is easily understood. Should be more succinct and presentational style would benefit from the use of photographs, maps and diagrams to break up text.	Noted. The Council considers that the document needs to be this length if it is to contain the necessary information to convey to the public how it is to involve them in the planning process. When the final version is published the Council will look again at presentation and the possibility of introducing photographs etc.

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
		Object to the requirement that representations on planning applications must be received within the specified time. All comments received prior to determination should be duly accepted.	The response period is in accordance with the Regulations. Where practicable and so long as it does not prejudice determination of applications within the Governments targets the Council will normally consider representations received after the specified time.
	Para 2.9	Danger that the SCI could mislead readers into believing that the DPDs produced at the district level will determine the amount and general location of development. Is necessary for the SCI to explain that the policies of the district Council must also be consistent with higher order policies and guidance and consultation on DPDs is not an opportunity to question established policies or guidance.	Paragraph 2.2 sets out that all the Councils Development Plan Documents must comply with the Regional Spatial Strategy. However, the Council would have no objection to the sentence also being included after the second sentence of para 2.9 to add clarity.
	Para 5.1	Failure to recognise the important role developers and land owners will have in influencing and importantly delivering the policies of the development plan. Para 5.1 be amended to include reference to land owners and developers working together with the Council and the community to meet the district's development requirements.	A reference to the role of developers is included in the last sentence of para 1.4. The Council would have no objection to amending para 5.1 to read '... by seeking early involvement from the local community (including the public, developers, town and parish councils and local organisations) on the content'.
	Para 5.2	Object to the final sentence of paragraph 5.2. It suggests to the reader that the Council may need to apply its discretion to which statutory requirements it will meet, in light of the resources that are available. Last sentence should state "overall context of international, national and regional policies and	The Council clearly demonstrates throughout the Statement of Community Involvement how it will meet the statutory requirements. The Council do not consider it necessary to refer

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
	Para 5.2	guidance, as well as the other policies of the district council". SCI should recognise that there are a number of international designations within the district.	to international policies and designations. Where relevant these are embodied in national legislation and/or dealt with in national planning guidance
	Para 5.4	Consider should be amended to include consultation techniques which intend to inform and educate the community on the wider policy context within which development plan documents and supplementary planning documents must be prepared.	The Council agrees that an understanding of planning issues is an important part of enabling effective community involvement. The Council's local plan documents include information and explanation about the wider policy context. The SCI refers to the wider policy context all is an example of how the use of the glossary, reference to web sites and organisations concerned with planning can help provide the public with a wider understanding.
	Para 5.6	There is a need to include reference to methods by which the Council intend to educate and inform the local community as well as simply listening to their views. Consultation is a two way process.	See response made to para 5.4 above
	Para 5.11	A further positive refinement would be to inform key stakeholders when their views are to be considered so that they may attend relevant committees or other meetings rather than being informed of the outcomes after the event.	The timetable of the Council's committees is available on the Council website along with agendas for those meetings. The Council would have no objection to providing such information where practical in its response to consultees and on its website.
			Anyone who submits written comments on a planning application is notified of the opportunity to speak at the Development Control Committee (para 6.15)

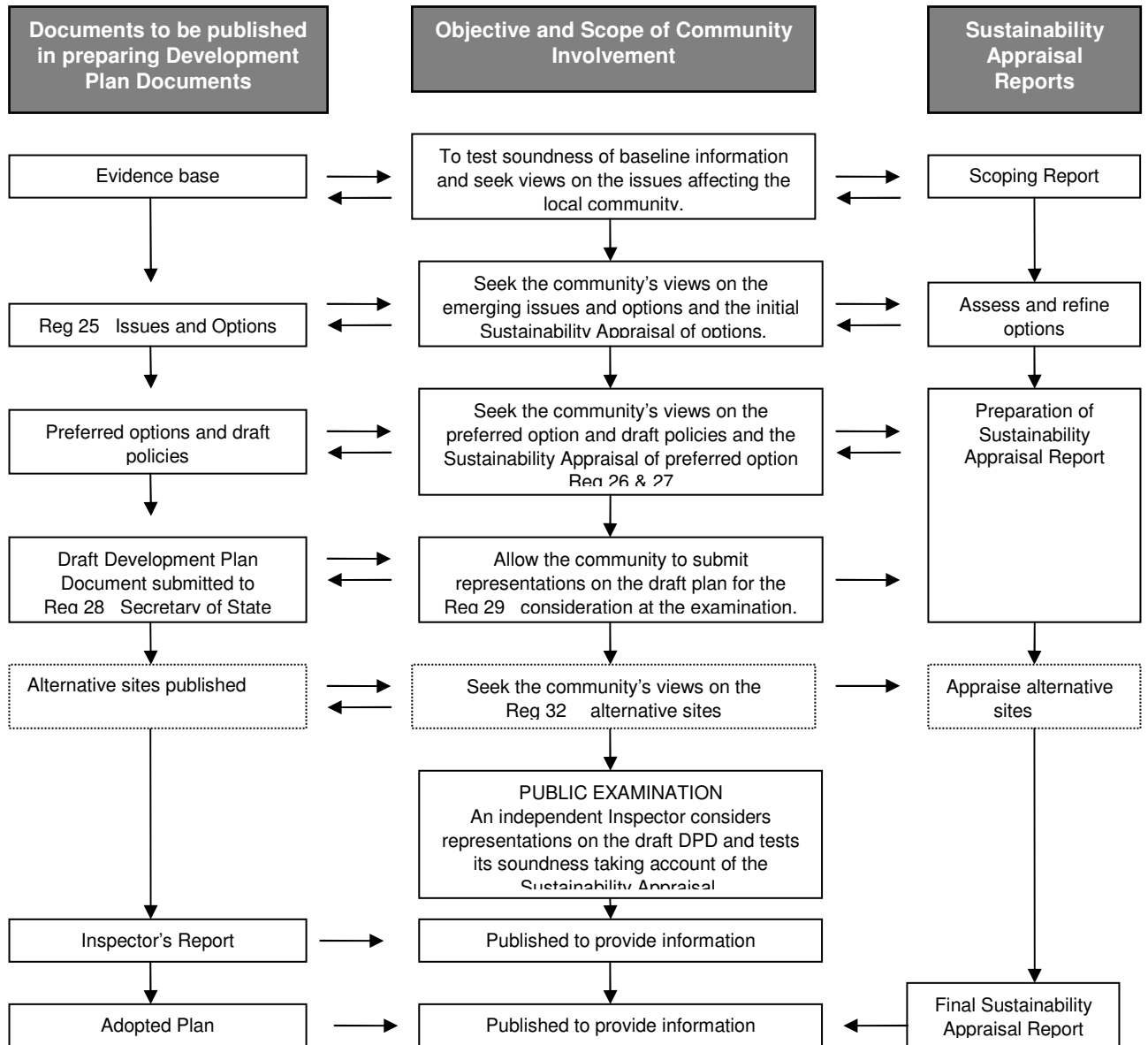
Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
	Para 5.13	In addition to standard forms and letters, an allowance should also be made for written reports.	The Council accepts written reports and has no objection to the inclusion of '(including written reports)' at the end of the first sentence of para 5.13 of the SCI.
	Para 5.27	Would be helpful when identifying the Preferred Option that the Council also explain why other main options were discounted.	The extent of background information available in the specific DPDs will be more appropriately decided when they are produced.
	Para 5.54	When significant changes are made to a draft SPD these should also be subject to further consultation in the interests of fairness and openness before the SPD is finally adopted.	There is no requirement in the regulations for a further round of consultation on SPDs. However if the Council feel significant changes have been made to an SPD they may consider further consultation in exceptional cases.
	Para 5.57	Should be amended to include a commitment by the Council to maintain a list of all adopted and emerging SPD's so the public are fully aware of their existence.	Paragraph 5.10 of the Statement of Community Involvement sets out the Council's commitment to provide information to the community. The Council has no objection to the second sentence being amended to read 'This will include providing lists of emerging and adopted documents, copies of documents'.
	Para 5.58	Stress that the sustainability appraisal must be undertaken by the Council to ensure that the strategic development requirements of the district are delivered in a sustainable manner and that they should not be used by the Council or any other party as a device to preclude or slow down the delivery of new development.	Sustainability appraisal of Local Development Documents will be undertaken in accordance with the process set out in Government guidance and will be undertaken in accordance with the timetable set out in the Council's Local Development Scheme which the Council must adhere to. The Council cannot comment with regard to the impact 'other parties' might have on the process.
		Should include a reference to the Council's role in	

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
	Para 6.1	explaining and educating the community on the importance of individual planning applications and how they will deliver the development plan strategy.	This statement clearly sets out the purpose of this Section of the SCI and it is not considered to need alteration as suggested.
	Para 6.3	Bullet point 7 – the Council have omitted to state that they will allow a further period of time for comments to be made. Further bullet point should be added to deal with applications that are determined under Officer Delegated Powers. Should be a requirement for an Officer's Delegated report to be made available.	The Council would have no objection to adding to the end of bullet point 7 the following ' and allow 21 days to comment.' A Schedule of delegated decisions is produced and is available for public inspection. The Council is currently investigating the possibility of producing fuller reports on delegated items but is not in a position to include this in the Statement of Community Involvement.
	Para 6.18	Amended to also refer to the use of special meetings where necessary for the consideration of large scale strategic sites. Flexibility should be given to the time allowed for public participation at such meetings. Reference should be made to extended presentations that developers may wish to make to the committee.	Occasionally the Council will have a Special Meeting for particularly significant proposals at which normal standing orders are relaxed to allow longer speaking by all interested parties.
	Para 6.20	Should positively confirm that the Council will receive planning applications electronically.	The Council can now receive applications electronically excluding payment of the fee and there is no need to change the paragraph.
	Para 6.21	Should confirm that all consultation responses received in respect of planning applications will be displayed on the website.	The Council is not required to and has made a decision not to proceed down this route. It considers, bearing in mind the IT resources available that it is more important at this time to

Organisation	Para No	Organisation's Comment	Council's Response
	Para 6.26	A further paragraph ought to be included which confirms that the Council will also provide advice on whether planning permission is required for non-householder development.	<p>have all the information relating to the development proposals available on the website.</p> <p>The Council currently provides such advice and has no objection to the inclusion of a new sentence at the end of para 6.26 'In addition the Council will provide advice on whether or not other forms of development require planning permission.'</p>

Appendix A

Figure 3. Process for preparing a Development Plan Document



Appendix B

List of Groups to be added to Environmental Interest Groups in Appendix 2 of SCI

Blewbury Village Society Environmental Group
Cumnor Conservation Group
Harwell Environment Group
Letcombe Conservation Society
Marcham Society
Wantage and District Field Club

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANNING AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY)
TO THE EXECUTIVE
2 JUNE 2006

Major and Minor Planning Applications Improvement Plan

1.0 **Introduction and Report Summary**

1.1 This report considers the implications of the Council being included on the list of Planning Standards Authorities for processing Major and Minor planning applications. Historical and current performance for processing all planning applications are considered, and an Improvement Plan is proposed in relation to Major and Minor applications.

1.2 The Contact Officer for this report is Mike Gilbert, Development Control Manager, telephone (01235) 547681.

2.0 **Recommendation**

2.1 *It is recommended that the proposed Improvement Plan and trajectory, as appended to this report, be agreed.*

3.0 **Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies**

3.1 This report is in accordance with Objective A of the Council's Vision.

4.0 **Background**

4.1 The Government is committed to improving the planning system, including the speed at which local authorities process planning applications. Performance indicators are used to monitor and compare the performance of all local authorities, and to drive the programme of continuous improvement.

4.2 BVPI 109 sets out the Government's targets for the time taken by local authorities to determine planning applications. Applications are divided into the following 3 categories:

Major - developments of 10 or more dwellings or 1,000 sq metres or more of commercial floorspace.

Minor - developments of less than 10 dwellings or less than 1,000 sq metres of commercial floorspace.

Other - changes of use, domestic extensions, advertisements, listed buildings consent and conservation area consent applications.

4.3 The Government's targets for the speed of determining applications are as follows:

Major applications – 60% to be determined within 13 weeks.

Minor applications – 65% to be determined within 8 weeks.

Other applications – 80% to be determined within 8 weeks.

Those local authorities which fall short of these targets are included on a list of Planning Standards Authorities published annually by the Government, which is seen as an incentive to improve performance. All local authorities are expected to achieve all of the targets by March

2007 and, thereafter, the targets will remain in force and performance will continue to be monitored by the Government.

- 4.4 At Appendix 1 are a list and graphs showing the Council's quarterly performance in determining Major, Minor and Other applications between March 2002 and December 2005. Performance has been extremely volatile for Major applications, which is due to the sensitivity of the figures arising from the relatively low number of applications involved (ie an average of only 36 applications per annum or 9 per quarter). A steady decline in performance relating to Major applications occurred between June 2004 and June 2005, which was due to the departure and/or long-term sickness absence of key members of staff. Performance for Minor applications has been more stable, although there was a noticeable dip between January and December 2004 which, again, coincided with the departure and/or long-term sickness absence of key members of staff. Although the target for Minor applications was only occasionally met between March 2002 and June 2005, the last two quarters have seen a marked improvement, with the target easily being met. The performance for Other applications generally has been very good, with the target being met in 12 of the last 15 quarters and easily being met in the last 3 quarters.
- 4.5 In December 2005, the Government announced that the Vale has been named as a potential Planning Standards Authority for the 2006/07 financial year for Major and Minor planning applications. This is due to the Council's performance for processing Major and Minor applications during the year ending June 2005 being below the Government's performance thresholds and it was considered unlikely that the thresholds would be achieved by 30 June 2006.
- 4.6 As a result, the Government has recommended that an Improvement Plan be drawn up and a trajectory of anticipated progress towards meeting the targets be prepared to ensure the performance targets are met by March 2007. This report, therefore, has been prepared to advise Members of the proposed Improvement Plan and trajectory.

5.0 **Current Position**

- 5.1 The list and graphs at Appendix 1 show that there has been a marked improvement in the performance of processing Minor applications since June 2005. This is largely due to the revised Scheme of Delegation, which came into effect in July 2005. Whilst the current high level of performance for processing both Minor and Other applications needs to be maintained, it is clear that the greatest effort needs to concentrate on achieving a consistently higher level of performance for processing Major applications (i.e. BVPI 109a).
- 5.2 The following actions have been carried out since June 2005 which will help to improve the performance of processing Major applications:
1. The revised Scheme of Delegation was introduced in July 2005 and has resulted in some Major applications being decided under delegated authority, which is speedier than having to be considered by the Development Control Committee.
 2. Since July 2005 planning applications have been capable of being submitted electronically.
 3. Since 1 December 2005 Major applications are prioritised on receipt to ensure they are processed more speedily.
 4. The Planning Support team has been reorganised. The recent introduction of multi-skilling means that each member of the team is responsible for carrying out all of the tasks relating to the registration of applications and carrying out consultations. This is a significant change from the previous linear process and has the major benefit of removing blockages in the process (and resulting delays) arising from the temporary absence of a member of staff. It needs to be noted, however, that following the

reorganisation and recent staff departures, the Planning Support team is not yet fully up to strength.

5.3 Some of the necessary processes and resources, therefore, are already in place to ensure improved performance in the processing of both Major and Minor applications. Nevertheless, it is clear that more needs to and can be done. To help achieve this, the advice of the Planning Advisory Service (a Government agency with a remit to support local planning authorities in improving their performance) has been sought, case studies of other local authorities have been considered, and a questionnaire has been sent to a number of top quartile performing local authorities. The resulting advice, information and ideas have been carefully considered, which has led to the preparation of the proposed Improvement Plan.

6.0 **Improvement Plan**

6.1 The proposed Improvement Plan for processing both Major and Minor applications is at Appendix 2. A number of actions will be taken over the next few months which will help with the speed of processing all planning applications. In particular, it is proposed to improve the current procedures for monitoring the progress of applications. With particular reference to Major applications, it is proposed to set out a “process map”, which will specify who does each part of the process and how much time they have to do it. This will lead to the preparation of an internal protocol which will include a timeframe for carrying out the various stages of processing the applications, a submission date agreed beforehand with the applicants, and a target Committee date for deciding the applications in the event they need to be considered by Committee.

6.2 The principal risk to achieving and maintaining any improvement in performance is considered to be the potential loss of staff. Performance has dipped noticeably in the past when key members of staff have left and the process of recruiting a replacement has taken longer than expected. The Best Value Review of the Development Control Service carried out in 2001, for example, found a clear correlation between the number of Case Officers and performance. As a result, the Improvement Plan includes an action to help ensure the maintenance of staff resources. It is recommended that use is made of Planning Delivery Grant money to set up a fund to draw on when key members of staff leave. The fund will enable a consultant to be employed temporarily, but on a full-time basis, until a permanent replacement is recruited, thereby helping to maintain a full complement of staff.

6.3 A further consideration is the potential loss of the 2 Planning Technicians, who provide essential support within the 2 area teams and handle a number of the more straightforward planning applications. The creation of these 2 posts has been an essential reason for the recent improved performance in processing planning applications, as their support within the teams has helped the 8 principal Case Officers to prioritise their caseload of applications. The 2 posts, however, are funded through the Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) on a temporary basis. As the PDG is expected to end in 2008, there is uncertainty about the future funding of the posts which, in turn, creates uncertainty about future performance.

6.4 The only other resource implications of the Improvement Plan are the proposed introduction of voicemail and the possible outsourcing of some Legal work relating to the preparation of Section 106 Obligations.

6.5 A trajectory of the anticipated progress towards meeting the Government’s target for processing Major applications is at Appendix 3. A trajectory for Minor applications has not been prepared, as the target is now being met and it is a purpose of the Improvement Plan to help ensure the current level of performance is maintained.

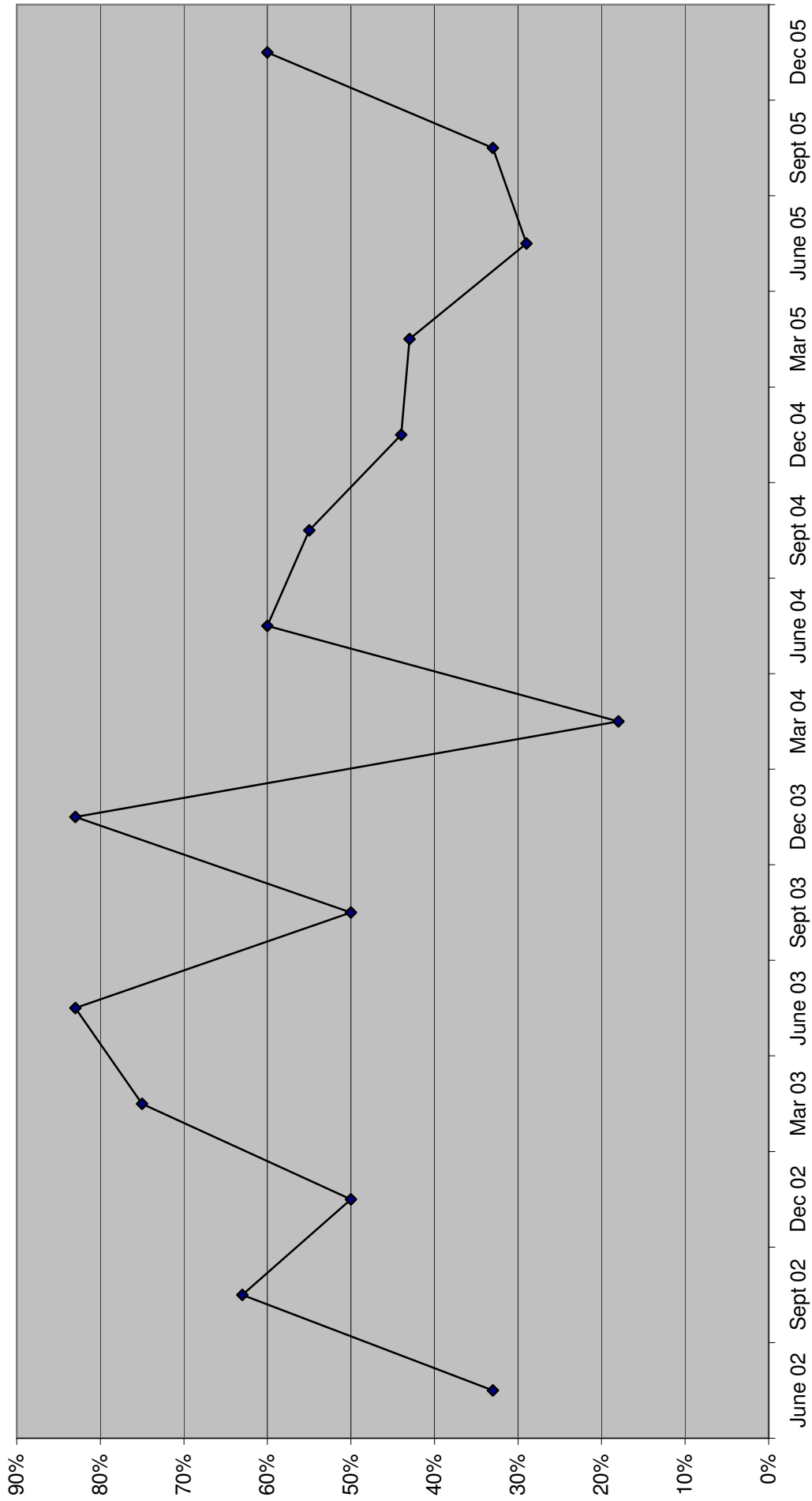
RODGER HOOD
Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy)

TIM SADLER
Strategic Director

**Major, Minor and Other Planning Applications Performance
2002/03-2005/06**

2002/03	Major	Minor	Other
Apr-Jun	33% (5/15)	59% (63/106)	87% (370/426)
Jul-Sep	63% (5/8)	59% (61/104)	90% (335/372)
Oct-Dec	50% (4/8)	65% (47/72)	83% (230/277)
Jan-Mar	75% (6/8)	63% (70/111)	86% (282/329)
2003/04			
Apr-Jun	83% (5/6)	57% (55/96)	87% (317/363)
Jul-Sep	50% (6/12)	68% (68/100)	83% (275/330)
Oct-Dec	83% (5/6)	61% (42/69)	85% (248/291)
Jan-Mar	18% (2/11)	50% (66/132)	82% (234/286)
2004/05			
Apr-Jun	60% (6/10)	45% (50/111)	77% (273/354)
Jul-Sep	55% (5/9)	49% (58/119)	71% (255/358)
Oct-Dec	44% (4/9)	51% (57/111)	77% (231/300)
Jan-Mar	43% (3/7)	61% (48/79)	82% (237/289)
2005/06			
Apr-Jun	29% (2/7)	59% (55/92)	85% (268/314)
Jul-Sep	33% (3/9)	70% (66/94)	86% (292/338)
Oct-Dec	60% (6/10)	75% (80/106)	88% (240/272)

MAJOR APPLICATIONS



Major & Minor Planning Applications Improvement Plan

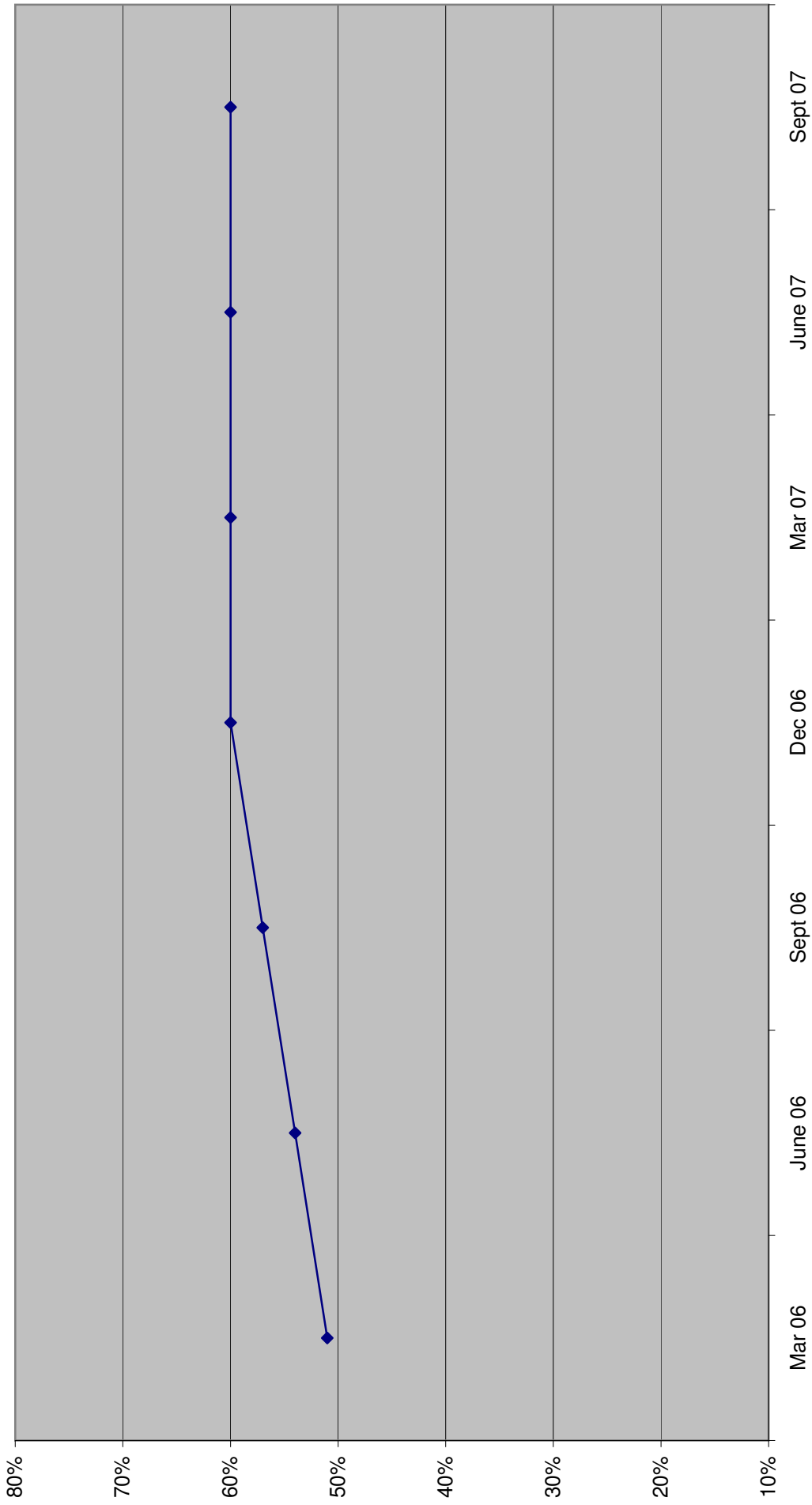
Action	Who	Timescale	Resource Implications	Date Achieved
<p>Improve Support Processes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare Validation Checklists to be sent out with planning application forms, which will clearly set out for applicants the information required to be submitted before an application can be accepted as being valid. 2. Achieve an agreed target for the time taken from the validation of applications to their receipt by the Case Officer – create a local performance indicator. 	<p>MG</p> <p>MG/RA</p>	<p>End of April '06</p> <p>End of August '06</p>	<p>No cost implications 20 hours staff time</p> <p>No cost implications 6 hours staff time</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Develop a Major Applications Protocol</p>	<p>MG</p>	<p>End of July '06</p>	<p>No cost implications 20 hours staff time</p> <p>No cost implications 40 hours staff time</p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Set out a “process map” for Major applications, specifying who does each part of the whole process and how much time they have to do it. 4. Set up a Protocol (derived from the “process map”) for processing Major applications to include a timeframe for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and manage pre-application discussions, in accordance with the Development Team Approach Protocol where appropriate • Agree an informal “contract” with applicants relating to agreed submission and Committee dates (in the event applications need to be considered by Committee) 	<p>MG, MD & GL</p>	<p>End of August '06</p>		

Action	Who	Timescale	Resource Implications	Date Achieved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APO's to check the validity of applications • Consultations and site visits to be carried out promptly • On-going discussions to be held with APO and DCM to discuss any difficulties or matters arising • On-going discussions to be held with legal and OCC to ensure timely progress of Section 106 Obligations • Cajole consultees to respond in a timely fashion • Discuss any necessary amendments with the applicants • Ensure the target Committee date is met • When an application is considered unacceptable, non-compliance with the Protocol by applicants may well lead to a refusal of permission <p>Improve Monitoring</p>				
<p>5. Improve the monitoring of Major applications by setting up and keeping up-to-date a table on the p-drive of the computer network.</p>	GL & MD	End of July '06	No cost implications 10 hours staff time	
<p>6. Improve the monitoring of Majors and Minors by making better use of the Uniform computer system – running reports per Case Officer, application type, and decisions made and required to be made within a given timeband. Regular monitoring to be carried out by APO's and overseen on a monthly basis by the DCM.</p>	MG, RA, GL & MD	End of July '06	No cost implications 40 hours staff time	
<p>Raise Awareness</p> <p>7. Publicise the above Protocol on the Council's website, by</p>	MG	End of July '06	No cost implications 6 hours staff time	No cost implications 4 hours staff time

Action	Who	Timescale	Resource Implications	Date Achieved
<p>including it in the guidance notes accompanying planning application forms, and by letters to be sent to regular agents and consultees.</p> <p>8. Write to OCC seeking their commitment to completing their Section 106 Agreements speedily and within agreed timescales.</p> <p>9. Meet with internal consultees to discuss ways of improving their consultation replies.</p> <p>10. Amend the standard letters to consultees to place greater emphasis on the need for prompt consultation replies.</p> <p>11. Emphasise to Members the importance of meeting the 8 and 13 week targets. Refer this Improvement Plan to the Executive, Development Control Committee, and Scrutiny Committee. Encourage Members to use their power to refer applications to Committee sparingly and, when they do, to ensure they notify the Case Officer as early as possible.</p> <p>Optimise Use of Resources</p> <p>12. Ensure staff resources are maintained by setting up a fund to draw on when key members of staff leave. A consultant will be employed temporarily and full-time until a permanent replacement is recruited.</p>	<p>MG</p> <p>MG & RH</p> <p>MG</p> <p>MG/RH</p> <p>RH</p>	<p>End of April '06</p> <p>End of July '06</p> <p>End of May '06</p> <p>End of June '06</p> <p>End of July '06</p>	<p>No cost implications 10 hours staff time</p> <p>No cost implications 6 hours staff time</p> <p>No cost implications 6 hours staff time</p> <p>Appropriate use of Planning Delivery Grant 6 hours staff time</p> <p>£10k – to be funded from Planning Delivery Grant 2 hours staff time</p> <p>Outsourcing of any Legal work would have cost implications</p>	<p>Completed</p>

Action	Who	Timescale	Resource Implications	Date Achieved
<p>13. Seek the early introduction of Voicemail as a means of freeing up Case Officer time.</p>	RH	End of March '06	20 hours staff time	Completed
<p>14. Meet with Legal to agree ways of speeding up the preparation of Section 106 Agreements. Possible outsourcing of some Legal work, and the use of templates and standard clauses to be considered.</p>	MG & RH	End of July '06	No cost implications 15 hours staff time	
<p>15. Carry out an assessment of the caseloads and capacity of the APO's and Principal Planning Officers (i.e. the Major applications Case Officers).</p>	MG	End of June '06	No cost implications 40 hours staff time	
<p>16. Recruit staff to the 1.5 vacant Planning Support posts.</p>	MG/RA	End of May '06		Completed

Trajectory for Major Applications



REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY)
TO THE EXECUTIVE
2 June 2006

CCTV Re-Organisation

1.0 Introduction and Report Summary

1.1 The Executive will be aware that the 2006/7 budget contained two commitments to make savings within CCTV, these are;

- The merging of the current out-of-hours Duty Officer system with CCTV;
- The deletion of the post of CCTV Manager.

1.2 This report recommends decisions necessary to achieve these commitments.

1.3 The contact officer for this report is Paul Staines, Assistant Director (Housing and Community Safety) tel. 01235-547621.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 *That the Executive agree to the proposals to merge the Duty Officer system with CCTV and delegate to the Assistant Director (Housing and Community Safety) the task of introducing this by September 2006.*

2.2 *The Executive recommend to PRAC the deletion of the post of CCTV Manager from the current staff structure and the creation of the post of CCTV Supervisor with effect from 30/06/2006.*

3.0 Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies

3.1 This report relates to the Council's Vision and strands A, B and E in particular.

3.2 The report relates to the Vale's Community Safety Strategy.

3.3 The report complies with Council policy in terms of staff reorganisation and implementation of budget decisions.

4.0 Background and Supporting Information

4.1 The 2006/7 budget demonstrated the Council's commitment to maintaining an effective CCTV service.

4.2 In total the Council approved circa £60,000 of additional monies to fund the essential running costs of CCTV, costs which grow both as a result of the increased number of cameras which now operating in the District and because of the increasing complexity of the CCTV infrastructure.

4.3 Alongside this however, the budget also made two commitments to achieve savings through more efficient management and operation of the CCTV unit. These savings commitments were:

- A merging of the Council's Duty Officer system with the CCTV unit;

- The restructure of the CCTV establishment and the deletion of the post of CCTV Manager.

4.4 This report sets out a methodology for achieving these savings as detailed below.

5.0 Merging of the Duty Officer system with CCTV

5.1 Members will be aware that the Council currently operates a duty officer system between the hours of 5 pm to 8.45am, Monday to Friday and from 5pm each Friday until 8.45 the following Monday each week to deal with out-of-hours emergencies. The rota comprises 5 volunteer officers and the total cost to the Council is circa £17,000 per annum.

5.2 Officers believe that it makes operational as well as financial sense for this system to be merged with the CCTV operator duty rota since this already provides 24 hours a day, 7 days a week cover for the CCTV operators. These officers, who number 6 FTE at full staffing levels can be provided with the necessary facilities to ensure that emergency calls are logged and dealt with appropriately and these operational efficiencies will realise a saving for the Council since the current Duty Officer system would no longer need to be resourced.

5.3 All staff affected by the proposal have been given an early draft of this report and it is intended that all will be provided with a final copy of the report and asked to comment if they so wish before the Executive consider the report so that those comments can be tabled at the meeting. In addition a copy of the report has been provided to Unison and an agenda item placed on the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) that meets before the Executive

5.4 Those staff that have taken the opportunity to comment on the early draft of the report have voiced concerns , these can be summarised as follows.

5.5 Current Duty Officer staff are unhappy that they are being required to give up the work and remuneration attached to it and have expressed concerns that the quality of the Duty Officer service will suffer as a result of CCTV staff being required to carry this task out in addition to their current duties.

5.6 The response of managers to this concern is:

- i The current staff complement of CCTV operators is one that the managers and supervisor of the CCTV unit consider to be sufficient to operate the CCTV unit at the required levels. At present there are 2 vacancies within the unit and it is accepted that a full complement of staff needs to be in place before the Duty Officer system can be amalgamated. Recruitment is under way and will be complete before the Duty Officer system is merged with CCTV.

5.7 CCTV staff have made the following comments:

- i. The first area of concern is the current staff levels within the CCTV unit. Staff believe that they will not be able to take on the Duty Officer system at current staffing levels. The conclusion of the staff is that it will not be possible to take on the duty officer system until the staffing levels are at full capacity.
- ii. The second area of concern is that of work load and in particular where there is a conflict between the roles of CCTV Operator and Duty Officer. The staff are employed as CCTV operators feel they are under increasing pressure by the Police and South Oxfordshire District Council to produce results from the CCTV system, and that the Duty Officer role could detract from this.
- iii. The staff question whether the Duty Officer work is of a more senior nature than their current duties and whether they should be remunerated for it.

5.8 The response of managers to these points is as follows:

- i. This is dealt with in paragraph 5.5 (i);
- ii. The Deputy Director charged with the management of the Duty Officer system has carried out a detailed analysis of the call out and work rate for Duty Officers. Managers have examined this and are content that it is sufficiently slight for CCTV operators to be able to carry on their current work whilst at the same time dealing with Duty Officer call outs as they arise. Managers are content that with appropriate training and systems in place that the Duty Officer system will be maintained at its current high standard;
- iii. Managers are content to revise current job descriptions for CCTV operators and examine whether additional seniority is gained although it is not their view that this additional work should materially affect the current job grades.

6.0 Project Outline

6.1 If the Executive are minded to approve this project, it will be necessary to delivery the following key milestones:

- Provide appropriate training for all CCTV staff on the Duty Officer system;
- Put in place appropriate telephone and IT systems in the CCTV control suite.

6.2 Officers believe this can be achieved by September 2006, thus achieving the savings commitment ear-marked in the budget for the first year of this project.

7.0 Restructure of CCTV

7.1 The Executive will be aware that in 2005 the Executive considered the issue of staffing difficulties within CCTV.

7.2 As a result of these considerations the Executive agreed to fund a full time supervisor post within CCTV to carry out shift and man management of the CCTV operators together with other related staff issues.

7.3 This post was agreed on a temporary basis for 6 months, after which a review of its effectiveness would take place. Since that date there have been other issues that have caused this temporary arrangement to be extended. However it is now appropriate to review these arrangements and to make the appropriate alterations to the establishment.

7.4 Managers have been very pleased with the creation of the supervisor post. As a result the CCTV unit has been more closely managed and staff absenteeism and sickness has decreased considerably.

7.5 Key partner agencies, these being Thames Valley Police and South Oxfordshire District Council have reported increased satisfaction with the service being provided by the CCTV unit.

7.6 Equally importantly the staff have advised managers in a formal survey that they believe that the appointment of a CCTV supervisor has provided them with higher quality line management and supervision and have voiced their support for the post being made part of the CCTV staff establishment. Accordingly the Council has approved the creation of this full time post in the budget.

7.7 The creation of the post however leads the Council to reflect on the need for the post of CCTV Manager, currently a 0.6 FTE post within the CCTV structure. The Executive may be aware that the post of CCTV Manager has fallen vacant following the resignation of the last post-holder.

- 7.8 This post was created at a time when CCTV was being implemented and the post was created to carry out a dual function of both managing staff and providing the necessary technical and developmental support for CCTV.
- 7.9 Latterly CCTV has entered a period of consolidation, expansion has decreased and is expected to decrease further and the relevance of the role of CCTV Manager with its heavy emphasis on technical development has waned.
- 7.10 In the budget for 2006/7 the Council has agreed increased resources for the implementation of maintenance contracts for the entire CCTV system which should mean that operators are able to call upon specialist technical experts to effect maintenance and repairs as when the need arises. The implementation of this maintenance regime further erodes the necessity of the CCTV Manager.
- 7.11 For these reasons officers are recommending to the Executive that they recommend to PRAC the following:
- The post of CCTV Manager be deleted from the establishment of the Authority;
 - That the permanent post of CCTV Supervisor be added to the establishment of the Authority at its current grade and that officers be charged with moving as quickly possible to filling this post.
- 7.12 If members are minded to recommend this to PRAC, officers consider that the new establishment can be put in place by the end of September 2006. This will ensure that the saving identified in the budget is achieved.

8.0 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 The risks associated with not carrying out the recommendations in the report are as follows:
- 8.2 In respect of the proposal to merge the duty officer and CCTV units, should this recommendation not be accepted then the Council will have a shortfall in its budget of £11,000 2006/7 (FTE £17,000) that it will need to fund from additional savings elsewhere in the Council.
- 8.3 In respect of the proposed restructure there is a risk that the progress made in effectively managing CCTV will be halted. This could lead to an increase in dissatisfaction with the service from our key partners and a decrease in staff morale. There would also be a shortfall in the Council's budget of £9,000 (FYE).

PAUL STAINES
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY)

Press Release



Listening Learning Leading

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Council Leaders Go Public on Possibility of a Single Council for Southern Oxfordshire

The Leaders of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils today announced that they had agreed to work together to explore the possibility of creating a single unitary council covering the whole of southern Oxfordshire.

The area has a combined population of nearly 250,000, easily bigger than a number of existing high performing unitary authorities. The largest centres of population within each existing district, Abingdon and Didcot, sit on the boundary of the two districts and are only five miles apart.

The two Council Leaders, Jerry Patterson of the Vale of White Horse and Ann Ducker of South Oxfordshire District Council, have decided to make their plans public in the run up to the expected publication of a Government White Paper in the summer that will address the reorganisation of local government. The Government has indicated that it wants proposals to come from local councils, rather than be imposed from above. A unitary southern Oxfordshire council would mean local control over services such as education, social services, libraries and highways as well as current district council services.

What makes this proposal particularly interesting is that it crosses the political divide. South Oxfordshire is currently Conservative controlled, while Vale of White Horse is run by the Liberal Democrats. The two councils, however, already have a strong track record of working together and recently put in place a combined finance, revenues and benefits team under a single Head of Finance who will work for both councils. The Leaders of the main opposition parties have given their endorsement to examining the possibility of creating a single unitary authority for southern Oxfordshire.

South Oxfordshire Leader, Ann Ducker said: "I am very pleased to make this joint announcement with Jerry. Up to now the debate about unitary councils has tended to focus on urban areas like Oxford. We feel that there are strong efficiency and effectiveness arguments for unitary rural councils too and we must make sure that the Government does not neglect this in the forthcoming debate. With a population of 250,000, significantly larger than any of the six unitary councils in Berkshire that have been running now for nearly a decade, we think that a unitary council for southern Oxfordshire makes sense and will offer

residents better services than the current two-tier arrangements. I am keen that we start work to explore what is possible without delay.”

Vale of White Horse Leader Jerry Patterson said: “I have no doubt that a single unitary Council for the market towns and villages of southern Oxfordshire is the right way forward. It will provide real community leadership with real accountability. People who live and work in the area would have one local Council with which to plan and deliver improved prosperity and quality of life.”

The two Leaders are also calling on the six local authorities in Oxfordshire to work together on looking at the different options for local government in the county. Oxford City and Oxfordshire County Councils have already put forward their ideas. Cllr Patterson added: “I see little point in the six councils working separately on this. We must listen to the residents of Oxfordshire and come up with proposals that are in their best interests. I think that the best way of achieving this would be to work collectively and share knowledge and ideas.”

Ends

Note to editors

The contact details for the Leaders and Opposition leaders for both Councils are:

Vale of White Horse District Council

Leader, Councillor Jerry Patterson 01235 540391 or 01865 730588 (home)

Opposition leader, Councillor Melinda Tilley, 01235 540366 or 01865 820385 (home)

South Oxfordshire District Council

Leader, Councillor Ann Ducker 01491 823130

Opposition leader, Councillor David Turner 01865 891169

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