

Date: 29 June 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, 7th July, 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 11)**

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 2 June 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**

**(Pages 12 - 15)**

Call-In of Executive Decision – Internal Audit Plan 2005/06 Outturn Improvements in the Internal Control Environment

In the 2005/06 Internal Audit annual report, which was considered by the Executive on 5 May (ref. 287/05), the Assistant Director (Audit) highlighted three areas of the internal control environment which needed to be improved:

- (a) The full implementation of the Debt Strategy, which is essential to achieving and maintaining robust control over debt [owed to the Council]
- (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

At its 18<sup>th</sup> May meeting the Scrutiny Committee recommended that the Executive receives a progress report on each of these areas. The Executive agreed to this recommendation.

A progress report is attached. Members are asked to note progress made to date in context. The Chief Finance Officer is satisfied that the internal control environment is adequate. As

more of the outstanding actions are completed, so the control environment will further improve. However, none of the outstanding actions are critical and should not displace service plan priorities.

*Recommendation*

*Members are asked to consider the progress made to date and indicate, if necessary, whether further action is required.*

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

**(Pages 16 - 18)**

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”.

This item was deferred at the last meeting of the Executive on 2 June 2006 to allow the collation of further information to assist the Executive.

To receive and consider the attached briefing paper of the Strategic Director.

**9. Financial Monitoring**

**(Pages 19 - 21)**

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

**KEY DECISIONS**

**10. Forward Plan**

**(Pages 22 - 25)**

To receive the Forward Plan containing Executive decisions to be taken from July to October 2006.

*Recommendation*

*that the Forward Plan be received.*

**OTHER MATTERS**

**11. Local Area Agreement**

The Local Area Agreement for Oxfordshire was due to be signed by the County Council by 30 June 2006. An oral report will be made at the meeting.

**12. Revised Comprehensive Performance Assessment Action Plans**

To note that the revised Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Action Plans

(referred to at the last meeting in the Corporate Governance report) have been produced and are included in the Best Value Performance Plan. The Best Value Performance Plan was due to be approved by 30 June 2006, under delegated authority.

**13. Securing Improvement - Audit Commission Report**

**(Pages 26 - 44)**

To receive the attached Audit Commission report on Securing Improvement and invite the Strategic Director to bring back to a future meeting of the Executive a proposed response to its recommendations.

**14. Performance Management - Audit Commission Report**

**(Pages 45 - 60)**

To receive the attached Audit Commission report on Performance Management and invite the Strategic Director to bring back to a future meeting of the Executive a proposed response to its recommendations.

**15. Affordable Housing Inspection**

**(Pages 61 - 64)**

To receive and consider report 36/06 of the Strategic Director.

Introduction and Report Summary

The Executive will be aware that the Housing Inspector carried out an inspection of the Council's Affordable Housing Service during April 2006.

The Council has now received the final report from the Housing Inspector and a copy is available on the web site. This report summarises the findings of this report, and sets out the key messages for the Council as it seeks to drive forward continuous improvement.

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

Recommendations

*That the Executive receive and note the findings of the Housing Inspector and*

*Request that the Assistant Director (housing and community safety) ensure that the recommendations of the inspector are incorporated into the service development plans for the housing service*

*Request that officers use the recommendations of the Inspector to drive service developments across the Authority as part of the Council's drive towards an improved CPA rating.*

**16. Financial Out-turn 2005/06**

**(Pages 65 - 84)**

To receive and consider report 37/06 of the Strategic Director.

Introduction and Report Summary

The report details, in accordance with the Corporate Planning Framework, the outturn position for 2005/06, subject to audit.

The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Bishop, Strategic Director (& Chief Finance Officer),

(01235 540332).

**Recommendations**

*Members are requested to:*

*Note the overall outturn position of the Council as well as the outturn of individual service areas and cost centres; and,*

*Take into account the impact of the outturn position in the Integrated Service and Financial Planning process when setting the 2006/07 Revised Budget and 2007/08 Original Budget.*

**17. Vale of White Horse Local Plan to 2011 - Supplementary Planning Guidance**

To receive and consider report 27/06 of the Strategic and Local Planning Advisory Group and the recommendations of the Development Control Committee.

**MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO BRING TO THIS MEETING THE SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS SENT WITH THE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING HELD ON 3 JULY 2006. THIS DOCUMENT WAS SEPARATELY STAPLED FROM THE MAIN AGENDA.**

**18. Didcot Growth Point Bid**

South Oxfordshire District Council has made an initial submission to the Department for Communities and Local Government expressing interest in the designation of Didcot as a growth point. Designation could unlock additional funding for services and infrastructure which South Oxfordshire District Council feel would assist in making Didcot a more sustainable and self-contained community. South Oxfordshire has not yet formally decided that it wishes to seek growth area status for Didcot as councillors do not want to commit themselves to such a significant decision without understanding the scale of Government investment that might be available. The submission is caveated by two provisos that South Oxfordshire District Council will want to see met before taking a formal decision. The provisos are:

- i) any decision to expand Didcot above the current level of growth proposed in the South East Plan must go through the proper planning process; and
- ii) the level of investment offered by Government must be sufficient to enable real inroads to be made into delivering the infrastructure that Didcot needs.

An increase of 1,500 dwellings above the current allocation of 3,000 dwellings for Didcot is proposed to meet the criteria laid down by Government for being designated as a new growth point.

Clearly this Council will need to be involved in the growth point bid. At this stage it is not appropriate for this Council to say whether it supports the growth point bid or not as more information is needed as to what it would involve. However, it is necessary for officers of this Council to work with officers of South Oxfordshire District Council to clarify the nature of the growth bid and the potential impact of the proposed increased levels of growth. It is also suggested that members of the two Councils may wish to discuss together the implications of such a significant decision. Nevertheless, the ultimate decision of whether to support the growth point bid must remain with each District Council separately.

**Recommendation**

*that authority be delegated to the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) in consultation with the Executive portfolio holder for planning to set up an appropriate mechanism at officer and member levels to work with South Oxfordshire District Council to assess the implications of making a growth point bid for Didcot to the Department of Communities and*

*Local Government.*

**19. Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006-2026**

**(Pages 85 - 101)**

(Wards Affected: Craven; Faringdon and The Coxwells; Shrivenham; Stanford; )

To receive and consider report 30/06 of the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy).

**Introduction and Report Summary**

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West, (the South West Plan) has been published for consultation purposes. The document looks ahead to 2026, and will supersede the current Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10). Although the Vale is not in the South West, the Vale's western boundary is co-terminous with part of the south west's regional boundary. Although in the area covered by the South West Plan, the town of Swindon is just 'over the border' and therefore policies in the South West Plan relating to the Borough and its surrounding area are of particular significance to this Council.

The documents published for consultation include; the draft Regional Spatial Strategy itself, an Implementation Plan; a Strategic Sustainability Assessment; and a Pre-Submission Consultation Statement.

These documents are currently held in the Planning Strategy team. Please contact Nick Burroughs or Katie Barrett if you wish to inspect them.

The consultation period runs from 6 June to 30 August 2006.

In summary, Swindon is identified in the South West Plan as one of 21 'Strategically Significant Cities and Towns'. Relevant policies are included to, among other things; realise and develop the role of Swindon as a service and employment centre providing a high quality lifestyle for residents within and adjoining the town (SR1), ensure that social, cultural and educational requirements for the Swindon sub-region are provided for (SR7), maximise economic opportunities within the Swindon travel to work area (SR8), make the best use of land for development by the provision of a strategic urban extension on the eastern side of Swindon to the north and south of the A420 (SR9).

This report summarises key elements of the proposed strategy and outlines suggested responses to the South West Regional Assembly.

The Contact Officer for this report is Nick Burroughs, Planning Strategy team, tel. 01235 520202 extn 496.

**Recommendation**

*It is recommended that the Strategic and Local Plan Advisory Group recommends the Executive to make representations on the South West Plan set out as comments in bold in Section 4 of this report.*

**20. Planning Delivery Grant**

**(Pages 102 - 107)**

To receive and consider report 38/06 of the Strategic Director.

**Introduction and Report Summary**

On 5 May the Executive was advised of the details of the 2006/7 Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) awarded to the Council, by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) as announced on

30 March. A further report was promised to bring forward spending proposals following discussion with the Executive's Planning Portfolio Holder. These discussions have now taken place and this report provides a brief overview of the current PDG position and puts forward proposals which would commit the remaining uncommitted grant. Delegated authority is sought for the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy) in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder, to take forward and implement the proposals.

The Contact Officer for this report is Rodger Hood (Deputy Director, Planning & Community Strategy) (01235 540340).

### Recommendations

*The Executive is recommended to:*

*consider and endorse the proposals for planning delivery grant spending as set out in this report;*

*delegate authority to the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy) in consultation with the Planning Portfolio holder to take forward and implement the proposals ensuring that spending remains within the available budget.*

## **21. Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy**

**(Pages 108 - 121)**

To receive and consider report 39/06 of the Strategic Director.

### Introduction and Report Summary

This report recommends the adoption of a Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy to guide the Council's enforcement work on envirocrimes. This will be a working document subject to consultation and finalization in September 2006. In pursuit of this, the report recommends the adoption of a charging regime for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) and other actions to allow their implementation from September 2006 onwards. It also indicates the offences for priority action.

The report also recommends consolidation of already agreed envirocrimes policies into a consolidated Environmental Health Enforcement Policy for consultation and finalization in September 2006

The contact officer for this report is David Stevens, Assistant Director (Environmental Health) telephone 01235 540378

### Recommendations

- (a) *that Members approve the draft Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy attached at Appendix 1.*
- (b) *that Members recommend to Council the Charging Scheme for FPNs as attached at Appendix 3*
- (c) *that Members note the level of existing support for a Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy outlined in Appendix 2 and agree that the proposed route for consultation and engagement should be to:*
  - (i) *apply the draft Strategy as an interim strategy pending consultation*
  - (i) *address the outcome of public consultation over July and August 2006*
  - (ii) *finalise the Strategy in September 2006*

- (d) *that Members approve the approach to enforcement policy changes, namely to
  - (i) *consolidate previously agreed FPN criteria and Fly-Tipping prosecution presumption into the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy*
  - (ii) *consult on the consolidated Environmental Health Enforcement Policy*
  - (iii) *bring the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy to September Council**
- (e) *that Members note the proposed implementation and priorities for FPNs from September 2006 after a period of public awareness raising*
- (f) *that Members note that with existing resources it will be possible to provide a low level reactive response to incidents but not to extend this to patrolling or surveillance activities and that both the level of activity and related resource needs will be kept under review.*

**22. Tree Policy**

**(Pages 122 - 158)**

To receive and consider report 40/06 of the Strategic Director.

**Introduction and Report Summary**

The Government recognizes the value of trees and the need to plan for a more sustainable future so it encourages Local Authorities to produce long term plans for the care of its trees. This policy document is our response to this encouragement and it sets out a series of actions that will help maintain and increase the number of trees within the Vale.

The contact officer for this report is George Reade, Landscape Officer (Arboriculture) 01235 520202 x 504.

**Recommendations**

*that the Council adopts the policy document.*

**23. Viability of the Direct Services Organisation**

**(Pages 159 - 166)**

To receive and consider report 41/06 of the Strategic Director.

**Introduction and Report Summary**

This report relates to the Direct Services Organisation (DSO) performance and financial review and its viability as a Council service.

It also relates to Address Management which has been integrated into the DSO administration.

The Contact Officer for this report is Bill Farrar, Deputy Director (Commercial Services), Tel: 01235 540202 ext 356

**Recommendation**

*The Executive is recommended to:*

*Recognise the high performance of the DSO during the past 12 months and its continuing improvement.*



*Endorse the continuation of the DSO subject to its ongoing financial viability and achievement of its Business Plan.*

**24. Gambling Act 2005 – Draft Statement of Gambling Policy**

**(Pages 167 - 169)**

Appended to this agenda is the covering report 35/06 of the Assistant Director (Environmental Health) to the Licensing Committee. The Committee met on the 5<sup>th</sup> July to consider the report in detail and make recommendations to Council. The covering report is on this agenda for the Executive's information only.

The Gambling Bill was introduced into Parliament on 18th October 2004. Following consideration by the House of Commons and the House of Lords, it received Royal Assent on 7th April 2005, and became the Gambling Act 2005.

The Gambling Act 2005 will modernise gambling legislation, which is currently regulated by the Gaming Board, local magistrates and local authorities. The existing three Acts, the Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963; the Gaming Act 1968; and the Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976 will be consolidated into a single Act. These will all be repealed in September 2007.

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the scope of the Gambling Act. It also sets out a programme to develop a draft statement of policy, to consult upon its contents and to publish a final statement in line with legal requirements.

Recommendation

*Members are requested to note the scope and likely implications of the Gambling Act 2005 and the proposals for drafting, consultation and finalisation.*

**25. Green Travel Plan**

**(Pages 170 - 179)**

Attached is the final version of the Green Travel Plan and Members' endorsement is sought.

Recommendations

- (a) *that the Green travel Plan be adopted;*
- (b) *that authority be delegated to the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) to make any minor editorial amendments; and*
- (c) *that authority be delegated to the Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) in consultation with the Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for the Green Travel Plan to approve arrangements for its launch.*

**26. Exclusion of the Public, including the Press**

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

- Item 27 Minutes  
(Category 3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information.)

Item 28 Energy Contracts  
(Category 3)

Item 29 Property Matters  
(Category 3)

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

**STANDING ITEMS**

**27. Minutes**

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Exempt minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 2 June 2006, (previously circulated).

**OTHER MATTERS**

**28. Energy Contracts**

(Page 180)

To receive and consider the attached briefing note of the Assistant Director (Estates).

**29. Property Matters**

(Pages 181 - 185)

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

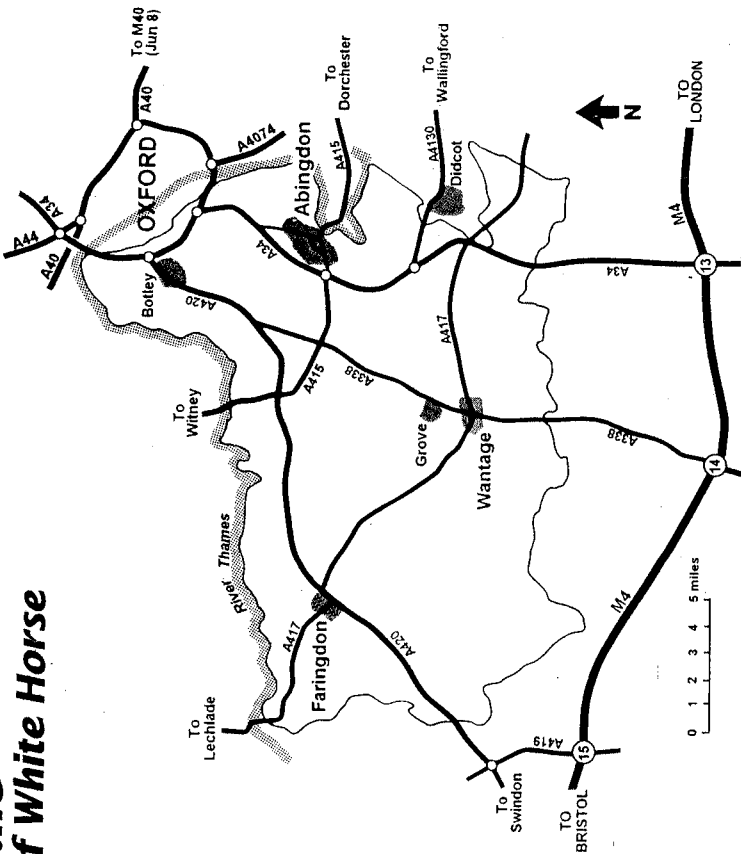
Create a safer community and improve the quality of life among Vale residents

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

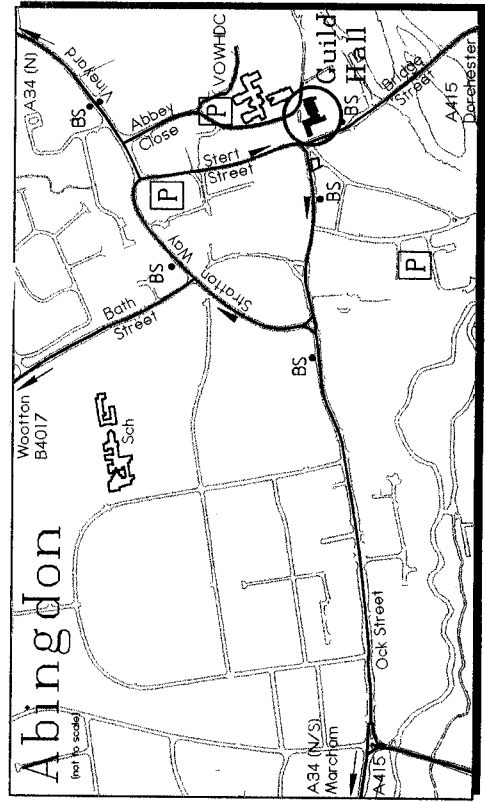
Help disadvantaged groups and individuals within the Vale to realise their full potential

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



KEY : BS = Bus Stop

# LOCATION MAP



**Improvements in the Internal Control Environment**

**Progress report to Executive 7<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Progress to 20 June 2006</b>
(a)	The full implementation of the Debt Strategy, which is essential to achieving and maintaining robust control over debt [owed to the Council]		
i.	Formal approval of the Strategy	Strategic Director (SB)	Done (July 2005)
ii.	Training of key officers	SD (SB)	Done (August 2005)
iii.	Strategy came into force on 1 April 2006	SD (SB)	Done
iv.	Strategic action 1: Cashiers to promote direct debit arrangements to Council Tax and Business Rate payers in March and April.	Deputy Director (OD & S)	Done
v.	Strategic action 2: Prominently display direct debit forms in cash offices	DD (OD & S)	Done
vi.	Strategic action 3: Publish direct debit promotional feature and form in 'Vale Views'	DD (OD & S)	o/s
vii.	Strategic action 4: Transfer live debts for bed & breakfast and temporary rents to the new Housing Rents system	SD (SB) & Assistant Director (Housing)	Done
viii.	Strategic action 5: Monthly housing system debt reports should be sent to the SD (SB) for monitoring	AD (Housing)	o/s
ix.	Strategic action 6: Invoice requisitions to be sent by service areas to Finance and invoices raised - all within 5 working days	All	Being achieved by most service areas. SD (SB) addressing non-complying areas.
x.	Strategic action 7: Service areas to check bad debtor record and cease/withhold further goods and services until debt is repaid (where statutorily permitted to do so)	All	o/s (service areas to generate their own bad debtor records using the outstanding debt reports and notification of write-offs)
xi.	Strategic action 8: Agree prompt payment arrangements with other public sector bodies	SD (SB)	o/s (significant arrears evidenced in Feb 06 audit testing)

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Progress to 20 June 2006</b>
xii.	Strategic action 9: Sundry Debtor Section to achieve 98% recovery rate for live debts (excluding benefit overpayments)	SD (SB)	Not achieved to date. Contractual remedies available when sundry debts transferred to Capita
xiii.	Strategic action 10: Produce monthly outstanding debt reports for service areas to check and to withhold further services (as per strategic action 7)	SD (SB)	Outstanding debt reports are sent to service areas for checking. No evidence of non-compliance.
xiv.	Strategic action 11: Old low value debts to be written off and credit balances to be transferred out of live debts	SD (SB)	Done
xv.	Strategic action 12: Shorten the Council's standard payment terms to 14 days	SD (SB)	Done
xvi.	Strategic action 13: Engage an external agency to trace debtors who have left the area	SD (SB)	Done
xvii.	Strategic action 14: Engage an external debt recovery agency to recover old debts	SD (SB)	Done - over £50k recovered to date
xviii.	Strategic action 15: Produce monthly outstanding benefit overpayment reports to the Benefits Section to identify potential attachments to benefit	SD (SB)	Done
xix.	Strategic action 16: Insert into the Council's standard contract of employment the agreement to deduct from salary any outstanding debts to the Council	SD (SB) & Head of HR	o/s
xx.	Strategic action 17: Produce regular printouts of written-off debts for service areas to check. And, service areas to check written-off debt records withholding further goods and services until debt is repaid (where statutorily permitted to do so)	SD (SB) All	o/s
xxi.	Strategic action 18: Produce work instructions covering the requisition of invoices and the issuing of debtor accounts	All	Done
xxii.	Strategic action 19: Introduce useful local performance indicators to monitor debt recovery processes	SD (SB)	Done
xxiii.	Strategic action 20: Monthly debt monitoring reports should be sent to the SD (SB) for monitoring	Sundry Debtor Section	Done

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Progress to 20 June 2006</b>
xxiv.	Review effectiveness after 6 months, including the exceptions suggested by service areas and, if necessary, recommend changes to the Strategy.	SD (SB)	o/s (planned for Oct 06)
xxv.	Instruct relevant staff to take more proactive approach (as per para 4.2.7 of internal audit report on Sundry Debtors)	SD (SB)	o/s
(b)	Review of the Council's risk registers following the senior management restructure and the production of business continuity plans		
i.	The strategic risk register should be reviewed by the Strategic Management Group twice a year	SD (TS)	Done (last updated May 06)
ii.	Risk registers to be realigned under new organisational structure by 31 Aug 06	Senior Management Team	o/s
iii.	The guidance notes and template for the monthly Asst Director-Portfolio Holder meetings should be amended to include a 'watching brief' of risk registers.	Principal Performance Management Officer (PPMO)	Done
iv.	Risk registers should be kept under review at the monthly Asst Director-Portfolio Holder meetings.	All	Done
v.	The guidance notes and template for the half-year service review report and service area annual report should be amended to include a formal review of risk registers.	PPMO	Done
vi.	Risk registers should be formally reviewed by the AD/DD as part of the half-year service review report and service area annual report.	All	Done (as evidenced by April 06 internal audit)
vii.	Business Continuity - as an interim measure produce a risk assessment for the district's ability to respond to potential major incidents in the county	Emergency Officer (EPO)	Done (Nov 05)
viii.	Appoint EPO Assistant	Deputy Director (Commercial Services)	o/s
ix.	Fully address the business continuity planning requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act and the Council's own disaster recovery planning needs in liaison with deputy directors.	DD (CS)	o/s
(c)	Improvements in reconciliation of income and the resolution & ownership of discrepancies		
i.	Introduce 'global' bank reconciliation and perform monthly	Accountancy Manager	Done

	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Progress to 20 June 2006</b>
ii.	<p>Introduce monthly monitoring process for the Chief Finance Officer to review and sign off the Council's key reconciliations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bank reconciliation</li> <li>• Cash book</li> <li>• Miscellaneous cash</li> <li>• Council Tax cash</li> <li>• Business Rates cash</li> <li>• Sundry Debtors</li> <li>• Mortgages</li> <li>• Housing rents</li> <li>• Treasury management income</li> <li>• Top 6 income streams</li> </ul>	Accountancy Manager & SD (SB)	Done
iii.	<p>The cash office should balance their takings of cash and cheques each day to their receipting system. Continual unders and overs should be looked at in respect of competency, with perhaps more training provided. Daily balances will help to ensure that the money sent to the bank is correct and the correct amount appears on the bank statement. (Accountancy Manager's response to May 05 Main Accounting audit action plan)</p>	DD (OD & S)	o/s
iv.	<p>Provide full year-end supporting papers for the Collection Fund and Control Account reconciliations - to the satisfaction of the external auditor.</p>	Accountancy Manager	(To be confirmed at annual audit - July/Aug 06)

## Briefing Paper to 7 July 2006 Executive Meeting

### Street Cleansing across the District

#### Introduction

1. The Executive wishes to review the arrangements for street cleansing in light of Councillor Peter Saunders' proposed motion to Council.
2. This briefing paper summarises:
  - the Council's statutory obligations
  - the current cleansing arrangements undertaken by Cleanaway on the Council's behalf
  - recent Council policy on grant aid to parishes for street cleansing

#### What is covered under 'street cleansing'?

3. The street cleansing service covers:
  - Litter Collection from Relevant Land i.e. streets, pavements, alleyways, public car parks, lay bys, verges, traffic islands, cycleways, subways, bridleways and other public areas under the Council's control. Note: Parks & open spaces are dealt with under the Grounds Maintenance services contract, for which the DD (Procurement & Contract Management) has responsibilities.
  - Litter Bin Emptying
  - The Sweeping of kerbed highways
  - Pavement Sweeping
  - Seasonal and routine leaf-fall removal
  - The clearance of fly-tips from Relevant Land
  - The removal of dead animals from Relevant Land
  - The emptying of dog waste bins.
  - The collection of litter on fast roads (including the A420 and the A34 trunk road).

#### Statutory Obligations

4. Through the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse, the Environmental Protection Act 1990 requires Councils to keep land under their control clean to specific standards as illustrated by photographs contained in the Code. Councils do not have any discretion as to whether they will meet the Code's requirements.
5. Councils are required to categorise land into zones, dependant on the density of population and usage of the land. The speed of response specified by the Code is determined by category of Zone and the extent of defacement by litter. The extent of defacement is measured in grades A to D where Grade A is free from litter and detritus and Grade D is heavily defaced. If a Council fails to achieve the response times, there is a potential for the matter to be referred to a Magistrate's Court.
6. Below is a brief description of the Zone Categories applicable to the Vale:

<b>Category 1 Zones</b>	Town Centres, Shopping Centres, Busy Public Places
<b>Category 2 Zones</b>	High Density Residential Areas
<b>Category 3 Zones</b>	Low Density Residential Areas
<b>Category 7 Zones</b>	Rural Roads

#### The current Contract Specification

7. Under the terms of the Contract awarded to Cleanaway Limited, the Council expects its statutory obligations to be fully met. This is achieved by a combination of **core inputs** and **responsive actions**.
8. The fundamental core inputs are:
  - Zones 1 & 2**, and Shopping Areas – Cleanse to Grade A standard (including emptying of litter bins) by 8am every day except Christmas Day.
  - Zone 3** – Cleanse to Grade A standard once per week.
  - Zone 7** – Cleanse to Grade A standard once every eight weeks.
9. Should the standard in any area fall below Grade A, Cleanaway are required to meet the following **response times**:



Zone	Grade	Restore to Grade A
Category 1	D	1 hour
	C	3 hrs
	B	6 hrs
Category 2	D	3 hrs
	C	6 hrs
	B	12 hrs
Shopping Areas	D	3 hrs
	C	6 hrs
	B	12 hrs
Category 3	D	6 hrs
	C	12 hrs
	B	1 week
Other Areas (Category 7)	D	5 days
	C	2 wks

10. Plans illustrating the various zones in the District will be provided at the Executive meeting. These zones have remained unchanged since the Environmental Protection Act Code of Practice was introduced in 1990. They indicate the following:

<b>Zones 1 &amp; 2</b>	Abingdon, Wantage and Faringdon
<b>Zone 3</b>	Abingdon, Wantage, Faringdon, Grove and Botley
<b>Zone 7</b>	All other Relevant Land across the District including parishes

#### Cleanaway Resources & Methods

11. Cleanaway deploy various resources in order to meet the requirements of the Specification. These comprise: a number of pedestrian operatives with barrows; a pedestrian-operated mechanical pavement sweeper; mobile crews with vans and large mechanical sweepers.
12. These resources tend to concentrate of the Town Centre areas (Category 1 & 2 Zones) to achieve the standards required in those areas first thing every morning after which they disperse to undertake schedule cleaning task in residential and rural areas. The pedestrian operatives concentrate on the Category 1 & 2 Zones throughout the working day to ensure that required standards are maintained.

#### Recent Council Policy on Parish Street Cleansing

13. In order to provide an enhanced standard of cleanliness, compared to that set out for zone 7 Relevant Land above, a number of Parish Councils employ their own staff to carry out additional street cleansing activities. In the past the Council has recognised the contribution made by these Parish Councils to the District's general cleanliness levels by inviting the Councils to apply for grant aid.
14. There is no formal Council policy on parish street cleansing or grant aid. The Council's approach in recent years is set out below:

##### 2003/04

Area Committees can award grants out of their community grants budget of 50% of the staff costs incurred by the Parish Council.

##### 2004/05

Area Committees can award grants out of their community grants budget of 50% of the staff costs incurred by the Parish Council.

##### 2005/06

Area Committees had reduced community grant funding following a £100k budget saving. Other than the following two exceptions, no change to the previous approach:

**West Area Committee** reduced the limit to 25% of the staff costs incurred by the Parish Council.

**North East Area Committee** imposed a £1,000 grant limit instead of a percentage.

##### 2006/07

Other than the following three exceptions, no change to the previous approach:

**West Area Committee** Grants limited to 50% of the first £500 cost; 25% for the remainder

**North East Area Committee** 50% limit up to a maximum grant of £500

**South East Area Committee** 40%limit, applying an hourly wage rate of £6

**Grant Aid**

15. The following grant aid has been awarded by Area Committees to Parish Councils for street cleansing in recent years:

	2003/04 £	2004/05 £	2005/06 £	2006/07 (part year) £
West Area Committee	5,880	6,669	3,400	4,335
North East Area Committee	1,118	1,657	2,417	1,801
South East Area Committee	2,234	2,590	2,566	1,946
Abingdon Area Committee	344	652	652	545
Total	9,576	11,568	9,035	8,627

16. The Council has been unusual in providing grant aid to Parish Councils for street cleansing. Having spoken to other Waste officers, it is clear that most district councils focus on their statutory duty, which directs more frequent cleansing to the areas most in need, i.e. urban centres. If individual Parish Councils choose to supplement the district council's statutory service with an enhanced service, they are expected to meet the cost themselves.

**Conclusions**

17. The Council complies with its statutory obligations.
18. There are uniform cleanliness standards enforced across the District. The objective is to maintain the highest Grade A standard across all zones. If an area falls to Grade C or D the Council takes action to bring it back up to Grade A. The main differential between Zone A urban centres and Zone 7 parish areas is the frequency of planned cleansing and the response times for reactive cleansing – which reflect practical constraints and the need to provide a cost-effective service.
19. The Council's support to Parish Councils for street cleansing is unusual. No other District Councils are known to do so, for example neither West Oxfordshire nor the City Council do so (Cherwell is being checked).
20. Each Parish Council has the authority to make its own locally-determined street cleansing arrangements and set its own standards. In accordance with the principle of local accountability the cost of locally determined street cleansing should fall entirely on the Parish Council.
21. Notwithstanding the above, Area Committees have the authority to provide discretionary grants for any purpose, including street cleansing. However, the spread of grant applications and consequently the cost of such grants do not fall equally on all Area Committees. Therefore, if any Area Committee chooses to support Parish Council street cleansing it reduces its available funds for other grant purposes.

**Options**

22. Status quo - continue the present scheme whereby Area Committees have the discretion to award grants for street cleansing purposes out of their grants budget.
23. No further support - The Council could focus on its statutory duties. Clear and unambiguous local accountability should be restored by withdrawing all support for Parish Council street cleansing, allowing individual Parish Councils to determine and finance their own arrangements. Street cleansing would no longer be eligible for Area Committee grants.
24. Alternatively, if the Council wishes to continue supporting Parish Council street cleansing it could centralise street cleansing grants so that each Area Committee's available grant budget is not distorted. Members may wish to introduce a cap on all grants.

Steve Bishop  
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

**Note to Executive**

**Permanent Budget Adjustments Requests**

at 27 June 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	12/06/2006	435	L90	Member Services	435	M10	Committee Section Management	4,010	Consolidate postal costs for committee management in one cost centre	3
1	12/06/2006	435	M30	Town & Parish Support	435	M10	Committee Section Management	1,000	Consolidate postal costs for committee management in one cost centre	3
1	12/06/2006	435	T08	Member Advice	435	M10	Committee Section Management	250	Consolidate postal costs for committee management in one cost centre	3
2	22/06/2006	Various (see attached)	T08	Member Advice	Various	L90	Member Services	15,560	Amalgamate budgets on T08 with those on L90 as the cost centres perform similar functions - support to Members	
								<b>20,820</b>		
<b>Summary</b>										
Total Type 1										
-										
Total Type 2										
-										
Total Type 3										
5,260										
Total Type 4										
-										
Total Type 5										
-										
<b>Total</b>										
<b>5,260</b>										

List of accounts in T08 to move to L90

Account	Description	Latest Budget
101	Salaries	4,300
103	Employers National Insurance	410
105	Employers Superannuation	750
211	Rent/Hire of Rooms	1,600
310	Car Allowances - Lump Sum	90
311	Car Allowances - Mileage	50
402	Tools & Equipment	200
412	Catering	300
415	Photocopying	50
429	Public Liability Insurance	380
436	Communications - Telephones	300
439	Subsistence	300
701	Support Services	6,830
<b>Total</b>		<b>15,560</b>

## Note to Executive

### Supplementary estimates approved by Strategic Director in consultation with the Leader of the Council

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	101/103/105	Various		£8,890	Budget changes resulting from staff and grading changes
2	13/06/2006	498	N80	Contingency	901	T52	Community Safety	-£135,280	Government grant not included in Original Budget
3	13/06/2006	498	N80	Contingency	461	T52	Community Safety	£71,700	Expenditure (funded by govt. grant) not included in Original Budget
4	19/06/2006	498	N80	Contingency	424	M40	Legal Services	£1,380	Order for banning alcohol in public places in Wantage: 50% of cost of signage
5	22/06/2006	498	N80	Contingency	119	N50	Corporate Core	£16,000	Extend interim DD (Procurement & Contract Management) arrangement to end July 06
<b>Total Supplementary Estimates</b>								<b>-£37,310</b>	

**VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**FORWARD PLAN**

**CONTAINING EXECUTIVE KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN FROM 1 JULY 2006 - 31 OCTOBER 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
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.
Financial Monitoring		Executive 7th Jul 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 7th Jul 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.

Decision	Key decision?	Decision maker	Date first published	Consultees	Consultation method	Contact	Documents used
Housing Inspectors' Report		Executive 7th Jul 2006	June 2006	Councillor Mary de Vere	Housing Inspection	Paul Staines Tel. 01235 547621 E-mail: paul.staines@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	None.
Financial Out-turn 2005/06		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Tony de Vere	Not applicable	Steve Bishop, Strategic Director and Section 151 Officer Tel. 01235 540332 E-mail: steve.bishop@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.
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.
Performance Management - Audit Commission Report		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Roz Smith	Audit Commission Report	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
Securing Improvement - Audit Commission Report		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Roz Smith	Report of the Audit Commission	Tim Sadler, Strategic Director Tel. 01235 540360 E-mail: tim.sadler@whitehorse dc.gov.uk	None.
Environmenta l Crimes Enforcement Strategy		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Richard Farrell	Not applicable	David Stevens Tel. 01235 540378 E-mail: david.stevens@whiteh orsedc.gov.uk	None.
Viability of the Direct Services Organisation		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Bob Johnston	Not applicable	Bill Farrar Tel. 01235 540356 E-mail: bill.farrar@whitehorsed c.gov.uk	None.
Internal Control Environment		Executive 7th Jul 2006	July 2006	Councillor Roz Smith	Not applicable	Sam Turner Tel. 01235 547615 E-mail: sam.turner@whitehors edc.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@whitehor sedc.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@whiteh orsedc.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@whiteho rsedc.gov.uk	None.



Decision	Key decision?	Decision maker	Date first published	Consultees	Consultation method	Contact	Documents used
North East Area Community Grants		North East Area Committee 7th Sep 2006	September 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Toby Warren Tel. 01235 547695 E-mail: toby.warren@whitehor sedc.gov.uk	None.
South East Area Community Grants		South East Area Committee 12th Sep 2006	September 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Toby Warren Tel. 01235 547695 E-mail: toby.warren@whitehor sedc.gov.uk	None.
West Area Community Grants		West Area Committee 17th Oct 2006	October 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Toby Warren Tel. 01235 547695 E-mail: toby.warren@whitehor sedc.gov.uk	None.
Abingdon Area Community Grants		Abingdon Area Committee 19th Oct 2006	October 2006	Councillor Joyce Hutchinson	Not applicable	Toby Warren Tel. 01235 547695 E-mail: toby.warren@whitehor sedc.gov.uk	None.

 20 JUNE 2006

# Securing Improvement

**Vale of White Horse District Council**

**Audit 2005-2006**

External audit is an essential element in the process of accountability for public money and makes an important contribution to the stewardship of public resources and the corporate governance of public services.

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## Summary report

### Introduction

- 1 This report summarises findings from workshops that we ran with councillors, assistant directors, team leaders, supervisors and staff at Vale of White Horse District Council in 2005. We designed these to explore the Council's recent improvement record, as well as any risks associated with the change programme that the Council set up in order to secure longer-term improvements.

### Council context

- 2 Following its Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) inspection and assessment as 'fair' in 2004, Vale of White Horse District Council began a programme of substantial change. It focused its improvement priorities on major strategic issues, on a scale that tackled some significant challenges:
  - clarifying the Council's ambition and strategic planning process;
  - aligning political and management structures;
  - developing an effective change management process;
  - ensuring sufficient managerial and staff capacity; and
  - embedding a performance management framework and culture that demonstrably delivers service improvement.
- 3 To help deliver improvements through this more strategic focus, the Council began a major re-structure of its senior internal management. It recognised that realigning its existing managerial capacity could help it deliver its strategy and improve value for money. Having outsourced its leisure services it also needed to reduce its managerial overheads. It therefore took the opportunity to restructure its management teams in line with its emerging corporate plan, rather than along its previous service-orientated lines. The aim was a better integrated approach, with the opportunity for a range of improvements.
- 4 Since our workshops the Council has taken the steps outlined in paragraph 14, and agreed this report and its recommendations with the Audit Commission.

### Context for this project

- 5 The Council's management restructure was intended to help it achieve the demands of its new corporate plan, by strengthening the capacity that would be required to achieve its improvement priorities.

- 6 In 2005 the restructure led to unforeseen consequences when several new managerial posts were not filled. The Council had decided to change its managerial structure to create three strategic director posts, supported by eight deputy directors (reduced from fifteen previous senior manager posts). However, it was initially unable to appoint to three posts from within its existing managers and staff. It therefore agreed a number of temporary contracts while determining how best to achieve its desired capacity - during which time some managers left for other jobs.
- 7 This hiatus followed a period of financial uncertainty (when the Council was divesting some services). It has had considerable impact on some groups of staff (especially the strategic directors, and their remaining second tier managers), by diverting capacity from other intended improvements. This lack of resolution led to an extended transition period in 2005.
- 8 The Council recognised the need to extend its change management capacity, as a result of these developments. It appointed an interim strategic director with responsibilities for organisational development in the summer of 2005. It did this to support it during its period of transition, and to help in facilitating and embracing a change of culture, as well as direction. Through this appointment the Council has made some further progress, as outlined in paragraph 14. It is basing this on an organisational development approach.
- 9 Our review was designed to assess the impact of all these changes, and the risks to the Council's improvement agenda. These risks stem from the scale and ambition of the Council's improvement agenda, and its capacity to achieve change. The Council acknowledges that realising its intentions will involve it in cultural, as well as structural, changes, which affect roles and relationships across the Council. Our work, therefore, contributes to assessing the Council's improvements in response to its CPA scores of '2' (ie 'weaknesses outweigh strengths') for ambition, capacity, performance management, service achievement, learning and future plans.

## Review approach

- 10 We agreed with the Council to run workshops in September 2005, with groups of:
  - councillors;
  - assistant directors;
  - team leaders and supervisors; and
  - other staff.
- 11 From these four groups we were able to collate the views and perspectives of nearly 50 people about the Council's achievements and risks. The groups identified some areas of common concern, as well as progress. This report analyses and presents a summary of those discussions, and makes recommendations.

- 12 We asked each group about their views of the Council's improvement record, structuring each workshop to explore perceptions about what had already improved, and areas for further improvement - including any barriers. We also asked councillors to indicate their assessment of the Council against some of the improvement characteristics identified by the Audit Commission in its 2005 review of all district council Comprehensive Performance Assessments.<sup>1</sup>
- 13 We presented our initial findings from the workshops at a management feedback briefing on 3 October 2005, as reported in Appendix 1. We have since compared these results and discussion with issues arising from our work on the Council's performance management, on which we reported in draft in January 2006. That, and the Council's continued progress, forms the basis of this report.
- 14 Since our workshops took place, the Council has confirmed its structure, including joint appointments with South Oxfordshire District Council to extend its financial and legal capacity. It has appointed to the new posts of Deputy Director of Organisational Development and Head of Communications, which will help it take forward many of the concerns identified in our discussions - including the need to establish improved performance management. It has also confirmed most other appointments to its strategic and deputy director tiers, and agreed the outline for a managerial development programme to help it secure and identify further improvement capacity.

## Conclusions

- 15 The groups' perceptions are discussed further in our detailed report (from paragraph 20, below), and suggest broad recognition that the Council has achieved:
  - improved focus and prioritisation;
  - some service improvement;
  - acceptance, in principle, of strategic reorientation and restructuring; and
  - a commitment, at all levels, to continue to improve.
- 16 Concerns were expressed about:
  - internal communication and morale; and
  - confidence in the capacity to manage and deliver change.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Characteristics of district councils in different CPA categories', table 1 in Audit Commission (2005) Comprehensive Performance Assessment: scores and analysis of performance for district councils in England, 2003/04. London: Audit Commission.

- 17 In summary, the Council has achieved a broad consensus over the principles of its restructuring, with evidence that some of its investment in a more corporate approach is already having an impact in areas of recognisable and tangible service improvement. Some new systems - such as IT, e-government, staff training and other resources - are supporting and helping to secure improvement. New performance management arrangements offer the opportunity for further streamlining of both focus and priority, although our workshops suggest that these arrangements are at an early stage - something that is confirmed in our separate report on the Council's performance management.<sup>2</sup>
- 18 However, the Council has had less success in securing the confidence of all its councillors, managers and staff in the more complex processes of cultural change. The groups recognised that specific effort will be needed to support the Council's transition to a more flexible and strategic organisation, capable of delivering a range of more stretching priorities. The scale of change in a relatively small district council necessarily renders this more difficult. But there are several areas where clearer leadership and direction could help the Council deliver its intentions for local residents. These include engaging more staff and managers in securing improvement, celebrating success and focusing on a range of organisational development practices in order to learn from its recent and continuing experience of change.
- 19 Our main conclusion is that the Council still needs to ensure that it has the capacity to achieve the improvements identified its CPA review in 2004 and its value for money assessment of 2006, in order to meet the ambitions of its corporate and community plans. Given the extensive impact of its restructuring in 2005, and the losses of momentum and confidence involved, it will need to focus on recovering lost capacity in the short-term, as well as building sustainable capacity for the future.

## Recommendations

### **Recommendation**

*R1 Reinforce and accelerate the Council's change programme, and take specific steps to recognise and respond to its cultural and organisational development demands, including:*

- *taking immediate steps to recover from the adverse impacts of change in 2005;*
- *being open about change, by promoting shared understanding of the nature of the challenges and organisational learning involved;*
- *assigning clear leadership responsibilities specifically for change management, to include councillors, directors, managers and staff; and*
- *providing further opportunities for team understanding and team working to address the impact and expectations of changed priorities.*

<sup>2</sup> Audit Commission (2006) Progress review: performance management: Vale of White Horse District Council



**Recommendations**

*R2 Reinforce and accelerate the Council's change programme, and take specific steps to recognise and respond to its cultural and organisational development demands, including:*

- *taking immediate steps to recover from the adverse impacts of change in 2005;*
- *being open about change, by promoting shared understanding of the nature of the challenges and organisational learning involved;*
- *assigning clear leadership responsibilities specifically for change management, to include councillors, directors, managers and staff; and*
- *providing further opportunities for team understanding and team working to address the impact and expectations of changed priorities.*

*R3 In the light of the Council's revised strategic priorities, strengthen the capacity to deliver the corporate plan at all levels - among councillors, managers and staff, and by teams as well as individuals, including by*

- *clarifying roles and relationships between councillors and managers, to ensure that the recent restructure has the impact intended;*
- *making sure that the changes that will be needed to deliver the Council's corporate priorities are clear, agreed and understood;*
- *progressively engaging all councillors, managers and staff in building capacity for change, for example through the new organisational development programme;*
- *ensuring objectives for service and organisational change are part of team and individual appraisal and learning systems;*
- *project and performance managing, and evaluating, the Council's new organisational development programme;*
- *establishing mentoring for councillors and the senior leadership team; and*
- *introducing a leadership and management development programme.*

*R4 Strengthen existing communications to better support change and learning, ensuring that this makes a specific response to concerns about morale; including by*

- *developing and using internal consultation and feedback;*
- *establishing staff and councillor attitude surveys; and*
- *celebrating success.*

**Recommendations**

*R5 Review the Council's HR function, and access to specialist advisory skills, to ensure the capacity to support continued organisational change.*

*R6 Respond fully to this report by:*

- sharing and discussing it openly within the Council, with staff as well as with councillors;*
- engaging these same groups in action planning that responds to it; and*
- developing an action plan, linked with corporate priorities, that will ensure progress is systematic and comprehensive.*

## Detailed report

### Improved focus and prioritisation

- 20 The Council has begun to consolidate improvement, in line with its priorities. The workshop groups were clear that the Council's high level priorities are beginning to make an impact on both service delivery and internal change. They were also clear that performance management is still bedding in, confirming the results of our separate report on this. It will be important to sustain this early momentum in emphasising corporate priorities, ensuring that these are clearly understood throughout the Council and that the Council strengthens its capacity to achieve its community's aims.
- 21 All four groups recognised that the Council had shown some improvement, although not yet strongly so. Improved corporate focus was evident in positive comments about the Council's investment and achievements in better systems and training, such as IT and progress with e-government, internal service agreements and inter-departmental working. These reflect corporate policy decisions and clearer priorities, although it was also significant that service improvement was often directly attributed to service-level rather than corporate lead. However, we found broad consensus that the Council was rightly focused on a number of the building blocks necessary to improve future service delivery.
- 22 Team leaders and supervisors, for example, cited several instances where resources had been committed to improvement. They noted that the Council now had a greater focus on performance management. They thought the Council was more customer focused, and working better in partnership with different sectors, such as business and voluntary groups. The other groups made similar observations, noting a positive relationship between resource prioritisation and better outcomes.
- 23 We found further evidence that high level priorities are beginning to make an impact on both service delivery and internal change through our separate progress review of the Council's performance management arrangements. That work concluded overall that the Council is tackling a more corporate and strategic approach, but has much more to do to secure it. The Council's new corporate plan (published in July 2005) provides an opportunity to further consolidate the focus across the Council on clear and achievable priorities.

## Some service improvement

- 24 In general, the Council has not yet achieved a significant level of service improvement. This is unsurprising, given the level of internal change experienced in 2005, and because the restructuring designed to achieve that change is still in transition. Given this context, the improvements that have been achieved - including some that were recognised by all the workshop groups - are commendable. The findings of our separate performance management review focus on helping ensure that improvements happen in line with the council's priorities, so it will be important to continue to develop the capacity for this. This will help the Council achieve more significant and consistent improvements, in line with its agreed priorities.
- 25 Each group thought that the Council had been delivering some better services, and affirmed that the Council had achieved a range of improvements. Some results were seen as mixed, or the investment relatively recent, but there was a general recognition that services were improving - and some markedly so.
- 26 For example, all four groups commended improvements in environmental and housing services - including planning, recycling, redevelopment and choice-based lettings - reflecting areas of Council priority. They also recognised the efforts made to improve customer access through the introduction of local service delivery points. Other service improvements were noted - covering a range of achievements such as leisure, tourism, council tax collection, and community safety.
- 27 The groups' aspirations for continued service improvement tended to focus on achieving further with this same set of services, and on providing and contributing to a Council that is fully 'fit for purpose' to achieve this.

## Acceptance, in principle, of strategic reorientation and restructuring

- 28 The Council has achieved a consolidated understanding of the broad rationale for strategic change across the organisation. This is a significant step forward, and is helping it strengthen its overall capacity through a better focus on corporate priorities. The risk is that this is still at an early stage, and that significant improvements remain to be delivered. The Council still has to implement many aspects of its restructuring, and establish confidence through clear two-way communication about it. Strengthened leadership, at all levels, will make an important contribution to this, and will complement the Council's investment in clarifying its priorities and establishing a performance management system.
- 29 We found that the groups generally understood, agreed and accepted the rationale for a greater strategic focus (on which the Council had consulted extensively, after its CPA assessment). Where the groups did perceive challenges for the Council, they were about implementation and clarity rather than principle.

- 30** Councillors, for example, thought that the restructuring was providing more focus and giving a stronger steer over the Council's priorities, while also developing and increasing managerial capacity. Assistant directors noted the advantages of better working with portfolio holders, and their collective experience as a more focused corporate management team. Team leader and staff groups each also noted instances of more streamlined and corporate approaches that were breaking down previous departmental barriers (although they also recognised that there was more to do).
- 31** At the time of our workshops the Council had begun to explore its assistant directors' understanding of and contribution to the leadership of change. This is an important repositioning from the Council's more traditional hierarchical approach. It recognises the contribution of staff and managers to meeting the more complex agenda of responding to a corporate, as well as service, agenda that reflects agreed community priorities.
- 32** The redirection also supports the desire expressed firmly by councillors for a better corporate delivery of agreed priorities, through closer service and resource alignment. Councillors, for example, were generally positive about the skills of and relationships with their appointed managers, while recognising that some of the systems with which to realise this potential needed to become more established. This included the performance management that would give councillors confidence in progress towards achieving priorities and give staff clearer responsibilities to work towards them.

## **Commitment to move forward**

- 33** The strength of commitment evident across the Council is a significant organisational resource. However, it is not yet being managed effectively, given the extent of redirection that the Council has embarked on. The Council needs to ensure that commitment is not dented further by poor morale, as this has both reputational and resource risks. The Council's capacity is not yet underpinned by clear roles and relationships, or by clear leadership of change at all levels. These factors are important to improvement. Greater attention to them will also support the council's capacity to better performance manage its resources and priorities.
- 34** All four groups showed a strong commitment to the Council's priorities, and to the delivery of better services for its local people, interest groups, and communities. Each recognised that improved systems and some different ways of working would be needed to deliver this, and appreciated where the Council had already invested in its priority areas.

- 35 Equally however, and perhaps unsurprisingly, that commitment was also resulting in frustration. New and higher expectations had emerged but were not yet felt to be met, and key roles and relationships remained in transition. Until the Council establishes a more stable structure - and the systems to support it - it may struggle to manage and meet expectations, orchestrate shared ownership, and engage all staff managers and councillors in a common understanding of their respective contributions to the challenges of the new corporate plan. These are important factors in change, and will require continued focus if the Council is to maximise the potential contribution of all its stakeholders.
- 36 There was a general consensus that all groups needed to pull together to overcome this, to address perceived gaps between those with different responsibilities for the Council - such as getting the relationships, roles and understanding right between councillors and managers, and between the new senior leadership team and the Council's other managers and staff.

## Internal communication and morale

- 37 The Council's internal consultation and communication have not proved effective during its restructuring, which has been having adverse impact on both morale and the ability to deliver Council priorities. Employee engagement is a weakness. A systematic approach to consultation and communication will help strengthen learning throughout the Council, and enable the Council to meet some of the more stretching challenges in delivering its priorities. Given the strength of feeling in this area, and the unfortunate delays in settling the restructure, it is important that the Council addresses this with urgency, as well as by building stronger systems for the longer term.
- 38 Communication and morale surfaced as major, and related, concerns. Staff and team leaders, in particular, expressed a wish for clearer communication, as well as purposeful engagement - reflecting the level of changes they were experiencing, and a wish for two-way communication about it. They also expressed a wish to be valued, and suggested a number of ways in which success might be both recognised and celebrated more systematically. Job security is clearly a concern; but this group - and the other groups - expressed greater confidence that services, rather than morale, would improve. All groups were concerned about relationships and morale, and their impact on services.
- 39 Concern about communication was also associated with a lack of clarity about the Council's approach to achieving change, which is discussed further below.

## Confidence in the capacity to manage and deliver change

- 40 The Council has not yet established confidence in its ability to lead and manage all the changes associated with its redirection. Change leadership affects the capacity to secure improvement, and concerns about it were particularly evident in the strength of feeling about the Council's restructuring - despite the broad agreement that some restructuring was necessary. The Council's appointment of an interim director to help resolve some of the tensions involved has been a positive step, but the investment was at a relatively early stage at the time of our workshops. It will be important that the capacity to lead change is sustained through deeper understanding and ownership throughout the organisation, as well as specific actions and changes in roles and relationships.
- 41 In different ways, each group expressed concern about the Council's capacity to deliver major change effectively. Some thought that the Council's past track record in achieving change (for example, difficulties experienced in the recent initiative to review pay and grading and in establishing a fit for purpose appraisal system) had not helped to develop confidence. The cultural changes involved in the Council's level of expected (and actual) change are significant. But it was not clear to any group that the Council was taking specific actions to address this aspect of its effectiveness.
- 42 While some of these tensions might be expected with any change, some were quite marked. Some councillors, for example, expressed concern that things that they perceived as underlying barriers to change appeared quite deep-rooted. This included concern about shared corporate purpose and direction, and the relationships and morale needed to deliver it. It will therefore be as important for the Council to achieve the same degree of consensus and shared commitment over its approaches to its people and its management, as it is beginning to achieve over its purpose and priorities.
- 43 A shift in roles was beginning to emerge as part of the Council's change agenda, having established and recruited to director and deputy director tiers with clearer expectations of strategic leadership. This was recognised clearly by the deputy and assistant director group, who had been involved in designing the Council's structure for delivering both a changed agenda and approach. However, they and other groups were not yet convinced that the Council had recognised the importance of a changed ethos - suggesting that recognition of the need for changed roles and relationships had tended to be tacit rather than explicit. It will be important to clarify these, including any change of emphasis between councillor and manager roles.
- 44 These findings may not be surprising, given the extended restructuring process, managerial shortages, and a track record of operational HR challenges, such as implementing new appraisal and pay schemes. While it is to the Council's credit that it is now making strategically-focused changes, it will be important to sustain commitment to it and to agree values, roles and relationships associated with it.

## Conclusion

- 45 Our main conclusion is that the Council still needs to ensure that it has the capacity to achieve the improvements identified its CPA review in 2004 and its value for money assessment of 2006, in order to meet the ambitions of its corporate and community plans. Given the extensive impact of its restructuring in 2005, and the losses of momentum and confidence involved, it will need to focus on recovering lost capacity in the short-term, as well as building sustainable capacity for the future.



## Appendix 1 – management feedback briefing 3 October 2005

Vale of White Horse Council  
Securing Improvement



### Vale of White Horse Council Securing Improvement

Feedback briefing  
3 October 2005

**Alison Dewar**

Audit Commission – Southern Region

Vale of White Horse Council  
Securing Improvement



### What we did on 28 and 29 October:

- Four focus groups to capture snapshot of perceptions
  - Councillors, front line staff, team leaders / managers, assistant directors
  - Open, confidential discussion
  - Nearly 50 people
- Broad initial views, and opening discussion
- Structured focus on changes in past 12-18 months
  - What's improved?
  - What still needs to improve?
- Formed initial 'headline' impressions
- Feedback to management team, 3 October, to help identify the issues to explore and actions to take

## Headline issues

- Mixed views on extent the council has improved:
  - Recognition of current restructuring
  - But also concern about impact of past track record in change
- Positives are that improvement happening, with impact externally, and overall priorities clarifying
- Weaknesses focus on internal barriers and communication, can the council demonstrate capacity and values for change?

## Things recognised as improving

- Mixed views on extent the council has changed, with best as 'slight overall improvement', including:
  - Better customer experiences through service improvements, e.g. – waste & recycling, planning, choice-based letting, access via local service points
  - Working with businesses
  - Use of and investment in ICT
  - Some joined up working, e.g. leisure
- Road 'chosen' for way ahead – clearer headline priorities and a senior management group
- More rigorous performance management beginning to draw the strands together (e.g. staff involvement in budget setting, BV process streamlined)
- Commitment has made these things happen.

## Areas of uncertainty

- Relationships, roles, trust and recognition – formal systems / psychological 'glue'
- Cascade of direction and priorities, and clear up/down connections with them.
- Corporate visibility and openness
- Systems to make things happen across and within teams
  - service based, still not corporate
  - 'lots of motion, no improvement'
  - recognition of things done well – want a culture of learning and success
  - restructuring protracted, and not built on platform of confidence
  - morale, and perception will get worse:
    - 'we've been told we're rubbish', plus pay & grading effects
- Communication, communication – real, focused communication and consultation

## The next stages?

- Discussion with management team
- More detailed analysis of existing data – and a report
- Agree feedback on report and its headlines
- Explore risk areas, engage with you in those
- Link with DoT, UoR and performance management review

Vale of White Horse Council

Securing Improvement



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# **Progress Review - Performance Management**

**Vale of White Horse District Council**

**Audit 2005-2006**

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## Introduction

- 1 Government initiatives, including best value, new political arrangements, public service agreements and, most recently, comprehensive performance assessment (CPA), have been aimed at improving the performance of local government and raising the quality of the services it delivers. This has led to increasing emphasis on the need for effective performance management.
- 2 Over the last three to four years, Audit Commission performance audit and inspection work has highlighted that many authorities still struggle to implement good performance management. Often authorities have performance management systems in place, but cannot make them work well in practice. This suggests that there are wider reasons for lack of success, other than the absence of a mechanism or framework.
- 3 One of the key reasons that has been identified is a lack of understanding of how performance management systems can drive improvement. An effective performance management system will underpin, and help deliver, a council's corporate priorities. Senior members and officers are essential to ensuring that this is understood in the organisation.

## Background

- 4 The Council's 2003 corporate performance assessment report scored performance management as 2 out of 4 - weaknesses outweigh strengths. The assessment found that a performance management framework was developing, but was not fully embedded into the Council's service culture.
- 5 The Council is committed to driving forward improvement in this area. Its CPA action plan identifies the following high level actions for improvement:
  - refine and simplify the Council's vision , aims and objectives – aligning the council's vision with the Vale Community Strategy;
  - using management information to manage;
  - embedding a performance management culture; and
  - more consistent application of Best Value '4C's'.

## Audit approach

- 6 Our objective was to assess how well the Council is progressing in implementing improvements to its performance management arrangements and to support the Council in its efforts by providing a 'health check' on current arrangements.
- 7 We reviewed key strategic documents and documents that support the Council's performance management systems. This was supplemented by discussions (interviews and focus groups) with councillors and staff from across the organisation.



## Conclusions

- 8 The Council has made some positive progress in developing and improving its performance management framework and has achieved those improvements that it identified as key through CPA improvement planning. Specifically, it has :
- aligned its aims and priorities with those of the community strategy and published these in the first of a new style corporate plan;
  - improved the 'culture' of performance management in the Council by raising its profile and ensuring that senior officers and councillors assume a stronger and more visible role in managing performance;
  - reviewed its best value review methodology so that the process is less bureaucratic and ensures a more consistent and timely approach to reviews; and
  - commenced a review of its staff appraisal process.
- 9 Despite progress, there are still some important gaps in the Council's performance management arrangements:
- the Council has not yet translated its corporate aims into outcomes for service users or communicated its aims and objectives clearly and consistently through its corporate documents. This makes it difficult for the Council to measure how well it is achieving its aims and objectives;
  - the thread from corporate level targets through to service and individual targets is inconsistent;
  - monitoring arrangements do not measure the contribution of the Council's key partnerships towards achieving its corporate aims and objectives; and
  - a performance management culture is not yet fully embedded across the whole organisation - communication and consultation with staff about performance issues has not been effective at all levels of the organisation and not all staff have a clear understanding of their role in performance management.
- 10 While the remit of this review did not include an assessment of the Council's capacity to deliver improved performance management, this was an issue that became apparent during our work. The Council appears to have very limited resources at its corporate core to fully develop the detail of its performance management framework. This presents a potential risk to how well the Council can progress its next phase of improvements.

## The way forward

- 11 The Council recognises that there is still considerable work to be done to ensure that performance management processes drive forward improvement and that it is fully embedded across the whole organisation. It is open to using our findings and recommendations to plan its next stage of improvement. In this context, key actions for the Council should include:
- Developing clear outcome based objectives, targets and performance measures which enable it to monitor progress towards achieving corporate aims.
  - Ensuring that key corporate documents articulate the Council's aims and objectives in a clear and consistent way.
  - Developing arrangements to enable the Council to monitor and evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of its work with key partnerships.
  - Making the links between corporate aims and objectives and actions within service plans more explicit.
  - Further embedding performance management across the Council by:
    - involving staff, councillors and other stakeholders in service planning and target setting;
    - sharing and learning from the pockets of positive practice in involving staff in performance management, for example, in housing and benefits;
    - providing councillors, managers and staff with performance management training, particularly in relation to target setting;
    - investigating 'quality circles' or similar structures to engage staff routinely in identifying service improvements;
    - improving the way performance issues are communicated; and
    - monitoring implementation of the new staff appraisal system to ensure that it is used to clarify individual contributions to the Council's objectives.
  - Ensuring that the Council has the capacity to develop and implement further improvements to its performance management arrangements. This could involve the Council investigating how similar councils in the region resource and implement their performance management arrangements.
- 12 Our key findings are set out overleaf.

## Key findings

### Clarity of vision, aims and objectives

- 13 The Council has aligned its aims and priorities with those of the community strategy and published these in the first of a new style of corporate plan. However, the Council has not yet translated its aims and objectives into clear outcome based targets and performance measures or articulated them clearly and consistently through its corporate planning documents.
- 14 The Council's plans are not clear about:
  - what the Council intends to achieve in terms of outcomes for service users;
  - how it will demonstrate success; or
  - how it will get from where it is now to where it wants to be.
- 15 For example:
  - The community strategy, agreed in February 2004, sets out nine priority strands for improvement, however, not all strands are supported by SMART (specific, measurable, attributable, realistic and time bound) plans to guide delivery.
  - The corporate plan sets no outcome targets for its corporate aims or priority actions. It lists a number of priority actions that the Council plans to undertake to achieve its corporate aims. However, the majority of actions are internally focused, for example, around developing strategies or policies or changes to internal administrative processes and are not linked to outcomes for service users.
  - The best value performance plan (BVPP) includes targets against statutory best value performance indicators (bvpi's). However, the Council does not indicate whether or how achieving bvpi targets will help deliver its priorities. Furthermore, it contains no local performance indicators specific to the Council's priorities.
- 16 Consequently, it is not clear what outcomes the Council is ultimately trying to achieve in the context of service improvement to the public, what its milestones are or how it will know when it has achieved the desired outcomes.
- 17 A clear corporate priority should show all three of these elements as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Comment</b>
We will achieve...	Facilitate the provision of affordable housing	This is the aim the council wants to achieve.
We will have been successful if....	By 2008, we have increased the number of affordable homes in the Vale by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• securing x private sector homes for rent via partnership with private landlords;</li> <li>• x homes via partnership with RSL's; and</li> <li>• X units of key worker accommodation.</li> </ul>	These are the targets it has set to achieve its aim.
To achieve this we will.....	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete supplementary planning guidance on the provision of affordable housing;</li> <li>• return empty homes to use;</li> <li>• Integrate the aims for the provision of affordable housing with planning policies and budgets etc.....</li> </ul>	These are the main changes the council will make to achieve its aim.

- 18 Although it is possible to identify some or all of the above elements by reviewing the Council's supporting strategies and individual service plans, these are not set out simply and explicitly and to establish the links can be confusing as well as time-consuming.

- 19 The clarity of the Council's vision, aims and objectives is also hindered by how these are communicated in its key strategic plans. We found these confused by:
- the use of 'aims' and 'objectives' - the corporate plan refers to six 'objectives' that underpin the vision, not all of which are measurable and are better described as aims;
  - the Council's 'overall aspiration' of protecting and enhancing the sustainability of the Vale through the economic, environmental and social vitality of our towns and villages' and where this fits with its vision and corporate aims; and
  - inconsistent use of language between the BVPP and corporate plan - currently the BVPP refers to six priorities for improvement. The corporate plan refers to these as 'corporate aims'.
- 20 This limits the effectiveness of the BVPP and the corporate plan in communicating the Council's overall performance context to staff, the public and other stakeholders. We acknowledge that the Council has recently reviewed and refreshed its vision, although because of the timing of this exercise, this is not reflected in the current corporate plan. We accept therefore, that the lack of clarity and inconsistency between the Council's BVPP and corporate plan may be rectified in subsequent years.

### **Cascading targets**

- 21 The thread from corporate objectives, through to service plans and individual targets is not yet consistent so it is not always clear what teams or individuals should focus on to meet the Council's strategic objectives or how actions are contributing to achieving corporate aims.

### **Service plans**

- 22 Actions within individual service plans generally link to the Council's corporate objectives where appropriate but this link is not always explicit. Service plans set out individual service areas 'core objectives' and development objectives but it is not always clear what corporate aim or priority the action is aimed at contributing to. This hinders the effectiveness of the Council's service plans in cascading high level objectives down to team level so that teams and individuals understand how their work contributes to meeting the Council's aims and objectives. Furthermore, not all tasks in service plans are linked to SMART targets, which hinder the extent to which achievements can be measured.

### **Individual plans (Service and Personal Plan)**

- 23 The Council's current appraisal system does not yet ensure a 'golden thread' from its corporate priorities to the jobs that people do or enable effective monitoring of individual performance. The focus of the system has been more around personal development needs than performance management and because the Service and Personal Plan (SPP) has always been a confidential document between the appraiser and appraisee, this has prevented the plan from being used as an effective performance management tool. Consequently the current system is not very useful in helping people:
- understand how their work contributes to meeting the council's objectives;
  - know what they are expected to do and to achieve for the public; or
  - manage their own and their subordinates' performance.
- 24 The Council is aware of these shortcomings and is currently at an advanced stage of implementing a revised appraisal system, which incorporates a number of positive features. For example, the Council plans to ensure that the new system is closely aligned with its performance management framework, promoted amongst managers as of key importance and closely monitored. If implemented as intended, the new appraisal system should address the bullet points above. However, as the system is not yet fully implemented we are unable to comment on its effectiveness.

### **Using performance information to manage**

#### **Performance monitoring**

- 25 The Council's performance monitoring is rigorous in terms of process and tracking against individual projects and targets, but arrangements do not tell officers and councillors whether or not the Council is on track to meet its corporate objectives, aims/priorities. Furthermore, arrangements to monitor and evaluate key partnerships are undeveloped.
- 26 The Council's main corporate level monitoring is through corporate governance reports. This is a detailed quarterly report which is considered by the Strategic Management Group (SMG) and in summary, by the Executive and scrutiny. It includes progress against the CPA improvement plan, priority actions, current financial position, key staffing issues, corporate risks, best value and local performance indicators.

- 27 The performance monitoring system has a number of good features:
- it provides an update on the Council's priority improvement areas;
  - it uses a simple 'traffic light' system to show whether or not performance against pi's is on target, which is well regarded by councillors; and
  - provides commentary where performance is off target and actions taken to deal with variances.
- 28 Corporate governance reporting is supported by monthly performance meetings between strategic directors, assistant directors and portfolio holders. This is a formal process which ensures that strategic directors and key councillors are given the full context to any performance issues which provides added assurance to the SMG monitoring arrangements.
- 29 Service area annual and half yearly reviews are also used. This sets out details of notable success and efficiency improvements during the year, performance against target for bvpi's and local indicators.
- 30 Despite the above positive features, monitoring arrangements focus on Council actions rather than outcomes for the community and do not explicitly show how performance against its priorities, CPA improvement plan or performance indicators have contributed towards the Council achieving its aims and objectives. For example, arrangements do not show:
- what the council set out to achieve in the first place;
  - what it has achieved to date;
  - whether it is on track to meet its corporate objectives, aims and priorities;
  - what, if any, remedial action it plans to take where it is not on track; and
  - which pi's link to the council's objectives and priorities or differentiate between those that are key and those that are not.
- 31 This means that the Council is not able to clearly demonstrate progress towards intended outcomes.

## **Partnerships**

- 32 The Council is involved in a considerable number of partnerships but this work is not integrated into the Council's performance management arrangements.
- 33 The Council and its LSP has not yet agreed joint plans and targets for delivering all strands of the community strategy or consolidated priorities from existing plans into an over-arching plan to guide delivery. This is slow progress and without clear outcome targets and success criteria, the Council is unable to monitor progress towards delivering the community strategy, or how delivery is feeding into the achievement of its own corporate aims and objectives.

- 34 The Council has no formal process for routinely monitoring how the outcomes achieved by its partnership work are contributing to its aims and objectives. Furthermore, the Council does not have an agreed method for evaluating partnership outcomes and the effectiveness of partnership working to enable it to demonstrate whether a partnership is meeting its objectives or to assess the benefits or 'added value' that a partnership has achieved.
- 35 The Council has produced a briefing paper on the effectiveness of partnership activity, which represents some thinking around the need to manage partnerships. However, it is clear from this document that the Council is some way off developing a corporate methodology and guidance which will address the need for arrangements described above.

## Embedding a performance management culture

- 36 The 'culture' of performance management in the Council has improved, particularly at senior officer and councillor level, but it is not yet embedded at all levels of the organisation.
- 37 Service heads and councillors are now 'thinking' more in terms of performance management and there is a consensus that performance management has a much higher profile in the organisation. The Council's performance monitoring arrangements ensure that the SMG, senior officers and councillors all have a role to play in performance management and are held accountable for performance. This is also facilitated by the Council's scrutiny committee that has been more pro-active in identifying and questioning poor performance. There are also a few pockets of good practice at individual service level, where regular formalised discussion around performance issues takes place. However, there is little evidence that the Council has sought to engage and involve all staff in managing performance, and ensure their 'buy-in' across all levels of the organisation.
- 38 Consultation and communication with staff about key performance issues has not been effective and some sections of staff have had very limited involvement, if any, in the Council's performance management arrangements. Our focus groups revealed the following weaknesses:
- staff can not recall being consulted about the Council's most recent priorities;
  - staff involvement in the current review of the Council's new vision statement has been minimal;
  - not all staff have had the opportunity to contribute to the development of their respective service plans, nor have they been consulted on how best to improve services; and
  - corporate arrangements for cascading key performance issues, 'Team brief' are not implemented consistently and staff do not consider this to be an effective means by which to communicate performance issues.
- 39 Tellingly, few of the attendees at our focus group of front-line staff appeared to know how their individual or service performance targets linked to the Council's corporate aims or objectives.



- 40 The Council has done some work to improve understanding of performance management. For example, it has recently published a guide to performance management for all staff. We also acknowledge the work the Council is doing to implement a new appraisal system, which when fully implemented should improve awareness and understanding of how the Council's vision and objectives link to the work of individuals. However, without effective communication and opportunities for all staff to become actively involved in performance management, the Council is unlikely to win the necessary 'buy in' and culture change needed to make performance management work across all levels of the organisation.

### **Best value reviews**

- 41 The Council has agreed a new approach to conducting best value reviews. New arrangements provide for a flexible approach to reviews by differentiating between larger 'cross-cutting' reviews and 'service specific reviews'. No cross-cutting reviews have completed to date, but the intention is that they will involve a fundamental review of services, comprising larger review teams and routinely involve senior officers, councillors and external stakeholders. In contrast, service reviews are more about 'checking' and 'validating' current arrangements and to date have been conducted by a single officer.
- 42 These arrangements enable the Council to approach reviews in a way that is proportionate to the complexities and issues of the particular service area. This means that the review programme is less resource intensive and reviews to date have been completed over a shorter timeframe.
- 43 While this flexibility offers clear advantages, the Council is at risk of not facilitating adequate challenge through the service review approach. By not routinely involving senior officers, councillors and external stakeholders in the service review process, the Council is missing the opportunity to bring together the range of experiences and perspectives that are key to effective challenge. We understand from discussion with the Council that the service review approach does not automatically preclude the establishment of a wider review team, and the Council's approach to the external challenge element of a review will be considered through a risk based assessment at the scoping stage and tailored accordingly. However, this approach has not been explicit in reviews to date and the Council's best value review tool kit does not set out clear guidance. The Council is aware of the need to clarify its approach in this respect and intends to do so.

## Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
R1 Develop clear outcome based objectives, targets and performance measures which enable the Council to monitor progress towards achieving corporate aims.	3				
R2 Ensure that key corporate documents articulate the Council's aims and objectives in a clear and consistent way.	3				
R3 Develop arrangements to enable the Council to monitor and evaluate the outcomes and effectiveness of its work with key partnerships.	2				
R4 Make the links between corporate aims and objectives and actions within service plans more explicit.	3				

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
<p>R5 Further embed performance management across the Council by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• involving staff, councillors and other stakeholders in service planning and target setting;</li> <li>• sharing and learning from positive practice in the Council;</li> <li>• providing councillors, managers and staff with performance management training, particularly in relation to target setting;</li> <li>• investigating 'quality circles' or similar structures to engage staff routinely in identifying service improvements;</li> <li>• improving the way performance issues are communicated; and</li> <li>• monitoring implementation of the new staff appraisal system to ensure that it is used to clarify individual contributions to the Council's objectives.</li> </ul>	3				

16 Progress Review - Performance Management | Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
R6 Assess whether there is adequate capacity at the corporate centre to deliver improved performance management.	3				

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY)  
TO THE EXECUTIVE  
7<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2006

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING INSPECTION**

**1.0 Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 The Executive will be aware that the Housing Inspector carried out an inspection of the Council's Affordable Housing Service during April 2006.
- 1.2 The Council has now received the final report from the Housing Inspector and a copy is available on the web site. This report summarises the findings of this report, and sets out the key messages for the Council as it seeks to drive forward continuous improvement.
- 1.3 The contact officer for this report is Paul Staines, Assistant Director (Housing & Community Safety) 01235-547621

**2.0 Recommendations**

*(a) That the Executive receive and note the findings of the Housing Inspector and*

- (I) Request that the Assistant Director (housing and community safety) ensure that the recommendations of the inspector are incorporated into the service development plans for the housing service*
- (II) Request that officers use the recommendations of the Inspector to drive service developments across the Authority as part of the Council's drive towards an improved CPA rating.*

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

- (a) This report relates to the Council's vision strands A, B, C, D, E & G
- (b) This report relates to the Housing Strategy
- (c) This report complies with existing policies in respect of housing and service planning.

**4.0 Background and Supporting Information**

- 4.1 The Housing Inspection Service is a stand-alone arm of the Audit Commission that deals with inspecting housing services across local authorities and housing associations.
- 4.2 The Housing Inspector last visited this Council in 2002 when it carried out a service wide inspection. This year they carried out a themed inspection of the Council's Affordable Housing Service, an inspection remit that is closely aligned to the scope of the housing element of a Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).
- 4.3 Although the inspection centred upon the Housing Service of the Council its thematic approach led it to inspect other areas of the Council's work. The main areas also inspected were:
- The Planning Service
  - Contact Services

- The Council's approach to performance management, equalities and diversity
- The Council's approach to securing value for money

## 5.0 **Main findings**

5.1 The headline finding of the inspector is that the service is awarded **Two Stars with uncertain prospects for improvement.**

5.2 Officers from housing are proud to advise the Executive that this rating represents the first time that a service inspection in this authority has received a two star or good rating from the Audit commission. As such it not only reflects well upon the housing service but represents a major step forward on the Council's journey towards being recognised as a Good Council under CPA.

5.3 The Inspector found much to praise in the affordable housing service, key findings were;

- The Council has developed a significant amount of affordable housing with an appropriate mix of tenures and size.
- There is a large volume of up to date research into housing needs and the condition of existing housing.
- Housing applicants benefit from the first choice-based lettings system in the sub region.
- Housing advice and the new banding system of housing allocations is being well used to prevent homelessness occurring.
- The use of current housing stock and brown-field land is being optimised.
- Face-to-face, telephone and internet access to the service is easy.

5.4 However the conclusions of the Housing Inspector were tempered by their finding that although the service is a good one, it has some way to go to becoming an excellent service. This leads them to the conclusion that the service has uncertain prospects for improvement.

5.5 This is an important message for the Council since the uncertainties of the Inspector are mainly to do with uncertainties about the Council's progress in some key corporate areas.

5.6 The remainder of this report therefore highlights those areas where the inspector believes corporate improvement is needed

## 6.0 **Access and Diversity**

6.1 In this area the Housing inspector finds much to praise when examining the work that the Council has done to improve the ability of our customers to access our services. For example the Inspector praises the Council's web based choice based lettings scheme and the Local Services Points.

6.2 The Inspector is more critical however of the way that the housing service engages with its customers and the work it does to provide services for the full range of its clients. This reflects his view that corporately the Council has concentrated its efforts upon developing a quality interface with customers but has not made such great progress in developing services for its full range of clients in consultation with them, for example in setting service standards across the Council.

6.3 The report concludes that engagement and consultation with our clients is not as strategically driven as the Inspectors might like and although for example housing can demonstrate major service improvements driven by customer feedback, the most notable example being Choice Based Lettings it is difficult to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Inspectors that there is systemic consultation and customer engagement across the authority.

6.4 The Executive will be aware that the Communications officer now drives the development of consultation mechanisms strategically and this officer will be working across the authority to ensure that the concerns of the inspector are addressed in Service development Plans.

## **7.0 Value for Money**

- 7.1 The report's conclusions represent a difference of opinion between the Council and the Inspector on this subject.
- 7.2 The Executive will be aware that the Council has adopted an approach to Value for Money that is predicated upon a strategic service review of all the Council's services. The review produced a list of services that would see the issue of value for money examined in depth.
- 7.3 Officers believe that this approach to value for money is based upon sound best value principles and reflects the resources available to this Council to carry out such work.
- 7.4 However, the fact that this approach means that not all services are subject to value for money appraisals at the same time means that at the time of the inspection there was, in the Inspector's view little evidence of work to establish value for money within housing. Although officers demonstrated that work had taken place in certain areas, for example the costs of temporary accommodation, the Inspector was critical of the lack of the strategic approach across the Council.
- 7.5 Ironically a best value review of housing services was due to take place in 2006, a review that would have addressed value for money as part of its remit. However this review was delayed so that officers could prepare for the inspection.
- 7.6 Officers continue to believe that the approach of the Council is sound, and believe that as the scope of the value for money reviews across the Council widens so the criticism of the Inspector will become less relevant. In the meantime the delayed best value review of housing services will take place in the autumn of 2006 and benchmarking work has already commenced to ensure that value for money is examined as part of this review.

## **8.0 Alignment of the Council's Budgets to its Priorities**

- 8.1 In his final recommendation to the Council, the Housing Inspector concludes that work is required to show that the priorities of the Council are demonstrated in its budgeting decisions.
- 8.2 Officers believe that the Inspector's conclusion does not demonstrate the financial realities of the Council, nor does it recognise the difficult decisions that the Council has taken in the last two budgets as it has sought to realign its budgets in the context of a shrinking financial base.
- 8.3 Nonetheless the officers do accept that the Council needs to demonstrate to its customers and to the Audit Commission that the budgetary decisions of the Council are made in the context of its stated priorities and accept that on occasions this is not always evident.
- 8.4 Officers will therefore be reflecting on the recommendations of the Inspector and seeking to ensure such clear linkages are further developed as the Council embarks upon setting its 2007-8 budgets later this year.

## **9.0 Conclusions**

- 9.1 This report introduces the finding of the Housing Inspection to the Executive and asks the Executive to receive the report and note its findings.
- 9.2 The report contains a number of key service improvement suggestions for the Housing Service. These will be reflected firstly in the Affordable Housing Priority within the Council's Best Value Performance Plan document and also in the individual Service Development Plans of Housing Services.

- 9.3 The Inspection also has important messages for the Council as a whole as it seeks to improve its performance. This report highlights those and suggests that the Executive require officers to reflect these issues in the service developments across the Council.

PAUL STAINES  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY)

**Background Papers:**

Affordable Housing; report of the Housing Inspector June 2006



REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER)  
TO THE EXECUTIVE  
7 JULY 2006

**2005/06 Annual Outturn Monitoring**

**1.0 Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 The report details, in accordance with the Corporate Planning Framework, the outturn position for 2005/06, subject to audit.
- 1.2 The Contact Officer for this report is Steve Bishop, Strategic Director (& Chief Finance Officer), (01235 540332).

**2.0 Recommendations**

*Members are requested to:*

- (a) *Note the overall outturn position of the Council as well as the outturn of individual service areas and cost centres; and,*
- (b) *Take into account the impact of the outturn position in the Integrated Service and Financial Planning process when setting the 2006/07 Revised Budget and 2007/08 Original Budget.*

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

- (a) This report summarises the financial consequences of the Council's entire activities, which support the Council's Vision.
- (b) The report does not conflict with any Council Strategies.
- (c) The report complies with existing policies on financial management.

**4.0 Financial Monitoring**

- 4.1 The overall Council outturn position is summarised in section 5 below.
- 4.2 Appendix A sets out the revenue outturn position for service areas and their component cost centres across the normal subjective headings.
- 4.3 Major variances over £10,000 are explained in Appendix B.

**5 Overall Council Outturn Position**

- 5.1 The appendices cover the 'normal' service area cost centres that comprise the Council's Revenue Account. As such they do not include corporate revenue items such as property income, investment income and Contingency. As a result the appendices do not reflect the true 'bottom line' revenue outturn position. The following table provides the overall projected outturn, which is a net under-spend of £26k (0.25% of Revised Budget Requirement):

	Variance from Revised Budget <sup>1</sup> £'000
Service areas outturn (as appendices)	(623)
Contingency	(438)
Property Income	21
Investment Income	100
Reduced use of Earmarked Funds	914
<b>Council Outturn (reduced use of balances)</b>	<b><u>(26)</u></b> <sup>2</sup>

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Underspends and overachieved income are negative; overspends and underachieved income are positive

<sup>2</sup> The outturn is finalised, subject to external audit

## 6 Explanation of the Outturn

### 6.1 Service Area variances

Some cost centres ended the year over-spent, whilst others under-spent. The total of all the cost centre variances is a net £623k under-spend (Appendix A). The larger variances, each individually over £10k in value are explained in Appendix B).

The four main reasons for the larger under-spend variances, as listed in Appendix can be summarised as being:

- Reduced supplies and services spending due to insufficient officer capacity and slippage on certain projects
- Cautious spending given the Council's known financial constraints
- Unexpectedly improving market conditions, resulting in actual income exceeding conservatively estimated income budgets
- Under-budgeting for certain Government grant income and certain costs

### 6.2 Contingency

Managed Vacancies over-performed the budgeted saving by £450k, which accounts for most of the under-spend on Contingency.

The way in which we budget for vacant posts has now changed. Previously vacant posts were managed centrally. However, this year's 2006/07 Original Budget for employee costs has been reduced in proportion to last year's outturn managed vacancy savings. Budget holders effectively start the year with 95% of the budget required to finance their full staffing complement for a full year. As vacancies arise, the budget holder is expected to manage the vacancy in order to keep within budget.

### 6.3 Property Income

The under-achievement of the corporate property income budget was £21k, or 1.2% down on the revised budget. This is within acceptable tolerances. It was due to unexpected minor voids and slightly lower rents than expected on some periodic rent reviews.

### 6.4 Investment Income

The under-achievement of the corporate investment income budget was £100k, or 6.9% down on the revised budget. Whilst the performance of the inhouse team was good, the treasury fund managers had a disappointing year, especially the final quarter. All fund managers suffered due to interest rate and bond yield uncertainty. It should be remembered that the fund

manager's brief is to maximise returns over three years and he is confident about an upswing in performance in the year ahead.

#### 6.5 Earmarked Funds and Reserves

The Council has a number of earmarked funds and reserves, each designated for a particular purpose. Each year we plan how much money needs to be returned to certain funds in order to build them up for their intended use, whilst others are used in the year according to their specific purpose. For 2005/06 we planned that the net usage of such funds would significantly exceed the contributions into the funds.

At the year-end review of earmarked funds it became apparent that the Contingency Fund needed to be replenished in order to meet the cost of projects carried forward for completion in 2006/07 as well as building an adequate reserve to meet as yet unforeseen costs associated with major procurement exercises, new statutory duties and local government reorganisation. The balance on the Superannuation Fund has also been maintained in order to offset the impact of the next triennial actuarial review. New reserves have been created to comply with statute (the Building Regulations Trading Reserve) or to meet an unexpected need (the DSO Replacement Vehicle Reserve). As planned a number of obsolete reserves have been closed down and the money returned to general fund balances.

#### 6.6 Overall Outturn and Use of Balances

This has been a good year for the Council's finances. The interaction of the revenue under-spend and lower use of earmarked funds is such that the Council used £26k less general fund balances than planned. The Council has made better progress against the Medium Term Financial Plan than forecast in February and starts 2006/07 with healthier general fund and earmarked fund balances.

STEVEN BISHOP  
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (& CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER)

**Background Papers:** Agresso download; Budget Holder variance explanations

Latest Budget 2005/06

	Democratic & Legal	Estates	Commercial Services	Environmental Health	Org Dev & Support	Procurement & Contract Mgt	Housing & Comm Safety	Housing & Comm & Spatial Planning	Internal Audit	Finance	Total
<b>Ciptagrap</b>											
1 Employees	773,610	312,070	799,030	1,041,270	1,524,170	979,340	940,890	1,458,390	139,620	2,528,190	10,496,580
2 Premises	27,600	588,310	53,630	70,710	14,890	301,540	34,610	195,010	0	2,490	1,288,790
3 Transport	18,060	13,190	91,700	79,010	16,890	33,000	30,670	73,310	6,260	36,730	398,820
4 Supplies	665,820	109,200	119,000	359,780	493,690	215,530	418,400	1,180,010	16,670	775,750	4,353,850
5 Contracts	0	27,000	0	3,389,190	15,200	1,021,560	6,620	123,860	0	0	4,583,430
6 Transfer pymts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17,832,050	17,832,050
7 Recharges	628,260	444,860	262,050	763,870	562,600	835,720	386,820	885,240	64,050	1,230,460	6,063,930
8 Capital chgs	39,392	373,034	39,375	58,338	154,331	1,449,397	1,066,314	402,699	4,400	44,820	3,632,100
9 Income	(1,127,660)	(1,276,070)	(934,730)	(1,244,800)	(2,851,370)	(836,470)	(1,171,260)	(1,809,310)	(128,800)	(19,664,290)	(31,044,760)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,025,082</b>	<b>591,594</b>	<b>430,055</b>	<b>4,517,368</b>	<b>(69,599)</b>	<b>3,999,617</b>	<b>1,713,064</b>	<b>2,509,209</b>	<b>102,200</b>	<b>2,786,200</b>	<b>17,604,790</b>

Actuals 2005/06

<b>Ciptagrap</b>											
1 Employees	762,831	331,221	800,300	1,114,649	1,528,170	990,704	900,550	1,429,108	171,181	2,489,800	10,518,514
2 Premises	32,497	588,224	63,852	75,755	14,089	272,047	40,487	182,082	0	5,039	1,274,072
3 Transport	18,643	14,016	94,633	72,501	17,478	29,414	28,370	67,702	5,090	32,637	380,483
4 Supplies	629,670	95,692	106,173	241,577	453,259	176,167	700,357	1,040,909	14,096	748,135	4,206,574
5 Contracts	0	30,598	0	3,283,063	11,337	1,057,955	6,623	119,741	0	0	4,509,318
6 Transfer pymts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17,961,969	17,961,969
7 Recharges	578,361	561,490	259,498	761,699	528,817	803,861	360,969	810,323	61,122	1,173,992	5,900,132
8 Capital chgs	39,392	373,034	39,375	58,338	154,331	1,449,397	1,066,314	402,699	4,400	44,820	3,632,100
9 Income	(1,120,440)	(1,407,183)	(988,038)	(1,187,370)	(2,614,975)	(911,939)	(1,318,931)	(1,756,180)	(139,086)	(19,957,288)	(31,401,431)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>940,953</b>	<b>587,092</b>	<b>376,334</b>	<b>4,420,212</b>	<b>92,506</b>	<b>3,867,606</b>	<b>1,784,739</b>	<b>2,296,384</b>	<b>116,803</b>	<b>2,499,103</b>	<b>16,981,732</b>

Variances 2005/06

<b>Ciptagrap</b>											
1 Employees	(10,779)	19,151	1,270	73,379	4,000	11,364	(40,340)	(29,282)	31,561	(38,390)	21,934
2 Premises	4,897	(86)	10,222	5,045	(801)	(29,498)	5,877	(12,928)	0	2,549	(14,718)
3 Transport	583	826	2,933	(6,509)	588	(3,586)	(2,300)	(5,608)	(1,170)	(4,093)	(18,337)
4 Supplies	(36,150)	(13,508)	(12,287)	(118,203)	(40,431)	(39,363)	281,957	(139,101)	(2,574)	(27,615)	(147,276)
5 Contracts	0	3,598	0	(106,127)	(3,863)	36,395	3	(4,119)	0	0	(74,112)
6 Transfer pymts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	129,919	129,919
7 Recharges	(49,899)	116,630	(2,552)	(2,171)	(33,783)	(31,859)	(25,851)	(74,917)	(2,928)	(56,468)	(163,798)
8 Capital chgs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Income	7,220	(131,113)	(53,308)	57,430	236,395	(75,469)	(147,671)	53,130	(10,286)	(292,998)	(356,671)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(84,129)</b>	<b>(4,502)</b>	<b>(53,721)</b>	<b>(97,156)</b>	<b>162,105</b>	<b>(132,011)</b>	<b>71,675</b>	<b>(212,825)</b>	<b>14,603</b>	<b>(287,097)</b>	<b>(623,058)</b>

Democratic & Legal

Outturn Report Appendix A

DD/AD (Tim Sadler)

Latest Budget 2005/06

Cip/grp	L70	L80	L90	M10	M20	M30	M40	M70	M80	T07	T08	T11	Grand Total
	Elections	Electoral Registration	Member Services	Committee Section Management	Support Administration	Town & Parish Support	Legal Services	Local Land Charges	Reprographics	Members Allowances	Member Advice	Political Group Assistants	
1 Employees	39,940	44,360	11,520	116,080	118,550	4,870	218,990	45,600	85,630	12,040	9,760	66,270	773,610
2 Premises	500		0	21,500		3,600	5,120		1,040	150	1,600	400	27,600
3 Transport	710	1,290	900	8,100	0	410	60,390	28,630	112,570	322,020	140	200	18,060
4 Supplies	3,240	61,340	7,460	57,270	7,210	2,310	55,845		141,830		1,780	1,600	665,820
7 Recharges	43,430	102,390	19,000	94,790	57,410	12,640	110,509	56,770	63,890	6,260	6,700	43,400	628,260
8 Capital chgs				7,900	2,200		14,800		14,492				39,392
9 Income	(4,800)	(1,250)	(150)	(2,050)	(190,590)	(100)	(418,280)	(300,000)	(210,440)	0	0	0	(1,127,660)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>83,020</b>	<b>208,130</b>	<b>38,730</b>	<b>303,590</b>	<b>(5,220)</b>	<b>23,730</b>	<b>(12,200)</b>	<b>(154,200)</b>	<b>67,180</b>	<b>340,470</b>	<b>19,980</b>	<b>111,870</b>	<b>1,025,082</b>

Actuals 2005/06

1 Employees	40,287	37,904	10,908	113,979	108,041	4,638	219,386	44,042	86,084	27,404	8,262	61,896	762,831
2 Premises	1,085		0	24,139		5,733	5,234		1,083	160	78	1,462	32,497
3 Transport	1,102	850	937	8,435	80	483	55,845		141,830		13	267	18,643
4 Supplies	5,118	32,675	2,440	47,666	3,720	1,668	55,845		141,830		1,409	2,002	629,670
7 Recharges	40,139	93,883	17,933	87,254	53,049	11,901	110,509	51,237	60,556	5,956	6,384	39,560	578,361
8 Capital chgs				7,900	2,200		14,800		14,492				39,392
9 Income	(5,336)	(1,789)	(163)	(2,339)	(167,090)	(74)	(390,973)	(309,213)	(243,409)	(35)		(20)	(1,120,440)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>82,394</b>	<b>163,523</b>	<b>32,054</b>	<b>287,035</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24,349</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(184,223)</b>	<b>60,636</b>	<b>353,871</b>	<b>16,146</b>	<b>105,168</b>	<b>940,953</b>

Variances 2005/06

1 Employees	347	(6,456)	(612)	(2,101)	(10,509)	(232)	396	(1,558)	454	15,364	(1,498)	(4,374)	(10,779)
2 Premises	585	0	0	2,639	0	2,133	0	0	0	0	(1,522)	1,062	4,897
3 Transport	392	(440)	37	335	80	73	114	0	43	10	(127)	67	583
4 Supplies	1,878	(28,665)	(5,020)	(9,604)	(3,490)	(642)	(4,545)	(13,719)	29,260	(1,634)	(371)	402	(36,150)
7 Recharges	(3,291)	(8,507)	(1,067)	(7,536)	(4,361)	(739)	(11,071)	(5,533)	(3,334)	(304)	(316)	(3,840)	(49,899)
8 Capital chgs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Income	(536)	(539)	(13)	(289)	23,500	26	27,307	(9,213)	(32,969)	(35)	0	(20)	7,220
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(626)</b>	<b>(44,607)</b>	<b>(6,676)</b>	<b>(16,555)</b>	<b>5,220</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>12,201</b>	<b>(30,023)</b>	<b>(6,546)</b>	<b>13,401</b>	<b>(3,834)</b>	<b>(6,702)</b>	<b>(84,129)</b>

Estates

Outturn Report Appendix A

DD/AD Andrew Morgan

Latest Budget 2005/06

Ciptagrp	L20	L30	L40	M50	M60	Q10	T02	T04	T06	T12	T13	U03	Grand Total
	Asset Maintenance	Contract Services	Land Drainage	Facilities Management	Estates Management	Technical Support Management	Tech Support - Map Service	Tech Support - Energy	Mobile Home Parks	Operational Buildings	Prop Man - Non operational Bldgs	Stws & Pump Stations - Vale	
1 Employees	28,410	67,620	140	86,750	40,250	0	0	0	42,730	24,280	21,890	0	312,070
2 Premises	2,690	2,480	200	341,110	96,870	0	0	0	53,260	13,180	76,190	7,500	588,310
3 Transport	740	2,570	0	2,200	1,920	150	0	0	1,600	1,140	1,010	0	13,190
4 Supplies	10,000	11,390	0	13,000	22,970	6,450	23,200	0	7,010	1,140	16,620	0	109,200
5 Contracts					2,520						11,480		27,000
7 Recharges			22,430	16,700	117,000	0	4,400	0	27,170	27,090	203,560	5,120	444,860
8 Capital chgs			20,749	221,600	4,700	0			6,400	59,585	52,700	7,300	373,034
9 Income	(41,730)	(98,500)		(717,410)	(170)	(11,280)	(27,600)		(301,700)	(140)	(70,040)	(7,500)	(1,276,070)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>(14,440)</b>	<b>46,240</b>	<b>(1,750)</b>	<b>286,060</b>	<b>(4,680)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(163,530)</b>	<b>125,470</b>	<b>331,310</b>	<b>13,620</b>	<b>591,594</b>

Actuals 2005/06

1 Employees	34,916	78,675	142	79,927	39,583	10,291	0	0	42,166	24,120	21,402	0	331,221
2 Premises	2,618	2,517	0	349,927	88,760	0	0	0	55,123	13,949	73,963	6,503	588,224
3 Transport	760	2,731	16	1,967	1,701	2,427	15,423	0	1,375	508	904	0	14,016
4 Supplies	13,886	15,188	0	20,512	24,966	6,769	4,174	5,777	7,969	248	16,299	0	95,692
5 Contracts			5,895	12,345	64						12,294		30,598
7 Recharges			30,129	15,076	214,634	0	4,174	5,777	25,116	20,842	196,724	19,944	561,490
8 Capital chgs			20,749	221,600	4,700	0			6,400	59,585	52,700	7,300	373,034
9 Income	(52,180)	(99,112)		(701,353)	(1,003)	(19,486)	(19,597)		(321,180)	(5,338)	(180,043)	(7,891)	(1,407,183)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>56,931</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>373,404</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,777</b>	<b>(183,031)</b>	<b>113,914</b>	<b>194,242</b>	<b>25,855</b>	<b>587,092</b>

Variances 2005/06

1 Employees	6,506	11,055	2	(6,823)	(667)	10,291	0	0	(564)	(160)	(488)	0	19,151
2 Premises	0	0	(200)	8,817	(8,110)	0	0	0	1,863	769	(2,227)	(997)	(86)
3 Transport	(72)	37	0	(233)	(219)	2,277	0	0	(225)	(632)	(106)	0	826
4 Supplies	20	161	16	(7,988)	1,996	319	(7,777)	0	959	(892)	(321)	0	(13,508)
5 Contracts	0	0	5,895	(655)	(2,456)	0	0	0	0	0	814	0	3,598
7 Recharges	3,886	3,798	7,699	(1,624)	97,634	0	(226)	5,777	(2,054)	(6,248)	(6,837)	14,824	116,630
8 Capital chgs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Income	(10,450)	(612)	0	16,057	(833)	(8,206)	8,003	0	(19,480)	(5,198)	(110,003)	(391)	(131,113)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(110)</b>	<b>14,440</b>	<b>13,412</b>	<b>7,550</b>	<b>87,344</b>	<b>4,680</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5,777</b>	<b>(19,501)</b>	<b>(12,361)</b>	<b>(119,168)</b>	<b>13,435</b>	<b>(4,502)</b>

DD/AD	Bill Farrar	Latest Budget 2005/06																Grand Total						
		B00	T01	T03	T55	T93	U04	U05	U06	U08	U09	U11	U13	U14	U15	U16	U17	U21	U22	U23	U24	U26	Grand Total	
		Building Control	Emergency Planning	Tech Support - Address Mangmt	Access Officer	Direct Services Other	Stws & Pump Stations - SODC	Stws & Pump Stations - Private	Stws & Pump Stations - Unallocated	Maintaining Car Parks	Emptying Septic Tanks - Vale	Emptying Septic Tanks - SODC	Sewer Blockages - Vale Private	Sewer Blockages - VHA	Sewer Blockages - SODC	Sewer Blockages - SODC Private	Sewer Blockages - Unallocated	Contract - AEA	Contract - Power Station	Contract - Minor Works	Contract - CCTV Sewers	Contract - Committee Meeting Setup	Grand Total	
1	Employees	435,650	19,610		0	344,770	150	100	14,000	16,000													799,030	
2	Premises	200			0	23,180																	53,630	
3	Transport	33,290	1,490		0	56,920	1,000																91,700	
4	Supplies	89,580	3,320	12,000	0	13,100			0													0	119,000	
7	Recharges	152,520	12,150	4,850	0	92,530																	262,050	
8	Capital chgs	10,160			0	29,215																	39,375	
9	Income	(546,540)		(600)	0	(1,000)	(37,000)	(25,700)	(50,000)	(79,240)	(63,240)	(16,950)	(29,350)	(29,350)	(4,100)	(8,800)	(1,860)	(4,000)	(1,000)	(55,290)	(5,000)	0	(984,730)	
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>174,760</b>	<b>35,570</b>	<b>16,230</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>558,710</b>	<b>(35,850)</b>	<b>(25,700)</b>	<b>(50,000)</b>	<b>(63,240)</b>	<b>(63,240)</b>	<b>(16,950)</b>	<b>(29,350)</b>	<b>(29,350)</b>	<b>(4,100)</b>	<b>(8,800)</b>	<b>(1,860)</b>	<b>(4,000)</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	<b>(55,290)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>430,055</b>	
<b>Actuals 2005/06</b>																								
1	Employees	422,981	19,003		0	358,367	2,695	1,331	17,874	14,994													800,300	
2	Premises	4,593			0	22,366																	63,852	
3	Transport	31,191	1,301		0	62,142																	94,633	
4	Supplies	62,859	4,899	7,040	0	31,915			0													3,751	106,713	
7	Recharges	143,095	11,244	13,911	0	87,497																	259,498	
8	Capital chgs	10,160			0	29,215																	39,375	
9	Income	(533,555)		(175)	0	(1)	(3,347)	(24,805)	(57,124)	(51,823)	(67,402)	(11,270)	(44,472)	(44,472)	(1,625)	(8,885)	63	(853)	(1,248)	(181,517)	0	0	(988,038)	
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>141,274</b>	<b>35,447</b>	<b>20,777</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>591,501</b>	<b>(652)</b>	<b>(24,805)</b>	<b>(57,124)</b>	<b>(51,823)</b>	<b>(67,402)</b>	<b>(11,270)</b>	<b>(44,472)</b>	<b>(44,472)</b>	<b>(1,625)</b>	<b>(8,885)</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>(853)</b>	<b>(1,248)</b>	<b>(181,517)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,751</b>	<b>376,534</b>
<b>Variances 2005/06</b>																								
1	Employees	(12,719)	393		0	13,597	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,270	
2	Premises	4,393			0	(814)	2,545	1,231	0	3,874	(1,006)												10,222	
3	Transport	(2,099)	(189)		0	5,222																	2,933	
4	Supplies	(26,721)	1,579	(4,960)	0	18,815	(1,000)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(12,287)	
7	Recharges	(9,425)	(906)	9,061	0	(5,033)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,751	(2,552)	
8	Capital chgs	13,085	0	425	0	999	33,653	895	(7,124)	10,377	11,838	5,680	(15,122)	(15,122)	2,475	(85)	1,923	3,147	(249)	(126,227)	5,000	0	(53,308)	
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(33,486)</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>4,527</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32,786</b>	<b>35,198</b>	<b>895</b>	<b>(7,124)</b>	<b>14,250</b>	<b>10,832</b>	<b>5,680</b>	<b>(15,122)</b>	<b>(15,122)</b>	<b>2,475</b>	<b>(85)</b>	<b>1,923</b>	<b>3,147</b>	<b>(249)</b>	<b>(126,227)</b>	<b>5,000</b>	<b>3,751</b>	<b>(53,721)</b>	

DD/AD	David Stevens	Latest Budget 2005/06																	Grand Total				
Cip/grp	C00	T05	T14	T16	T17	T18	T19	T21	T22	T23	T24	T25	T26	T27	T28	T29	T31	T32	T78	T79	T81	Grand Total	
	Environmental Health	Taxi Licensing	General Licensing	Water Environment	General Environment	Waste Strategy	Food Safety	Licensing	Animal Control Management	Health & Safety	Terrestrial Environment	Air Environment	Noise	Public Conveniences	Recycling	Refuse collection	Street Cleansing	Waste Minimisation	Pest Control	Environment Warden	Dog Waste		
1 Employees	129,900	29,580	7,330	26,620	26,400	5,990	118,960	101,280	77,420	77,030	49,780	47,030	67,740	18,020	83,720	80,550	58,250	20,190	0	15,480	0	0	1,041,270
2 Premises	0	0	0	100	100	100	330	330	77,420	200	3,070	2,800	5,120	69,580	200	9,810	100	200	0	15,480	0	0	70,710
3 Transport	3,010	15,140	550	1,410	1,210	330	8,830	4,430	5,710	5,120	3,070	2,800	7,830	810	4,730	9,810	2,950	1,000	1,000	2,880	5,000	0	359,780
4 Supplies	22,740	8,170	480	3,160	2,280	1,600	7,120	6,040	14,520	5,090	4,130	38,110	7,830	1,360	47,500	125,570	19,370	23,130	1,000	15,580	0	0	3,389,190
5 Contracts	86,790	33,600	12,100	16,530	16,890	78,580	56,160	40,190	39,450	33,060	28,150	33,060	46,270	83,300	90,200	93,610	894,130	15,150	10,350	14,440	6,170	0	763,870
8 Capital chgs	10,660	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,000	30,628	0	0	0	0	1,650	0	0	58,338
9 Income	(242,000)	(58,190)	(3,500)	(180)	(280)	8,020	(1,150)	(106,980)	0	(790)	(300)	(20,150)	(150)	(2,090)	(582,700)	(161,540)	(35,540)	(36,260)	(21,560)	(2,000)	(11,000)	(1,244,800)	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>11,100</b>	<b>23,300</b>	<b>16,950</b>	<b>47,340</b>	<b>46,500</b>	<b>8,020</b>	<b>212,670</b>	<b>60,930</b>	<b>137,640</b>	<b>126,100</b>	<b>84,830</b>	<b>100,850</b>	<b>126,810</b>	<b>200,620</b>	<b>787,700</b>	<b>1,452,340</b>	<b>970,900</b>	<b>59,670</b>	<b>(21,560)</b>	<b>48,130</b>	<b>14,170</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	<b>4,517,368</b>
<b>Actuals 2005/06</b>																							
1 Employees	145,936	30,259	10,812	26,948	26,694	6,022	139,008	137,625	73,497	72,872	54,965	54,785	79,563	18,413	79,262	72,934	48,920	20,668	0	15,466	0	0	1,114,649
2 Premises	0	0	0	0	0	0	93	0	0	0	0	0	0	75,663	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75,755
3 Transport	3,485	16,613	571	1,227	1,034	340	8,353	4,823	5,938	4,238	3,065	2,289	3,921	645	4,763	5,389	2,676	1,439	(0)	1,692	3,943	0	72,501
4 Supplies	24,039	9,080	415	2,465	1,148	60	4,567	10,154	12,479	4,891	4,518	33,696	5,107	384	40,130	27,503	20,811	21,467	(0)	14,720	0	0	241,577
5 Contracts	82,751	30,849	11,284	16,790	17,132	79,259	57,008	41,361	40,584	33,493	28,823	33,493	46,371	89,540	984,965	1,309,593	885,347	15,057	10,183	14,374	5,903	0	3,283,063
8 Capital chgs	10,660	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15,400	30,628	0	0	0	1,650	0	0	0	761,699
9 Income	(266,871)	(62,099)	(3,648)	(90)	(427)	6,421	(1,570)	(131,773)	0	(456)	(181)	(20,324)	(181)	(1,761)	(496,088)	(112,487)	(40,209)	(35,002)	(24,820)	(1,009)	(12,593)	(1,187,370)	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24,702</b>	<b>19,433</b>	<b>47,340</b>	<b>45,581</b>	<b>6,421</b>	<b>229,669</b>	<b>77,837</b>	<b>133,275</b>	<b>122,128</b>	<b>91,190</b>	<b>103,941</b>	<b>135,381</b>	<b>212,847</b>	<b>734,937</b>	<b>1,394,853</b>	<b>949,681</b>	<b>58,631</b>	<b>(24,820)</b>	<b>46,294</b>	<b>10,870</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	<b>4,420,212</b>
<b>Variances 2005/06</b>																							
1 Employees	16,036	679	3,482	328	294	32	20,048	36,345	(3,923)	(4,158)	5,185	7,755	11,823	393	(4,458)	(7,616)	(9,330)	478	0	(14)	0	0	73,379
2 Premises	0	0	0	0	0	(100)	(237)	0	0	(200)	0	0	0	6,083	(200)	0	(100)	(200)	0	0	0	0	5,045
3 Transport	475	1,473	21	(183)	(176)	10	(477)	393	228	(882)	(5)	(511)	(1,199)	(165)	(33)	(4,421)	(274)	439	0	(1,288)	0	0	5,045
4 Supplies	1,299	910	(65)	(695)	(1,132)	(1,540)	(2,553)	4,114	(2,041)	(199)	388	(4,412)	(2,723)	(976)	(7,370)	(98,067)	1,441	(1,663)	(1,000)	(860)	(1,057)	0	(6,509)
5 Contracts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,240	(108,455)	5,253	(8,783)	0	0	0	0	0	(118,203)
7 Recharges	(4,039)	(2,751)	(816)	260	242	0	659	848	1,171	1,134	673	433	701	23	1,077	(1,689)	496	(93)	(167)	(66)	(382)	0	(106,127)
8 Capital chgs	(24,871)	(3,909)	(148)	90	(147)	(919)	(420)	0	0	334	119	(174)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	391	(267)	0	(2,171)
9 Income	(11,100)	(3,598)	2,373	(200)	(919)	(1,599)	17,019	(24,793)	(4,565)	(3,972)	6,360	3,091	6,571	11,927	(92,761)	(57,467)	(21,219)	(1,039)	90	(1,838)	(3,300)	(1,000)	57,430
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(11,100)</b>	<b>(3,598)</b>	<b>2,373</b>	<b>(200)</b>	<b>(919)</b>	<b>(1,599)</b>	<b>17,019</b>	<b>(24,793)</b>	<b>(4,565)</b>	<b>(3,972)</b>	<b>6,360</b>	<b>3,091</b>	<b>6,571</b>	<b>11,927</b>	<b>(92,761)</b>	<b>(57,467)</b>	<b>(21,219)</b>	<b>(1,039)</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>(1,838)</b>	<b>(3,300)</b>	<b>(1,000)</b>	<b>(97,156)</b>



DD/AD	Helen Bishop		F00	G00	K10	K20	K30	K40	K70	K90	L10	N70	T09	T35	T86	T87	T98	T99	U01	U02	Grand Total
	ICT	S & C Admin Support	Training & Development	Recruitment & Selection	Welfare	Policy Development	Consultation	Employee Relations	Health & Safety	Corporate Resources Administration	Civic Duties	Faringdon Cash Office	Wantage Local Services Point	Abingdon Local Services Point	Corporate Contact Management	Duty Officers	Corporate Postal Service	Corporate Communications			
1 Employees	464,005	117	75,491	87,429	29,960	0	0	69,002	47,730	91,755	26,190	23,035	118,138	355,920	25,317	17,767	69,318	26,996	1,528,170		
2 Premises	3,335	410	435	436	1,095	0	204	432	3,416	183	11	342	1,569	4,353	1,143	142	142	445	14,089		
3 Transport	266,263	11,845	9,760	5,527	423	290	7,903	16,429	9,112	5,904	9,404	893	11,388	29,012	6,157	1,204	19,688	42,057	453,259		
4 Supplies	92,304	4,201	17,519	25,700	7,943	9,909	5,857	23,724	10,163	45,958	11,156	9,434	3,129	155,062	16,401	43,486	13,784	528,817			
5 Contracts	65,451									1,700				72,180					154,331		
7 Recharges	(920,780)	(14,970)	(221,240)	(157,070)	(37,690)	0	35,320	(103,620)	(75,950)	(136,710)	48,510	(42,300)	(196,420)	(663,300)	(50,120)	0	(156,160)	(75,040)	(2,851,370)		
8 Capital chgs	(18,980)	120	(115,280)	(28,470)	0	11,620	0	0	230	480	48,510	(170)	(220)	(7,000)	2,620	16,910	(1,990)	0	0	(69,599)	
9 Income																					
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>10,199</b>	<b>13,964</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>49,242</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(196,739)</b>	<b>(621,302)</b>	<b>(49,018)</b>	<b>(12)</b>	<b>(132,634)</b>	<b>(83,281)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>92,506</b>
<b>Actuals 2005/06</b>																					
1 Employees	464,005	117	75,491	87,429	29,960	0	0	69,002	47,730	91,755	26,190	23,035	118,138	355,920	25,317	17,767	69,318	26,996	1,528,170		
2 Premises	3,335	410	435	436	1,095	0	204	432	3,416	183	11	342	1,569	4,353	1,143	142	142	445	14,089		
3 Transport	266,263	11,845	9,760	5,527	423	290	7,903	16,429	9,112	5,904	9,404	893	11,388	29,012	6,157	1,204	19,688	42,057	453,259		
4 Supplies	92,304	4,201	17,519	25,700	7,943	9,909	5,857	23,724	10,163	45,958	11,156	9,434	3,129	155,062	16,401	43,486	13,784	528,817			
5 Contracts	65,451									1,700				72,180					154,331		
7 Recharges	(920,780)	(14,970)	(221,240)	(157,070)	(37,690)	0	35,320	(103,620)	(75,950)	(136,710)	48,510	(42,300)	(196,420)	(663,300)	(50,120)	0	(156,160)	(75,040)	(2,851,370)		
8 Capital chgs	(18,980)	120	(115,280)	(28,470)	0	11,620	0	0	230	480	48,510	(170)	(220)	(7,000)	2,620	16,910	(1,990)	0	0	(69,599)	
9 Income																					
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>10,199</b>	<b>13,964</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>49,242</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(196,739)</b>	<b>(621,302)</b>	<b>(49,018)</b>	<b>(12)</b>	<b>(132,634)</b>	<b>(83,281)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>92,506</b>
<b>Variates 2005/06</b>																					
1 Employees	(296)	(3)	261	(7,441)	1,590	(360)	(250)	4,642	2,580	10,935	2,030	(2,485)	4,368	(3,540)	(183)	1,837	(16,462)	6,776	4,000		
2 Premises	0	(40)	0	0	0	0	104	0	(500)	0	(19)	0	(345)	0	0	0	0	0	(801)		
3 Transport	(505)	0	(15)	(14)	495	0	0	(18)	(124)	33	11	142	(21)	453	23	(8)	(8)	145	588		
4 Supplies	(2,287)	1,755	(2,050)	(73)	143	(300)	(20,947)	2,789	(6,878)	(286)	(426)	(2,057)	(293)	(4,318)	(3,633)	374	(3,372)	1,427	(40,431)		
5 Contracts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(71)	35	(3,826)	0	0	0	0	(3,863)		
7 Recharges	(7,356)	(229)	(951)	(1,980)	(497)	(761)	(263)	(1,446)	(837)	(2,372)	(864)	(826)	(3,304)	(10,368)	71	0	(1,694)	(106)	(33,783)		
8 Capital chgs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
9 Income	29,422	(1,603)	118,035	37,979	(1,731)	0	0	(5,968)	5,529	(8,790)	0	5,487	(319)	41,998	1,102	(12)	23,526	(8,241)	236,395		
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>18,979</b>	<b>(120)</b>	<b>115,280</b>	<b>28,471</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(1,421)</b>	<b>(21,356)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(230)</b>	<b>(480)</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>20,400</b>	<b>(2,620)</b>	<b>2,191</b>	<b>1,990</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>162,105</b>

DD/AD Hywel Griffiths

Latest Budget 2005/06

Cip/Ag/Prp	L50	P10	P20	P31	P32	P40	P50	P60	P70	P80	P91	O90	T44	T61	T64	T65	T66	T67	T72	Grand Total
	Highways Agency	Sport & Recreation Operations	Landscape Services	Wantage Client	Faringdon Client	Guildhall	Wantage Civic Hall	Leisure & Arts Admin	Sports Development	Arts Development	Tilesey Client	Fitzharris Common Room	Health Development	Abingdon Outdoor Pool	Grounds Maintenance Contract	Horticultural Services	Parks & Open Spaces	Street Arts WH Centre	Bridge Tennis & LC	
1 Employees	0	1,730	5,910	19,540	12,240	50	600	250	7,250	1,710	0	720	2,630	3,230	10,410	2,260	51,540	6,280	7,730	979,340
2 Premises	100	2,130	14,000	203,340	171,010	420	23,990	24,370	23,450	18,180	272,350	0	2,060	10,690	9,030	6,330	319,030	1,750	0	301,540
3 Transport	27,760	6,000		23,240	19,890	78,520	90,720	28,530	46,060	26,680	39,770	3,000	10,840	7,880	23,890	47,720	259,240	11,600	22,010	1,021,560
4 Supplies	23,800	21,940	53,390	214,350	77,450	119,700	102,500				192,400			26,900			118,797		594,300	835,720
5 Contracts																				
7 Recharges																				
8 Capital chgs																				
9 Income	(26,200)	(103,080)		0	0	(153,030)	(63,540)	(55,340)	(14,500)	(4,770)	0	(3,770)	(250)	(16,000)	(192,480)	(195,720)	(52,510)	(15,280)	0	(836,470)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>25,460</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>198,070</b>	<b>457,670</b>	<b>279,690</b>	<b>330,990</b>	<b>405,680</b>	<b>1,490</b>	<b>182,820</b>	<b>95,900</b>	<b>511,230</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>51,780</b>	<b>31,960</b>	<b>770</b>	<b>1,920</b>	<b>769,850</b>	<b>12,010</b>	<b>629,660</b>	<b>3,999,617</b>

Actuals 2005/06

1 Employees	68	70,232	118,430	17,155	(8,144)	157,014	195,569	10,848	113,060	51,728	299	2,219	36,077	5,600	147,658	68,457	12,030	7,382	10,178	990,704
2 Premises	0	1,812	5,258	209,083	(108)	30,079	70,425	34	209	34	34	1,430	117	5,600	9,779	15,023	49,247	5,293	0	272,047
3 Transport	0	1,996	11,866	69	(108)	17	574	64	5,996	1,564	(36)	510	2,740	1,275	8,128	1,611	45,072	1,018	0	29,414
4 Supplies	46,681	5,448		209,083	193,935	144	926	11,788	19,757	14,204	275,640		1,476	2,448	0	4,757	318,723	4,927	1,622	1,057,955
5 Contracts	22,573	19,989	49,708	22,508	19,219	73,027	83,618	27,709	41,891	24,496	38,318	3,000	10,078	7,527	21,359	46,207	263,812	10,758	21,066	803,861
7 Recharges	0			214,350	77,450	119,700	102,500				192,400			26,900			118,797		594,300	1,449,397
8 Capital chgs																				
9 Income	(40,678)	(99,476)		(59,614)	(8,768)	(156,109)	(68,234)	(50,443)	(17,550)	(3,662)	(31,362)	(4,933)	(249)	(725)	(186,924)	(136,055)	(41,561)	(11,087)	5,490	(911,939)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>28,644</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>185,262</b>	<b>403,551</b>	<b>273,584</b>	<b>328,971</b>	<b>408,049</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>163,364</b>	<b>88,364</b>	<b>475,260</b>	<b>2,225</b>	<b>50,239</b>	<b>43,026</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>766,120</b>	<b>13,364</b>	<b>637,583</b>	<b>3,867,606</b>

Variation 2005/06

1 Employees	0	(1,268)	(6,340)	(2,385)	0	16,044	9,709	7,218	(4,000)	(2,372)	0	(331)	(23)	0	(2,262)	(193)	(4,540)	(278)	0	11,364
2 Premises	68	0	0	(2,385)	(20,384)	(5,341)	5,115	(16)	(3,291)	34	(7,411)	380	(63)	2,310	0	2,343	(2,293)	(987)	2,448	(29,493)
3 Transport	0	82	(652)	0	0	(33)	(26)	(186)	(1,254)	(146)	0	(146)	(90)	0	(631)	(649)	0	0	0	(39,586)
4 Supplies	(100)	(134)	(2,134)	69	(108)	(5,040)	(1,318)	(12,582)	(3,693)	(3,976)	(36)	(211)	(584)	1,275	(902)	(1,573)	(9,208)	(732)	1,622	(39,363)
5 Contracts	18,921	(552)		5,743	22,925	(276)	86	0	0	0	3,290	0	0	(8,242)	0	0	(907)	0	(5,193)	36,395
7 Recharges	(1,227)	(1,951)	(3,682)	(732)	(672)	(5,494)	(7,103)	(821)	(4,169)	(2,184)	(1,452)	0	(762)	(953)	(2,531)	(1,514)	4,572	(842)	(944)	(31,859)
8 Capital chgs				0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Income	(14,478)	3,604	(12,808)	(59,614)	(8,768)	(3,079)	(4,694)	4,897	(3,050)	1,108	(31,362)	(1,163)	1	15,275	5,556	(335)	10,949	4,193	5,490	(75,469)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,184</b>	<b>(220)</b>	<b>(12,808)</b>	<b>(56,919)</b>	<b>(7,066)</b>	<b>(3,219)</b>	<b>1,769</b>	<b>(1,490)</b>	<b>(19,456)</b>	<b>(7,536)</b>	<b>(36,970)</b>	<b>(1,325)</b>	<b>(1,541)</b>	<b>10,266</b>	<b>(769)</b>	<b>(1,920)</b>	<b>(827)</b>	<b>1,354</b>	<b>3,423</b>	<b>(132,011)</b>

DD/AD Paul Staines

Latest Budget 2005/06

	T43	T45	T46	T47	T48	T52	T53	T54	T57	T58	T71	U29	Grand Total
	CCTV	Housing Provision	Homelessness	Enabling	Regulation	Community Safety	HECA	Housing Register	Mediation Service	Neighbourhood Wardens	Housing Strategy	Temporary Accommodation	
1 Employees	172,810	32,750	292,660	50,100	68,380	57,650	57,750	143,860	0	30,000	34,930	0	940,890
2 Premises	100	4,020	4,020	2,690	3,180	1,250	1,940	200	0	(1,760)	1,380	30,800	34,610
3 Transport	2,250	1,190	8,760	2,690	3,180	4,100	1,940	4,300	2,160	880	1,380	186,180	30,670
4 Supplies	41,790	15,620	70,880	9,220	2,620	24,970	20,830	37,900	2,160	760	5,470	0	418,400
5 Contracts											6,620		6,620
7 Recharges	50,170	48,730	66,240	30,960	27,120	36,160	17,890	42,320	6,060	0	10,110	51,060	386,820
8 Capital chgs	81,500		0	808,714				19,400				156,700	1,066,314
9 Income	(147,810)	(50)	(22,050)	(736,150)	(50)	0	(50)	(50)			(50)	(265,000)	(1,171,260)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>200,810</b>	<b>98,240</b>	<b>420,510</b>	<b>260,700</b>	<b>101,250</b>	<b>124,130</b>	<b>98,360</b>	<b>247,930</b>	<b>8,220</b>	<b>29,880</b>	<b>58,460</b>	<b>151,040</b>	<b>1,713,064</b>

Actuals 2005/06

1 Employees	165,893	31,609	273,365	54,496	70,357	85,851	57,962	127,194	0	0	33,823	0	900,550
2 Premises	1,165		4,893			1,579		60				32,789	40,487
3 Transport	1,776	1,116	7,926	2,035	2,533	5,612	2,143	3,977	2,160	0	1,252	0	28,370
4 Supplies	72,854	12,794	48,268	8,541	3,040	103,215	14,102	44,515	2,160	0	566	390,302	700,357
5 Contracts											6,623		6,623
7 Recharges	45,256	46,360	61,680	29,940	25,535	33,624	16,450	39,218	5,800	0	9,424	47,682	360,969
8 Capital chgs	81,500		0	808,714				19,400				156,700	1,066,314
9 Income	(154,294)	(120)	(18,497)	(717,286)	(104)	(135,199)	(104)	(104)			(104)	(293,119)	(1,318,931)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>214,151</b>	<b>91,760</b>	<b>377,636</b>	<b>186,439</b>	<b>101,362</b>	<b>94,681</b>	<b>90,553</b>	<b>234,259</b>	<b>7,960</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>51,583</b>	<b>334,354</b>	<b>1,784,739</b>

Variances 2005/06

1 Employees	(6,917)	(1,141)	(19,295)	4,396	1,977	28,201	212	(16,666)	0	(30,000)	(1,107)	0	(40,340)
2 Premises	1,065	0	873	0	0	329	0	(140)	0	1,760	0	1,989	5,877
3 Transport	(474)	(74)	(834)	(655)	(647)	1,512	203	(323)	0	(880)	(128)	0	(2,300)
4 Supplies	31,064	(2,826)	(22,612)	(679)	420	78,245	(6,728)	6,615	0	(760)	(4,904)	204,122	281,957
5 Contracts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3
7 Recharges	(4,914)	(2,370)	(4,560)	(1,020)	(1,585)	(2,536)	(1,440)	(3,102)	(260)	0	(686)	(3,378)	(25,851)
8 Capital chgs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Income	(6,484)	(70)	3,553	18,864	(54)	(135,199)	(54)	(54)	0	0	(54)	(28,119)	(147,671)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>13,341</b>	<b>(6,480)</b>	<b>(42,874)</b>	<b>20,905</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>(29,449)</b>	<b>(7,807)</b>	<b>(13,671)</b>	<b>(260)</b>	<b>(29,880)</b>	<b>(6,877)</b>	<b>174,614</b>	<b>71,675</b>

DD/AD Rodger Hood

Latest Budget 2005/06

	A00	K60	M90	N10	N20	T15	T33	T59	T69	T74	T75	T88	T89	T91	U28	Grand Total
	Economic Development	Community Planning	Development Policy	Development Control	Environmental Services Admin	Car Park Strategy	Car Park Operations	Community Funding Officers	Youth Development	Community Grants	Community Service Grants	Abingdon TIC	Faringdon TIC	Excess Charges Administration	Planning Delivery Grant	
1 Employees	89,670	300	377,030	670,480	0	16,630	41,350	9,240	24,300	49,510		7,100	9,040	135,160	44,720	1,458,390
2 Premises	250	1,150	22,500	2,500	0	700	151,270	2,980	600	600				12,920	2,500	195,010
3 Transport	2,130		25,170	22,460	0	14,160	2,210	2,980	250	1,990				9,570	105,000	73,310
4 Supplies	174,220	131,040	340,250	118,390	0	7,000	47,290	2,190	5,550	115,780	116,570		0	24,000		1,180,010
5 Contracts	51,500	9,810	95,400	425,260	0	7,270	41,360	19,610	11,020	23,770	6,130			55,840		123,860
7 Recharges	63,740	0	137,696	25,980	0		167,390									885,240
8 Capital chgs	0				0		224,400			14,623						402,699
9 Income	(11,000)	(6,590)		(565,980)	0	(2,000)	(823,620)	34,020	41,720	202,920	122,700	(5,200)	(400)	(242,520)	(152,000)	(1,809,310)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>370,510</b>	<b>142,300</b>	<b>1,017,980</b>	<b>699,090</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36,760</b>	<b>(154,150)</b>	<b>34,020</b>	<b>41,720</b>	<b>202,920</b>	<b>122,700</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>8,640</b>	<b>(5,030)</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>2,509,209</b>

Actuals 2005/06

1 Employees	86,411	0	382,714	641,317	0	16,741	45,552	8,394	24,290	54,959		771	3,892	119,715	48,976	1,429,108
2 Premises	83	349	22,379	1,237	0	2,283	151,922	1,451	1,451	0				11,462	1,348	182,082
3 Transport	2,096		22,723	22,757	0	13,976	1,779	1,096	174	1,983				9,005	10,971	67,702
4 Supplies	146,777	123,943	344,840	118,216	0	6,880	42,899	2,519	4,641	105,421	117,613		90	21,654		1,040,909
5 Contracts	51,465	9,193	89,452	398,879	0		40,778	18,302	10,249	21,751	5,868			50,884		119,741
7 Recharges	60,641	0	137,696	25,980	0		138,224			14,623						810,323
8 Capital chgs	0				0		224,400									402,699
9 Income	(9,926)	(6,367)		(626,427)	0	(2,023)	(837,412)	30,311	40,804	198,777	123,481	0	(9)	(212,720)	(61,295)	(1,756,180)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>337,546</b>	<b>133,485</b>	<b>999,281</b>	<b>581,958</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37,856</b>	<b>(191,858)</b>	<b>30,311</b>	<b>40,804</b>	<b>198,777</b>	<b>123,481</b>	<b>771</b>	<b>3,972</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,296,384</b>

Variances 2005/06

1 Employees	(3,259)	(300)	5,684	(29,163)	0	111	4,202	(846)	(10)	5,489	0	0	0	(15,445)	4,256	(29,282)
2 Premises	(167)	(801)	(121)	(1,263)	0	0	652	0	851	(600)	0	(6,329)	(5,148)	0	0	(12,928)
3 Transport	(34)	0	(2,447)	297	0	1,583	(431)	(1,884)	(76)	(7)	0	0	0	(1,458)	(1,152)	(5,608)
4 Supplies	(27,443)	(7,097)	4,590	(174)	0	(184)	(4,391)	329	(909)	(10,359)	1,043	0	90	(565)	(94,029)	(139,101)
5 Contracts	(35)	0	(1,155)	0	0	0	(582)	0	0	0	0	0	0	(2,347)	0	(4,119)
7 Recharges	(3,099)	(617)	(5,948)	(26,381)	0	(390)	(29,166)	(1,308)	(771)	(2,019)	(262)	0	0	(4,956)	0	(74,917)
8 Capital chgs	0	0	0	0	0	0	(13,792)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Income	1,074	0	223	(60,447)	0	(23)	(13,792)	0	0	0	0	5,200	391	29,800	90,705	53,130
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(32,964)</b>	<b>(8,815)</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>(117,132)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,096</b>	<b>(43,508)</b>	<b>(3,709)</b>	<b>(916)</b>	<b>(7,496)</b>	<b>781</b>	<b>(1,129)</b>	<b>(4,668)</b>	<b>5,030</b>	<b>(220)</b>	<b>(212,825)</b>

DD/AD Sam Turner

## Latest Budget 2005/06

	E00	K50	Grand Total
Cipfagr	Internal Audit	Performance Management	
1 Employees	82,600	57,020	139,620
2 Premises		0	0
3 Transport	5,120	1,140	6,260
4 Supplies	4,810	11,860	16,670
7 Recharges	33,010	31,040	64,050
8 Capital chgs		4,400	4,400
9 Income	(128,800)		(128,800)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(3,260)</b>	<b>105,460</b>	<b>102,200</b>

## Actuals 2005/06

1 Employees	99,643	71,538	171,181
2 Premises		0	0
3 Transport	3,270	1,821	5,090
4 Supplies	4,632	9,464	14,096
7 Recharges	31,542	29,580	61,122
8 Capital chgs		4,400	4,400
9 Income	(139,086)		(139,086)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>116,803</b>	<b>116,803</b>

## Variances 2005/06

1 Employees	17,043	14,518	31,561
2 Premises	0	0	0
3 Transport	(1,850)	681	(1,170)
4 Supplies	(178)	(2,396)	(2,574)
7 Recharges	(1,468)	(1,460)	(2,928)
8 Capital chgs	0	0	0
9 Income	(10,286)	0	(10,286)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,260</b>	<b>11,343</b>	<b>14,603</b>

DD/AD Steve Bishop

Latest Budget 2005/06

	D00	N50	N60	N90	T34	T36	T37	T38	T39	T41	T49	T51	T56	T73	T76	T77	Grand Total
	Asset Management	Corporate Core	Unapportioned Overheads	Accountancy	Rent Accounting	Council Tax	Business Rates	Payroll	Creditors	Sundry Debtors	Benefits Administration	Mortgages	Benefit Fraud	Assisted Transport	Payment Of Housing Benefit	Payment Of Council Tax Benefit	
1 Employees	50,980	551,460	342,100	321,700	10,260	282,120	144,290	53,960	17,030	36,360	505,550	12,930	140,790	58,660			2,528,190
2 Premises	1,140	7,390		9,020	0	1,980	2,470	0	0	0	9,850	0	4,700	180			2,490
3 Transport	43,880	178,680	0	29,710	1,000	112,080	17,600	12,000	9,860	7,730	109,190	3,360	19,010	231,650			36,730
6 Transfer pymts	37,020	140,920	6,000	107,330	6,210	427,700	64,110	32,040	43,060	37,940	242,750	8,800	46,140	30,400	13,795,000	4,037,050	775,750
7 Recharges				36,900	60	500	130	300		250	680				6,040		17,832,050
8 Capital chgs				(620,480)	(17,530)	(112,820)	(208,090)	(100,710)	(75,650)	(81,850)	(588,370)	(9,800)	(129,400)	0	(13,548,910)	(4,106,810)	1,230,460
9 Income	(136,220)	(37,650)		(15,820)	0	711,560	25,510	(2,410)	(5,700)	430	284,650	16,680	81,240	320,890	252,130	(69,760)	(19,664,280)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(3,200)</b>	<b>841,900</b>	<b>348,100</b>	<b>(15,820)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>711,560</b>	<b>25,510</b>	<b>(2,410)</b>	<b>(5,700)</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>284,650</b>	<b>16,680</b>	<b>81,240</b>	<b>320,890</b>	<b>252,130</b>	<b>(69,760)</b>	<b>2,786,200</b>

Actuals 2005/06

1 Employees	58,163	538,597	338,242	317,511	9,572	292,808	152,458	49,498	22,070	36,123	474,429	14,228	145,295	40,804			2,489,800
2 Premises		3,647										1,392		0			5,039
3 Transport	1,155	5,101		8,439	0	2,354	1,653	0	0	0	9,198	123	4,331	282			32,637
4 Supplies	36,032	185,126	18	28,777	339	109,113	16,729	9,089	5,925	9,847	101,356	1,766	25,420	218,598			748,135
6 Transfer pymts	37,438	135,779	6,000	103,104	5,768	403,951	62,297	31,455	43,514	37,365	227,633	8,271	43,048	28,592	13,900,495	4,061,474	17,961,969
7 Recharges				36,900	60	500	130	300		250	680				5,777		44,820
8 Capital chgs				(494,732)	(15,739)	(107,596)	(193,713)	(90,342)	(71,509)	(83,584)	(584,539)	(36,609)	(362,660)	(73)	(13,665,354)	(4,085,121)	(19,957,288)
9 Income	(132,789)	(32,929)		(0)		701,130	39,555	(0)	(0)	1	228,758	(10,829)	(144,566)	288,203	240,918	(23,647)	(19,957,288)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>835,320</b>	<b>344,260</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>701,130</b>	<b>39,555</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>228,758</b>	<b>(10,829)</b>	<b>(144,566)</b>	<b>288,203</b>	<b>240,918</b>	<b>(23,647)</b>	<b>2,499,103</b>

Var05es 2005/06

1 Employees	7,183	(12,863)	(3,858)	(4,189)	(688)	10,688	8,168	(4,462)	5,040	(237)	(31,121)	1,298	4,505	(17,856)	0	0	(38,390)
2 Premises	0	2,547	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2,549
3 Transport	15	(2,289)	0	(581)	0	374	(817)	0	0	0	(652)	123	(369)	102	0	0	(4,093)
4 Supplies	(7,848)	6,446	18	(933)	(661)	(2,967)	(871)	(2,911)	(3,935)	2,117	(7,834)	(1,594)	6,410	(13,052)	0	0	(27,615)
6 Transfer pymts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,495	24,424	129,919
7 Recharges	418	(5,141)	0	(4,226)	(442)	(23,749)	(1,813)	(585)	454	(575)	(15,117)	(529)	(3,092)	(1,808)	(263)	0	(56,468)
8 Capital chgs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Income	3,431	4,721	0	25,748	1,791	5,224	9,377	10,368	4,141	(1,734)	(1,169)	(26,809)	(233,260)	(73)	(116,444)	21,689	(292,998)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,200</b>	<b>(6,560)</b>	<b>(3,840)</b>	<b>15,820</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>(10,430)</b>	<b>14,045</b>	<b>2,411</b>	<b>5,700</b>	<b>(429)</b>	<b>(55,892)</b>	<b>(27,509)</b>	<b>(225,806)</b>	<b>(32,687)</b>	<b>(11,212)</b>	<b>46,113</b>	<b>(287,097)</b>

**Variances over £10,000**

Costc	Costc (T)	Cipfa grp	Account	Account (T)	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Working Budget	Actuals	Variance	Budget Holder
A00	Economic Development	4	451	Partnership grants	89,170	0	89,170	67,050	(22,120)	T. Warren
<b>Reason For Variance</b> General underspend on provision of Grants and Exyernal Services payments										
B00	Building Control	4	424	External Services	41,100	5,000	46,100	31,556	(14,544)	B. Farrar
	Building Control	9	920	Fees for services	(545,000)		(545,000)	(533,115)	11,885	
<b>Reason For Variance</b> The 424 account is predominantly for the payment of consultant engineers, etc and is dependant upon market trends, legislation, etc. and can fluctuate - the underspend demonstrates a careful approach to use resources which offsets other areas of increased expenditure.										
K70	Consultation	4	424	External Services	32,100	(5,000)	27,100	7,895	(19,205)	N. Malin
<b>Reason For Variance</b> Fewer consultation exercises than planned were undertaken, resulting in consultancy and survey savings.										
L50	Highways Agency	9	907	Contributions - Oxfordshire Cc	(23,500)	(2,700)	(26,200)	(40,678)	(14,478)	I. Matten
L50	Highways Agency	5	502	Third Party Payments - Groun	37,660	(9,900)	27,760	46,363	18,603	I. Matten
<b>Reason For Variance</b> Throughout the year we were in negotiations with Oxfordshire County Council regarding the cost of grass cutting in Urban areas which we undertake on their behalf. In the past we have always subsidised some of the cuts to maintain a certain standard. The County Council have agreed to reimburse the full costs associated with the work which has resulted in increased income of £14,478. The third party payments and actual income should, therefore, correspond. There is, however, a difference of just over £4k because the third party payment for March 2005 has been included in the 2005/06 financial year.										
L80	Electoral Registration	4	424	External Services	10,950	5,000	15,950	3,110	(12,841)	M. Beviere
<b>Reason For Variance</b> The money in this budget is for the conduct of the Parish Boundary review which has been completed and sent to the Electoral Commission for approval. The previous Monitoring Officer did all the work on the review and passed it to me for completion when he left. My understanding is that he was unable to offer this as a saving this year because, until the EC approve the boundary changes, we may need to use the money for further enquiries. I hope to hear from the EC before October approving all the proposed boundary changes. Once this has happened, we may use a small amount to have new maps made up but apart from that it could be offered up as a saving.										
M70	Local Land Charges	4	424	External Services	16,020	0	16,020	2,385	(13,635)	S. Commins
<b>Reason For Variance</b> This is due to money allocated for the next stage of the Uniform system remaining unspent. This will be required as soon as those problems are resolved.										
M80	Reprographics	4	414	Printing	52,000	0	52,000	72,335	20,335	J.Howard

Outturn Report Appendix B

Costc	Costc (T)	Cipfa grp	Account	Account (T)	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Working Budget	Actuals	Variance	Budget Holder
M80	Reprographics	4	418	Stationery - Other Stationery	45,000	0	45,000	55,570	10,570	J.Howard
<b>Reason For Variance</b> Both budgets demand driven by customer requirements.										
N10	Development Control	9	920	Fees For Services	(440,000)	(122,400)	(562,400)	(612,199)	(49,799)	R. Hood
N10	Development Control	4	423	Advertising	17,400	0	17,400	30,766	13,366	R. Hood
<b>Reason For Variance</b> 920:Greater number of planning applications than expected received, paying higher fees under the new Government fee regime. 423: Greater number of applications requiring formal advertisement than expected.										
N50	Corporate Core	4	424	External Services	116,360	29,500	145,860	138,422	(7,438)	N. Davies
N50	Corporate Core	9	955	Interest	(13,000)	0	(13,000)	2,345	15,345	N. Davies
N50	Corporate Core	4	438	Bank Charges	0	0	0	12,820	12,820	N. Davies
<b>Reason For Variance</b> 424: Expenditure on this code covers a wide variety of corporate matters and it is not always possible to exactly calculate what will be required in any year. 955: The overspend relates to interest on a loan the Vale made the County Council in respect of the old mortuary. The interest should have decreased every year but unfortunately the same figure has been credited to the accounts since 1999/2000 438: Bank charges should be left in a cost centre unapportioned. In 2006-07 they should be coded to N60 - unapportioned overheads. A budget will have to be created for them.										
P31	Wantage client	9	935	Leisure fees & charges	0	0	0	(41,580)	(41,580)	C. Webb
		9	948	Reimbursements - OCC	0	0	0	(18,034)	(18,034)	C. Webb
<b>Reason For Variance</b> Income due to the Council for the period prior to the transfer of leisure centres to a contractor in 2004/05, not posted in that year.										
P32	Faringdon Client	2	203	Repairs & maintenance of buil	0	10,120	10,120	(11,708)	(21,828)	C. Webb
	Faringdon Client	5	506	Third Party Payments - Gener	0	170,160	170,160	192,396	22,236	C. Webb
<b>Reason For Variance</b> 203: Accrual (£13,824) from 2004/05 not cleared. 506: A late invoice (June 05) for 04/05 was posted in 05/06 to the value of £14k. This related to operational expenditure from the old T63 code and was not budgeted for in the newly set up Client Codes where that expenditure is not required.										
P91	Tilsley Client	5	502	Third Party Payments - Group	0	15,900	15,900	27,330	11,430	C. Webb
P91	Tilsley Client	9	935	Leisure fees & charges	0	0	0	(30,012)	(30,012)	C. Webb
<b>Reason For Variance</b> 502: Historic budget for this element is circa £28k. In 2004/05 the budget was reduced in error as a result of externalisation of the Management Function. The budget needs to be increased to £28k. This need was raised in 2004/05 935: Income due to the Council for the period prior to the transfer of leisure centres to a contractor in 2004/05, not posted in that year.										
T06	Mobile Home Parks	9	928	Commission	(35,000)	(48,640)	(83,640)	(96,545)	(12,905)	L. Rodway
<b>Reason For Variance</b> Overachieved commission income. Budget fluctuates according to the transactional value of assignments. This variance was noted through										



# Outturn Report Appendix B

Costc	Costc (T)	Cipfa grp	Account	Account (T)	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Working Budget	Actuals	Variance	Budget Holder
			regular budget monitoring. A budget adjustment was made for £48,640. A couple of transactions completed at year end created the variance shown.							
T13		941	Rents - Other Property	(2,100)	0	(2,100)	(40,692)		(38,592)	A. Morgan
T13		970	Service Charges	0	(63,530)	(63,530)	(116,444)		(52,914)	A. Morgan
			<b>Reason For Variance</b> T13 941: Income was miscoded/misposted to this budget. This included £8,000 of income which was misposted to another cost centre. This was identified through periodic budget monitoring. In October and thereafter each month the nature of errors occurring on this account was monitored and corrected as they occurred through monthly liaison meetings with Finance. An examination of the account allows this income to be more accurately predicted this year. A budget adjustment was proposed as part of the overall package of measures to effect corporate savings. There should be no re occurrence next year subject to coding.							
			<b>Reason For Variance</b> T13 970: Two accrual entries for £49,000 & £66,000 respectively were made at the end of April. This represented an estimate of likely expenditure in relation to service charges. Repetition is likely due to the nature of the recharge calculation and the significant variations which occur when major expenditure and hence recovery occurs.							
T21		968	Licence Fees	(140,710)	34,000	(106,710)	(131,462)		(24,752)	R. Paddock
			<b>Reason For Variance</b> Budget adjustment over estimated, as the number of TENs, change of licence details and the number of personal and premise application underestimated as this is the first year of application.							
T28		948	Reimbursements - Oxfordshire	(402,200)	55,400	(346,800)	(354,212)		(7,412)	A. Windust
T28		505	Third Party Payments - Recycl	1,083,420	10,000	1,093,420	984,965		(108,455)	A. Windust
T28		921	Fees For Use Of Facilities	(160,000)	(39,000)	(199,000)	(122,625)		76,375	A. Windust
			<b>Reason For Variance</b> 949: 1 month's income overaccrued. Actual income for year £354,210 giving a variance of £7,410							
			505: Underspend due to the late start of various recycling schemes. The budget included £167K for payments relating to the Brown Bin scheme for the whole year. At the end of the year, only £78k had been expended on Brown Bins.							
			The original budget of £160K was the subject of an SBCF, which reduced the expected income to £116k due to the reduction in charges to residents. The introduction of the 2nd phase of the Brown Bin scheme was expected to bring in an additional £29k of income. Delays in bin deliveries reduced this to £6-7K. Therefore by my estimate, the under recovery of income is £23k not £76K.							
T29		918	Sales	(27,500)	0	(27,500)	(40,192)		(12,692)	A. Windust
T29		424	External Services	105,090	0	105,090	18,275		(86,815)	A. Windust
T29		948	Reimbursements - Oxfordshire	(71,000)	0	(71,000)	(4,960)		66,040	A. Windust
			<b>Reason For Variance</b> 918: This relates to green sack income. The income includes some mis-coded bulky waste monies relating to transaction 640646 totalling							

## Outturn Report Appendix B

Costc	Costc (T)	Cipfa grp	Account	Account (T)	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Working Budget	Actuals	Variance	Budget Holder		
					<p>£9,628. The rest of the over recovery is due to the expected fall in demand not happening after the introduction of the brown bin scheme. 424 &amp; 948 are linked as the income relates to reimbursements from OCC for the disposal of abandoned vehicles. A SBCF was submitted in early November to reflect the reduction in costs to the Vale along with reduction in income from OCC. The effect of the SBCF should have been to reduce the T29 424 by £83k and T29 948 by £59K</p>							
T31		5	506	Third Party Payments - Gener:	115,900	0	115,900	93,333	(22,567)	A. Windust		
T31		5	503	Third Party Payments - Waste	778,230	0	778,230	787,041	8,811	A. Windust		
					<p><b>Reason For Variance</b> Looking at Agresso, there is £7,215 coded to 503 when it should be 506. In addition the accrual amount of £137,760 in 503 may have been overstated by approx. £6,000 which reduces the overspend in 503 to £2,800 and the underspend in 506 is reduced to £15,351. Also, I have noticed that £2,300 (dog waste) has been coded to 506 when it should be coded to T81. An additional payment of £7,215 missing from 506</p>							
T33		9	932	Parking Fees	(707,020)	15,500	(691,520)	(675,684)	15,836	B. Mizen		
T33		9	933	Season tickets	(84,400)	(10,000)	(94,400)	(117,187)	(22,787)	B. Mizen		
					<p><b>Reason For Variance</b> Parking Fees have increased, It is now beneficial to purchase a season ticket.</p>							
T43		4	403	Repairs & Maintenance of Fun	14,500	(2,000)	12,500	34,861	22,361	B. Jones		
					<p><b>Reason For Variance</b> The deadline for accruing an invoice on this account was missed due to the absence of the budget holder on sick leave. It was decided that because the bottom line variance on the cost centre was within tolerance no action would be taken</p>							
T46		4	424	External services	21,500	12,000	33,500	13,981	(19,519)	P.Staines		
					<p><b>Reason For Variance</b> This is grant received from the ODPM which has previously been unbudgeted for.</p>							
T47		9	901	Government Grants	(716,100)	(20,000)	(736,100)	(717,182)	18,918	I. Forster		
					<p><b>Reason For Variance</b> Budget set too high and comprises of part subsidy for DFG and PRC houses. The subsidy in respect of PRC houses is falling and will be phased out. The reduction is not reflected in the budget and a BCF will make adjustment for future years.</p>							
T51		9	946	Capitalised salaries	0	0	0	(27,417)	(27,417)	H. Bowen		
					<p><b>Reason For Variance</b> This is the allocation of pool receipts acquired over 2 years. The debit is to capita receipts to reduce the amount payable to the Government.</p>							
T52		4	461	Community Safety grants	0	0	0	76,013	76,013	B. Jones		
		9	901	Government Grants	0	0	0	(135,199)	(135,199)	B. Jones		
					<p><b>Reason For Variance</b> The variance on 461 is due to unbudgeted expenditure, to be met from the government grant credited to 901 T52.</p>							

# Outturn Report Appendix B

Costc	Costc (T)	Cipfa grp	Account	Account (T)	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Working Budget	Actuals	Variance	Budget Holder	
					The variance on account 901 is an over-recovery of grant income against budget - this appears because the Vale does not budget on T52 for the GOSE grant income or the matching expenditure.						
T56	Benefit Fraud	9	901	Government Grants	(79,950)	0	(79,950)	(245,744)	(165,794)	H. Bowen	
T56	Benefit Fraud	9	904	Overpayment Housing Benefit	(17,040)	(32,410)	(49,450)	(115,508)	(66,058)	H. Bowen	
					<b>Reason For Variance</b> it appears we received subsidy for finding more overpayments (WIBS) than budgeted for. With regards to 904 relates to fraud incentives and as we recruited another fraud officer last year I would expect the work in this area to have increased. However, it would appear that the budget was not adjusted to reflect this. I have asked The Benefits Manager/Benefit Fraud Manager for their thoughts on this and will get back to you.						
T61	Abingdon outdoor pool	9	949	Reimbursements - Town coun	(14,000)	0	(14,000)	0	14,000	C. Webb	
					<b>Reason For Variance</b> No town council contribution due to the pool's closure in 2005/06.						
T66	Parks & open spaces	9	921	Fees for use of facilities	(16,520)	0	(16,520)	(6,280)	10,240	I. Matten	
					<b>Reason For Variance</b> Wantage Pitch and Putt has a short season due to staffing issues.						
T73	Assisted Transport	4	422	Concessionary Travel	671,480	(471,000)	200,480	184,181	(16,299)	H. Bowen	
					The variance is a result of actually not knowing what the budget would really be as 2005/06 was the first year travel tokens were revoked. The Vale ceased providing these concessions and people had to claim bus passes instead so the usage and reimbursements to the bus companies were estimated, hence the variance.						
T74	Community Grants	4	424	External Services	58,870	0	58,870	50,300	(8,570)	L. Edwards	
					<b>Reason For Variance</b> The budget allocation of £58,870 represents the costs to this Council of granting National Non-Domestic Rate relief to charities, certain non profit making bodies and some clubs. In previous years the budget has been debited without any instruction by the budget holder and Howard and I assumed that this would be the case in 2005/2006. Please let me know if an instruction is required.						
T76	Payment of Hsg Benefit	9	901	Government grants (net)	411,790	(159,660)	252,130	240,918	(11,212)	H. Bowen	
					<b>Reason For Variance</b> Revised Housing Benefit calculation slightly out (0.8%), resulting in a minor underspend						
T77	Payment of CTax Benefit	6	603	Non HRA rent rebates	3,957,050	80,000	4,037,050	4,061,474	24,424	H. Bowen	
T77	Payment of CTax Benefit	9	901	Government grants	(3,946,810)	(160,000)	(4,106,810)	(4,085,121)	21,689	H. Bowen	
					<b>Reason For Variance</b> Revised Council Tax Benefit calculation slightly out (0.6%), resulting in a minor overspend						
T93	Direct Services Other	4	409	Materials	3,000	(1,000)	2,000	19,434	17,434	B. Farrar	
					<b>Reason For Variance</b> (See U14 explanation below)						
U02	Corporate Communication	4	424	External Services	14,910	0	14,910	28,864	13,954	N. Malin	
					<b>Reason For Variance</b> Incorrectly charged for edition of Waste Views which should have come from the Environmental Health budget.						

Outturn Report Appendix B

Costc	Costc (T)	Cipfa grp	Account	Account (T)	Original Budget	Budget Adjustments	Working Budget	Actuals	Variance	Budget Holder
U04	Stws & Pump Stations - S9	920	Fees For Services	(37,000)	0	(37,000)	(3,347)	33,653	B. Farrar	
	<b>Reason For Variance</b> (See U14 explanation below)									
U05	Stws & Pump Stations - P9	920	Fees For Services	(25,700)	0	(25,700)	(9,718)	15,982	B. Farrar	
	<b>Reason For Variance</b> (See U14 explanation below)									
U09	Emptying Septic Tanks - \9	920	Fees For Services	(52,000)	(10,200)	(62,200)	(51,823)	10,377	B. Farrar	
	<b>Reason For Variance</b> (See U14 explanation below)									
U11	Emptying Septic Tanks - \9	920	Fees For Services	(64,740)	(14,500)	(79,240)	(67,402)	11,838	B. Farrar	
	<b>Reason For Variance</b> (See U14 explanation below)									
U14	Sewer Blockages - VHA	9	Fees For Services	(28,750)	(600)	(29,350)	(42,949)	(13,599)	B. Farrar	
	<b>Reason For Variance</b> Cost centres T93,U04,U05,U09,U11 and U14 are all within the Direct Service range of work. The Service Area was transferred to Building Control under special measures defined within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. During 2005-06, Direct Services commenced on a major overhaul in its operational and financial management. Many improvements are yet to take place in the future. However, there was insufficient time and scope to simplify the complex system of recharging that existed previously. As the working budget was expecting a deficit of £145K in Jan 2006 a saving of £50K was offered to the end of year accounts. It should be noted that the final deficit resulted in only a £77K deficit (including Address Management) representing an underspend (or saving) of over £68K.									
	To this effect variances shown in the said cost centres above cannot be analysed in isolation but rather read within the whole Direct Service financial statement.									
	07 the number of cost centre shall be reduced and each service will have more accurate figures for income and expenditure.									
U29	Temp. Accommodation	4	425	Accommodation costs	0	180,000	389,986	209,986	P.Staines	
		9	941	Rents - other property	0	(265,000)	(293,119)	(28,119)		
	<b>Reason For Variance</b> Late claim for two years accommodation costs received from landlord. Full cost accrued in 2005/06.									

(342,669)

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANNING AND COMMUNITY STRATEGY)  
TO THE STRATEGIC AND LOCAL PLANNING ADVISORY GROUP 26 JUNE 2006  
AND TO THE EXECUTIVE ON 7 JULY 2006

**The Draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2006 - 2026**

**1.0 Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 The draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West, (the South West Plan) has been published for consultation purposes. The document looks ahead to 2026, and will supersede the current Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10). Although the Vale is not in the South West, the Vale's western boundary is co-terminous with part of the south west's regional boundary. Although in the area covered by the South West Plan, the town of Swindon is just 'over the border' and therefore policies in the South West Plan relating to the Borough and its surrounding area are of particular significance to this Council.
- 1.2 The documents published for consultation include; the draft Regional Spatial Strategy itself, an Implementation Plan; a Strategic Sustainability Assessment; and a Pre-Submission Consultation Statement.
- 1.3 These documents are currently held in the Planning Strategy team. Please contact Nick Burroughs or Katie Barrett if you wish to inspect them.
- 1.4 The consultation period runs from 6 June to 30 August 2006.
- 1.5 In summary, Swindon is identified in the South West Plan as one of 21 'Strategically Significant Cities and Towns'. Relevant policies are included to, among other things; realise and develop the role of Swindon as a service and employment centre providing a high quality lifestyle for residents within and adjoining the town (SR1), ensure that social, cultural and educational requirements for the Swindon sub-region are provided for (SR7), maximise economic opportunities within the Swindon travel to work area (SR8), make the best use of land for development by the provision of a strategic urban extension on the eastern side of Swindon to the north and south of the A420 (SR9).
- 1.6 This report summarises key elements of the proposed strategy and outlines suggested responses to the South West Regional Assembly.
- 1.7 The Contact Officer for this report is Nick Burroughs, Planning Strategy team, tel. 01235 520202 extn 496.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 *It is recommended that the Strategic and Local Plan Advisory Group recommends the Executive to make representations on the South West Plan set out as comments in bold in Section 4 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 West Plan does not cover the Vale but could affect it and it will be important to keep the strategy under review because of the proximity of the major growth area of Swindon and its potential impact on the Vale's western parishes.

#### 4.0 **The Main Features of the draft Plan with the Officer's comments**

##### General

- 4.1 The draft Spatial Strategy for the South West, (the South West Plan), looks ahead to 2026. It has been prepared by the South West Regional Assembly. It is one of the new kind of strategy documents, both spatial and functional, responding to the Government's challenge to build sustainable development. It will supersede the Regional Planning Guidance for the South West (RPG10) which looked ahead to 2016.

##### The Spatial Strategy

- 4.2 Although the Vale is not in the South West region, the Vale's western boundary is co-terminous with Swindon Borough, which is covered by the South West Plan. Swindon is identified in the South West Plan as one of 21 'Strategically Significant Cities and Towns' (SSCTs). Paragraph 3.1.3 sets out and Map 3.1 shows the 'Spatial Strategy Statement' which explains that the emphasis of the strategy will vary to include realising the economic and other potential of the SSCTs particularly in the north (eg. Swindon) and centre of the region. Paragraph 3.3.3 explains that relevant strategies for the SSCTs are included in Section 4 and will among other things, seek to make the best use of land for development by the provision of urban extensions.
- 4.3 Comment. The South West Plan's strategy to realise the economic and other potentials in the north of the region, and particularly with regard to Swindon, is noted and should be supported in principle, given the importance of Swindon as a major source of employment and services for residents in the western part of the Vale.

##### Sub-region - Swindon

- 4.4 In Section 4, paragraph 4.2.2 emphasises the economic potential of Swindon – "another potential national growth centre, although...potential water supply and waste treatment issues will need to be taken into account". Paragraph 4.2.1 notes that the realisation of this potential will require, among other things, "the provision of sufficient housing linked with job growth at the named places" and should be complemented by allowing balanced development elsewhere to ensure the service role of the market towns is maintained. Policy SR1 confirms this approach.
- 4.5 Comment. See para 4.3 above. The reference to allowing balanced development elsewhere to ensure the service role of market towns is maintained should be welcomed as this is consistent with this Council's approach in the Local Plan 2011, particularly in relation to Faringdon.

##### Policy SR7

- 4.6 Paragraph 4.2.26 introduces and policy SR7 covers the role of Swindon in providing a high quality lifestyle for residents within and adjoining the town.
- 4.7 Comment. Policy SR7 is noted and should be supported for the reasons given in paragraph 4.3.

##### Policies SR8 & SR9

- 4.8 Paragraph 4.2.27 introduces and Policies SR8 and SR9 cover development at Swindon and specifically include a strategic urban extension on the eastern side of the town to the north and south of the A420. This expansion area is shown diagrammatically as 'Area of Search G' in Inset Diagram 4.2, (see Appendix A to this report). The policies and the Inset diagram indicate that this strategic eastern extension is for about 12,000 dwellings at a proposed rate of development of 600 dwellings per year. Policies SR8 and SR9 also set out the scales of development for the Swindon area. These are summarised in the table below.

- 4.9 These figures have been informed by the technical work carried out by the strategic authorities and the views of a Joint Strategy Group involving representatives from Swindon and its surrounding authorities, including the Vale and Oxfordshire County Council. It would not be practical to go over this technical work in any detail in this report. However, it may be helpful if some of the main 'numbers' and their contexts are considered further.

Swindon	SW Plan Proposed Dwellings nos. built per annum	SW Plan Proposed Dwellings Total nos. 2006 - 26
Urban area	950	19,000
Eastern Area	600	12,000
Small scale urban extensions	100	2,000
Rest of Borough	50	1,000
Urban extension into North Wilts	50	1,000
<b>Total Swindon Area</b>	<b>1750</b>	<b>35,000</b>

- 4.10 The South West Plan proposes that an average of 1,750 dwellings per year be built within and adjoining the urban area of Swindon up to 2026, to provide some 35,000 dwellings in total over the 20 year period. Reference to the table also shows the sub totals of dwellings that are proposed within and adjoining the Swindon area. Further comment on these sub totals is made in para 4.20 below.
- 4.11 As part of the preparatory work for the spatial strategy and on the Regional Assembly's behalf, the Swindon Joint Strategy Group undertook a sub-regional study for Swindon. After careful consideration the Joint Strategy Group's recommendations included a growth figure of 16,000 dwellings for the period 2016 to 2026. Taking into account the housing provision proposed for Swindon in the Structure Plan 2016, this recommended figure of 16,000 dwellings equated to a total figure of 32,000 dwellings over the period 2006 to 2026.
- 4.12 The draft South West Plan appears, therefore, to have effectively increased the housing provision from 32,000 to 35,000 – an increase of just over 10% - without any real justification or explanation. This is in the context of the Joint Strategy Group's extensive and detailed work in assessing and evaluating a number of growth options, and the serious concerns which emerged as part of that work relating in particular to service and infrastructure requirements and provision, eg water supply, highway improvements and the availability of sewage treatment capacity. It should be noted that some of these matters have been identified as potential issues in the South West Plan (referred to in para 4.4 above) although this appears to have not been reflected in the proposed higher level of growth the Assembly is consulting on.
- 4.13 The proposed level of growth of 35,000 dwellings to 2026 is the total which derives from the dwellings' provision in policy SR8. The policy notes that "investment will be made in key infrastructure to enable the achievement of the development". The draft Strategy has already identified that there are potential water supply and waste treatment issues (see para 4.4 above). These issues are considered to be so important that this reference in the policy should be strengthened to make the development proposed dependent on the key infrastructure being provided (rather than the rather weak statement that investment will be made to enable the achievement of development).
- 4.14 Comment. The Vale Council objects to policy SR8 on the basis that (i) the proposed scale of development at Swindon is excessive having regard to the serious concerns that exist in relation to infrastructure provision to support growth as proposed and, (ii) the policy should be strengthened to make the development proposed dependent on the key infrastructure being

provided and that its provision should be timely in order to co-ordinate new development with the infrastructure it demands.

- 4.15 Reference to para 4.8 above and the table in para 4.9 shows proposed dwelling build rates for the Swindon area in the period to 2026. For the borough as a whole, the rate is 1,750 dwellings per annum. Reference to the adopted Structure Plan 2016 (Section 3, see Appendix B) shows that between 1978 – 2003, the average build rate in the Borough was 1,100 dpa, having dropped to some 800 dpa in the latter period 1996 – 2003 and that from 2003 a build rate of over 1,500 dpa “will need to be sustained” (to achieve Structure Plan requirements 2016).
- 4.16 Additionally, the table shows a build rate for the proposed eastern area of 600 dwellings per annum. It is interesting to note that the Panel Report into the Structure Plan 2016 ( see Appendix C) referred at para 3.29 to housing completions in the Swindon Area. A companion table set out average completions on strategic and other major sites, such as the Western Development Area (WDA), the Northern Development Area (NDA) and the Southern Development Area (SDA). The Panel concluded in para 3.29 that the table demonstrates that it would be reasonable to assume an output from a new major source of development of about 400dpa. Assuming that any development on the eastern area realistically commences in, say, 2010 then this would represent a required build rate of around 750 dpa for the remainder of the period to achieve the outcome now desired by the Spatial Strategy.
- 4.17 The South West Plan’s build rate of 1,750 dpa for the Swindon area and a build rate of 600dpa – possibly rising to 750 dpa - for the eastern area would appear to be very optimistic when compared to historical rates and yet these forecast rates have been included in policy SR8 without any real justification or explanation. If the actual build rate for the eastern area falls short of the forecast rate then this could have significant implications for the draft strategy. Over the plan period, the eastern area housing shortfall could amount to some 4000 dwellings ( the difference between rates of 600 and 400 dpa over 20 years). This is a third ( and could be more) of the eastern area total of 12000 dwellings and such a shortfall could adversely affect the integrity and proper planning of the strategic eastern expansion. Moreover, as the strategy will become part of the development plan any shortfall in the delivery of housing numbers may encourage developers to make planning applications on sites not supported by the development plan but where the argument to allow would be to ‘make up’ for housing numbers not coming forward on the eastern area. Such a situation would not result in the proper planning of the area.
- 4.18 Comment. The Vale Council objects to policies SR8 and SR9 on the basis that the figure of 12000 dwellings proposed for the eastern urban extension is unrealistic and unlikely to be achieved and therefore runs the risk of damaging the strategy and leading to planning by appeal.
- 4.19 Reference to paragraphs 4.11 and 4.12 above explains that the Joint Strategy Group had recommended a growth figure which the Assembly has effectively increased by 3000 dwellings. A reduction in the eastern area total by 3000 to 9000 dwellings would mathematically produce a build rate over the plan period of 450 dwellings per annum. This is much more realistic, see para 4.16 above, as the reasonable build rate from a new major source of development.
- 4.20 The table at para 4.8 above also sets out sub totals for dwelling provision figures within and adjoining Swindon listing, for example, smaller scale urban expansions within the borough and adjacent to the urban area in North Wiltshire District Council. No further detail is given on what these various areas might comprise. However, your officers consider that the potential for growth in the form of urban extensions around the town may be greater than the 3,000 dwellings total set out in the table (2000 plus 1000 dws). Such growth could face local opposition and would need further assessment but might not necessarily perform less favourably when compared with the strategic growth to the east. Should the potential for these smaller scale urban extensions be greater than described in the strategy, then there could be a further reciprocal reduction in the total proposed for the eastern area. For example, if this potential was of the order of an additional 1000 dwellings, then the eastern area total in the period to 2026 would be cumulatively reduced to an additional 8000 dwellings. This would mathematically produce a build rate over the plan



period of 400 dpa which, as described in para 4.16 above, is the rate the Structure Plan Panel considered could reasonably be expected.

- 4.21 Comment. The Vale Council objects to policy SR8 on the basis that the required provision of the additional dwellings in and around the Swindon area in the period to 2026 does not reflect a distribution of development which is consistent with the likely development potential of sites on the periphery of the town.

#### Inset Diagram 4.2 Swindon

- 4.22 This diagram (see appendix A) shows the area of search for the location of the eastern expansion of Swindon for 12,000 dwellings. This area is south and north of the A420. To the north the area is between the A420 and the A361. This area, however, is already taken up by what are listed in the Swindon Borough Local Plan Table 3 as key employment areas; South Marston Airfield (138 ha) which includes the Honda factory, South Marston Park industrial estate (93 ha), Keypoint (24 ha) which the borough plan protects as a rail freight distribution complex and also the village of South Marston. In this context and at a rough calculation only approximately half this northern search area is undeveloped land. Development in this area would also seem to be undesirable as it is likely to lead to coalescence with the settlement of South Marston and be located in close proximity to these major employment areas. While the area and timescale of the proposed eastern area would not rule out development to the north of the A420, diagram 4.2 would seem to be misleading in that it suggests that the whole of this area is an area of search. Moreover, this area, east of the A419 and north of the A420, was considered with other sites in Swindon's Council's Principal Urban Area Study. This study assessed areas adjacent to the Swindon built-up area as good, fair or poor, and concluded, among other things, that the performance of this area was 'poor'.

- 4.23 Comment. The Vale Council objects to policy SR8 and Inset diagram 4.2 Swindon on the basis that the area of search shown on inset diagram 4.2 for the location of 12,000 dwellings is misleading because only half the area of search to the north of the A420 could be considered to be realistically available for major housing development.

#### Employment

- 4.24 The strategy notes at para 4.2.25 that jobs in the Swindon 'travel to work area' (TTWA) are projected to increase by about 26,000 to 32,000 jobs. However, while para 8.3.1 states that 'a ready supply of ..... sites ... in suitable locations is fundamental to the continued economic performance of the region' and para 8.3.4 explains that an ODPM note provides guidance on the translation of forecasts to land requirements, the strategy clarifies in policies E1 and E2 that at towns like Swindon (an SSCT) local development documents (LDDs) will provide sufficient sites to accommodate the numbers of jobs identified for each SSCT. The land requirement implications of an additional 6000 jobs would seem to be something on which the regional strategy should provide guidance if the strategy's aim of balancing the provision of jobs with housing (para. 4.2.25) is to be achieved.
- 4.25 Comment. The Vale Council objects to policy E2 on the basis that there should be more policy guidance to assist the strategy's aim of balancing housing and jobs.

#### Surrounding Settlements

- 4.26 Paragraph 4.2.30 notes that surrounding settlements (not named) play important roles in relation to Swindon and as smaller scale balanced, sustainable communities, and other named settlements perform a largely dormitory function to Swindon. Faringdon is not named presumably because it lies outside the region. Paragraph 4.2.25 explains that realising Swindon's economic potential and balancing the provision of housing and jobs will be critical in creating more sustainable development and travel patterns, reducing the overall levels of in-commuting from rural communities, including from the Vale in the South East Region.

Comment Noted.

#### Strategic Gaps

- 4.27 Para 4.2.30 requires Swindon Borough to work with neighbouring local authorities to identify strategic gaps in their local development documents, to ensure that settlements surrounding the town do not coalesce with Swindon's built up areas, ie this issue is addressed in the text and not in a policy. It also seems to relate to neighbouring towns like Highworth and Wroughton rather than neighbouring villages. The point is made that this is an issue that will be progressed through the appropriate local development document. However, given the scale of the eastern area, and the implications such a large development may have on its immediate area, officers believe this is an issue which should be covered by a specific policy in the strategy.
- 4.28 It is noted, for example, that policy SR16 dealing with an urban extension at Exeter not only seeks a high quality of life through standards of design but that the urban extension should protect and maintain environmental assets, maximise the landscape setting and avoid areas susceptible to flooding. These are all issues which apply to the eastern area. In fact the River Ray floodplain, which lies in the eastern area, is specifically mentioned as a characteristic of the area likely to be significantly affected by the strategy, see para 4.45 below. All these policy matters should be mentioned accordingly.
- 4.29 Comment. The Vale Council objects to the omission of a policy context for the Swindon area which specifically addresses the identification of strategic gaps and requires the strategic eastern development to protect and maintain environmental assets, maximise the landscape setting and avoid areas susceptible to flooding.

#### Key Infrastructure

- 4.30 The strategy recognises at paragraph 3.6.7 that the delivery of key infrastructure is a pressing concern across the region. Paragraph 4.2.31 lists key infrastructure for Swindon and this includes a new reservoir (Upper Thames Reservoir) in the South East Region. Additionally paragraph 3.6.7 comments that in some cases the scale of development 'implies a step change in delivery rates' and that the development industry must play a full role in insuring that supporting infrastructure is in phase with development. Development Policy D expects co-operation between bodies across administrative boundaries to ensure development contributes to the cost of necessary infrastructure and the establishment of forward funding mechanisms.
- 4.31 Comment. The Vale Council objects to the reference in para 4.2.31 to a new reservoir on the basis that Thames Water has yet to formally bring forward a reservoir proposal and that such a reservoir proposal has yet to be shown to be justified on technical, economic, environmental and planning grounds. This reference to the Upper Thames reservoir is therefore premature and potentially misleading.
- 4.32 The strategy shows the proposed 12,000 dwellings to the east of the A419 in a diagrammatic fashion. The detail of this housing will properly be developed through the appropriate local development document. However, local circumstances suggest that the vehicular access to this site will be from the A420 and that this will significantly increase the number of vehicles using the A420. While the A420 may technically be able to carry this additional traffic or be suitably improved if necessary, this is a matter of local concern and an acknowledgement that this is an issue that should be addressed would be welcome.
- 4.33 Comment. The Regional Assembly should be informed that the highway improvements that will be required to access and serve the eastern development area should be listed as an issue of key infrastructure in para 4.2.31 including an acknowledgement of the implications for the existing A420 within the Vale.



that it sets these matters out, it should assist the coordination and timely delivery of the desired outcomes of the strategy.

- 4.41 In the section on Policies SR7 to SR9 at Swindon, the key infrastructure required includes “a new reservoir (Upper Thames reservoir) in the South East Region”. This matter has already been addressed at paras 4.31 and 4.32 above.

#### Strategic Sustainability Assessment

- 4.42 The purpose of the Strategic Sustainability Assessment, summarised in para 2, is to assist the preparation of the draft strategy by identifying the key sustainability issues facing the region and, in short, to increase the positive effects and reduce the negative. This is a useful exercise to carry out but examination of the Strategic Sustainability Assessment seems to indicate a relatively superficial assessment of the various issues.
- 4.43 Section 4 looks at the sustainability issues in more detail and table 4.1 lists the sustainability characteristics that are likely to be significantly affected by implementation of the strategy. Point 6 in the Swindon section of the table refers to flood risk and states that the River Ray and tributaries flood plain lies in the eastern development area. Section 10, which deals with sub regional strategy statements, reiterates that at Swindon flood risk issues arise across the favoured development areas and attention will need to be given to this issue and, in a box below, that there will be pressure on Swindon’s waste water treatment systems, as well as water resources.
- 4.44 Comment. The Regional Assembly should be informed that waste water treatment and water resources would seem to be such significant issues that the Strategic Sustainability Assessment should cover them in greater detail than the relatively superficial way that is set out in section 10 as described above.

#### Pre-submission Consultation Statement

- 4.45 The pre-submission Consultation Statement explains how stakeholder and public involvement was secured in the preparation of the strategy.

Rodger Hood  
Assistant Director (Planning and Community Strategy)

TIM SADLER  
Strategic Director

#### Appendices;

Appendix A	Spatial Strategy for the South West, Inset Diagram 4.2.
Appendix B	Adopted Structure Plan 2016, section 3 extract only.
Appendix C	Report of the Panel, Structure Plan 2016, extract only.
Appendix D	Spatial Strategy for the South East, section B, map B2.

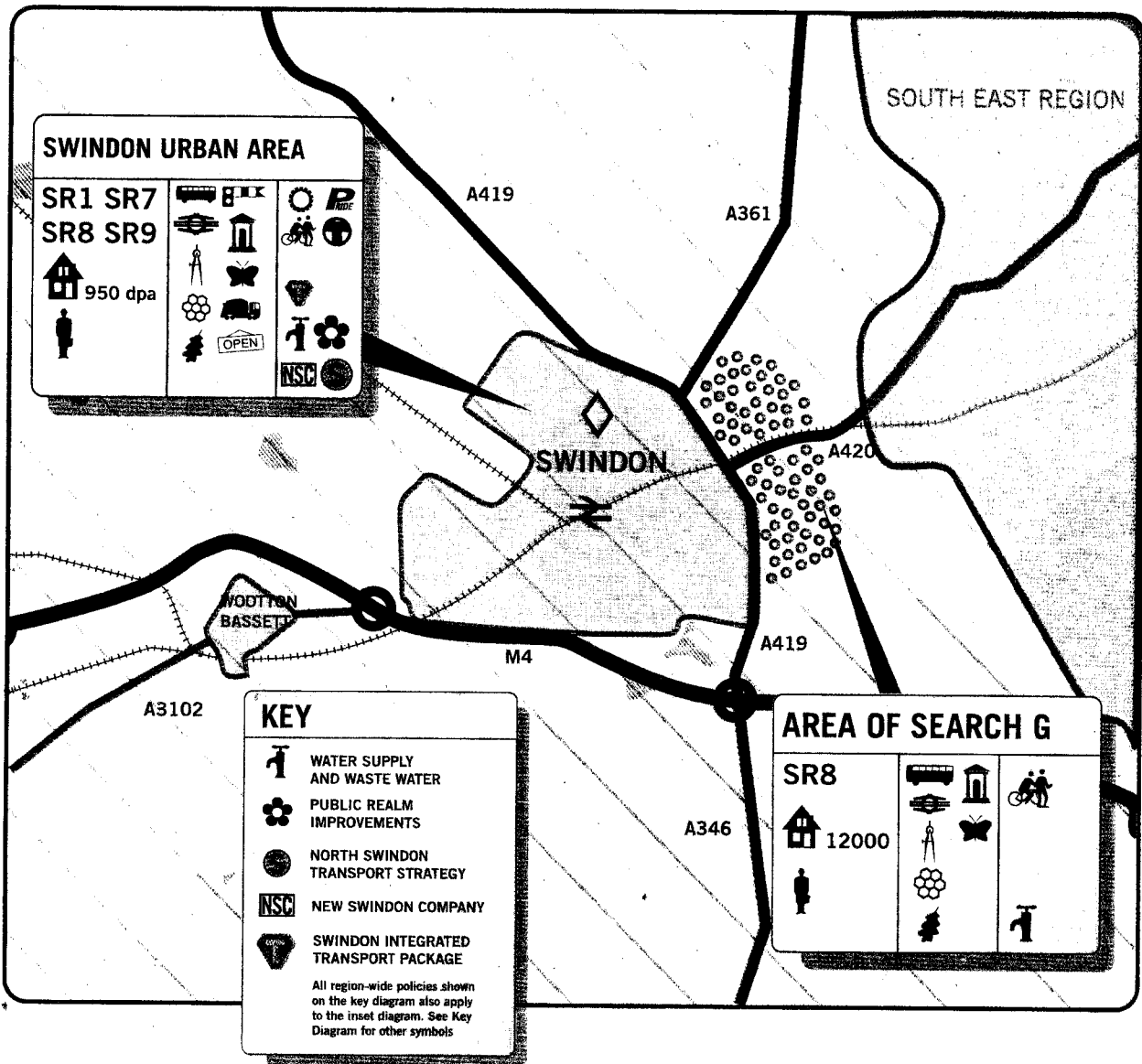
#### Glossary:

RPG10	Planning Policy Guidance Note 10.
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
SSCTs	Strategically Significant Cities and Towns
SWRA	South West Regional Assembly

#### Background Papers:

South West Regional Spatial Strategy April 2006

Inset Diagram 4.2 Swindon



**Swindon Spatial Strategy**

- 4.2.24 Swindon (population 155,000) has good accessibility to London and the South East and Bristol, resulting in strong economic, skill and knowledge flows that benefit the area immensely. The influence and economic advantages of its geographic location have enabled Swindon to prosper and this is anticipated to continue into the future. The significant potential of the town is recognised in 'The Way Ahead', Sustainable Communities submission for the region and its possible designation as a national growth centre.
- 4.2.25 A key regional economic driver, Swindon's economy has withstood some major shocks and has benefited from high levels of economic

growth, investment, economic activity rates, new business formation and a labour force increasing at a faster rate than the national level. Jobs in the Swindon TTWA are projected to increase by about 26,000 to 32,000 jobs over the plan period, offering the potential to increase access to, and dispersal of, prosperity across a greater cross-section of the community. Realising its economic potential and balancing the provision of housing and jobs will be critical in creating more sustainable development and travel patterns, reducing the overall levels of in-commuting to Swindon from rural communities in Cotswold, North Wiltshire and Kennet Districts within the region, and Vale of White Horse District in the South East region.

- 3.5 This Plan Area Strategy fully reflects that of the Structure Plan to 2011 with the exception of the first bullet point that has been altered and previously read - "continued concentration of development in the main towns including Swindon", and third bullet point that has also been altered to include reference to the need to "provide for local housing needs".
- 3.6 Sustainable development is more likely to be secured by urban concentration than by dispersed development, with Swindon and the Strategic Service Centres playing a major role. Other towns will continue to play an important role as centres of employment and local services for the wider rural area and development will be necessary to ensure the vitality and viability of these centres is supported and enhanced. Some development in rural areas is inevitable and, indeed necessary to enable diversification of the rural economy, and to permit local needs housing. The Strategy needs to support and sustain rural communities, by affording scope for increased local employment opportunities and the development of low cost housing at settlements throughout the rural areas of the County.
- 3.7 The Structure Plan therefore seeks to secure a sustainable pattern of development by concentrating development at the main urban areas, but also provides some scope for limited development in smaller towns and villages. The specific distribution within each area will be a matter for the Borough and District Councils to determine in preparing their Local Development Documents. The scale and nature of development at each settlement should reflect a range of considerations, namely, its role and function, location within or adjoining areas of protected countryside, the scope for links to major employment centres by public transport, the availability of necessary infrastructure and the need to achieve balanced growth in population, job opportunities and access to services.

### **Other Main Elements of the Strategy**

- 3.8 The distribution of the 60,000 net additional dwellings required by RPG10 to be provided in Wiltshire over the period 1996 to 2016 is shown in **Table 3.1**. For the Plan Area as a whole, the average building rate in the period from 1978 to 2003 was about 3,350 a year. About 20,700 dwellings were built between 1996 and 2003, although the net increase in the housing stock over this same period was only about 18,650 dwellings. However, losses over this period were exceptionally high (due to the demolition of married quarters in Bulford and Tidworth<sup>1</sup> and the Precast Reinforced Concrete replacement housing programme in West Wiltshire), and it is expected that they will now revert to their long-term level of around 100 dwellings a year. Consequently, a build rate of about 3,280 will be required over the remainder of the Plan period to reach the policy total of 60,000 net additional dwellings by 2016.
- 3.9 In Swindon, the Strategy proposes 26,000 dwellings (**Table 3.1**). The average building rate in the period from 1978 to 2003 was about 1,100 a year, a total which is strongly influenced by the high build-rates which prevailed through most of the 1980s. Since that time, however, build-rates have been affected, firstly by the

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<sup>1</sup> Although MOD married quarters housing is monitored and counts towards the overall build rate for Wiltshire, it does not count towards meeting the Structure Plan quantum.

housing-market collapse of the late 1980s, and then by the recessionary conditions of the early 1990s. Although rates have since recovered, the number of dwellings completed in the Borough remains relatively modest, with about 5,900 dwellings having been built between 1996 and 2003, resulting in a net increase to the stock of about 5,800 dwellings. From 2003, a build rate of over 1,500 dwellings a year will need to be sustained to reach the policy total of 26,000 net additional dwellings by 2016.

- 3.10 In the towns of the western part of Wiltshire, the local authorities have pursued regeneration for some time. These towns have suffered major losses to their traditional employment base and much effort has been needed to encourage new employment. There remains a need for regeneration to address existing economic problems, and improvements to transport links, in particular the A350, are seen as vital to this process. The regeneration of this area remains an important part of the Structure Plan Strategy
- 3.11 After allowing for further windfall developments (potential for redevelopment of brownfield sites) and existing commitments, **Table 3.1** also provides an indicative assessment of the estimated capacity of new greenfield sites required to be allocated in Local Development Documents. This indicates that there is little or no potential to identify additional greenfield sites over and above those provided for in current and emerging Plans to 2011. The reasons for this are set out in more detail in **Paragraphs 4.30 to 4.34**. However, within the guidelines of the Structure Plan, and as part of the development plan process, it will be the responsibility of the Borough and District Councils to determine the location of development by means of urban capacity studies and the assessment of other potential for development. As part of the review of Local Plans (as Local Development Documents), the Councils should reappraise any outstanding allocations to determine whether they are needed within the period to 2016 and whether there are any alternative sites where development would be more sustainable.

Strategic Planning Authorities on Matter 2/2 subsequently identified scope for the de-allocation of capacity amounting to 970 dwellings. This means that the level of provision for West Wiltshire District can be reduced to 11,500 using the rounding methodology in the *Housing Background Paper*. As a result this capacity can be re-allocated to Swindon PUA, giving a level of provision of 26,250. This is in accordance with our recommendation in Chapter 5.

- 3.27 The Government Office indicated that a logical interpretation of the term 'most' would be 50% or more. A 50% share of the total provision of 60,000 dwellings would be 30,000 dwellings, which compares with the proposed provision of 26,000 dwellings. This would require the re-allocation of an additional 4000 dwellings from the other Districts to Swindon. There is no evidence from the housing background papers that sites with planning permissions represent a realistic source of capacity for re-allocation to the PUA. The main sources can be expected to be the local plan allocations and windfall provision, but it is very difficult to challenge the windfall component at the strategic level. In some of the Districts the windfall component has already been scrutinised at a local plan inquiry, but in some others that process is still awaited.
- 3.28 Tables 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and 8.5 of Appendix 1 of the *Housing Land Background Paper Update*<sup>7</sup> provide the details on the local plan allocations in the Districts outside Swindon. The total capacity identified amounts to 8314 dwellings and therefore to achieve the target of an additional 4000 dwellings in Swindon about 48% of all of the local plan allocations in these districts would be required. Some of these allocations cover previously developed land in very sustainable locations. As we noted in paragraph 3.16 we regard the development of such sites as being consistent with the Regional Strategy. The brownfield component of the local plan allocations amounts to 2877 dwellings, leaving a capacity of 5437 dwellings on the greenfield component. The largest element is the West Wiltshire District allocations, 2871 dwellings, and this will be reduced by 970 dwellings leaving an overall balance of 4467 dwellings. The capacity of Salisbury District greenfield allocations amount to 1665 dwellings. Apart from the Amesbury allocation which would appear to be committed, we do not consider that this is out of scale with the role and function of Salisbury. We are of the opinion that it would be undesirable and unrealistic to seek the re-allocation of sufficient capacity to achieve 50% of the overall provision at the PUA.
- 3.29 Appendix D of this report consists of the table of housing completions for the Swindon area, which was included in the Briefing Note on *Swindon PUA Development Programme*<sup>8</sup>. This table was considered at the EIP and received general approval from participants as a reasonable description of the likely output from the various housing development components. The table also includes an annual rate of development derived from the balance of the housing level of provision for Swindon. The table demonstrates that it would be reasonable to assume an output from a new major source of development of about 400 dwellings per annum. On this basis, the

<sup>7</sup> *Housing Land Background Paper Update*, prepared by the Strategic Planning Authorities, April 2004.

<sup>8</sup> *Swindon PUA Development Programme*, prepared by the Strategic Planning Authorities, June 2004. Included as Appendix D of this report.



achievement of an additional 4000 dwellings would require a start to be made on such a component about 2005/2006. On the information available on the provision of infrastructure and the other processes to be undertaken prior to such a development, such a programme would be unrealistic.

3.30 The table also shows the annual rate of completions. The ability of the market to absorb the increased rates of development from 1217 dwellings in 2003/04 up to a maximum of 2100 dwellings in 2009 was discussed. It was generally agreed that this level of development could be absorbed. The New Swindon Company expressed confidence that the proposed housing in the central area would be competitive with the output from the other sources of supply. Concern was expressed that a further increase in the maximum level of development could have an adverse impact on the brownfield housing programme. The achievement of a 50% share of development at the PUA would require an increase in the maximum level of development of about 20%. On this basis the aspiration to achieve a 30,000 dwelling development programme for Swindon appears to be not only unrealistic, but also undesirable over the plan period.

3.31 Taking all of these findings into account we conclude that we cannot support the aspiration for a 30,000 dwelling share of the overall level of provision for the Swindon area. We accept the conclusion of the Strategic Planning Authorities that the level of provision for West Wiltshire District should be reduced to 11,500 dwellings. Consequently, on the basis of the Regional Strategy, we are of the opinion that the Swindon PUA level of provision should be increased by 250 to 26,250 dwellings.

### Recommendation 3.1

Modify new policy DP3 as follows:

- i) Reduce the dwelling quantum for West Wiltshire District from 11,750 to 11,500;
- ii) Increase the quantum for Swindon PUA by 250 to 26,250; and
- iii) Insert specific housing policy quanta for the towns of Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham.

### Local housing needs

3.32 We were asked to consider whether the housing distribution allows for local needs to be met across Wiltshire, including provision of affordable housing. The Briefing Note on *Locally Generated Housing Demand* provides a context for this issue. The Note presents two measures of locally generated need. The first is based on the concept of zero net migration and the other is described as allowing for natural change. We accept that these are relatively theoretical concepts, but believe that they provide a useful benchmark against which to evaluate this question.

Actual & 'Forecast' Completions on Strategic & Other Major Sites Sites

a) Annual Rates

Year	WDA	NDA	SDA	Coate	EDA
1	36	81	50	50	50
2	351	300	250	300	300
3	296	447	350	300	400
4	539	800	450	300	400
5	952	626	450	300	500
6	1036	369	450	300	500
7	806	424	450	250	500
8	923	411	450		500
9	782	418	450		500
10	811	511	450		500
11	774	550	300		500
12	955	600	200		500
13	854	600	200		500
14	538	600			500
15	269	550			500
16	182	550			500
17	124	550			500
18	70	550			350
19	238	200			
20	221				
21	210				
22	118				
23	82				
24	45				
25	1				
Total	11213	9137	4500	1800	8000
Average	449	481	346	257	444

gives a steer on longer-term issues relating to housing supply. It provides a set of pointers for public expenditure on the provision of social and affordable housing in the region. It therefore has an important relationship to the implementation aspects of the South East Plan, and particularly the delivery of the Plan's housing policies. A new version of the RHS, covering 2006-08, was published in July 2005.

**10.5** Topic Alterations/Reviews – When RPG9 was approved the Government drew attention to the need for early selective reviews of specific topics. The Assembly has devoted considerable time and effort to the pursuit of these reviews and all have now reached an advanced stage. Because of their currency, they form important building blocks for the South East Plan and have been incorporated into the Plan on that basis. They are referred to more fully in the appropriate sections of the Plan, but in summary they cover the following topics:

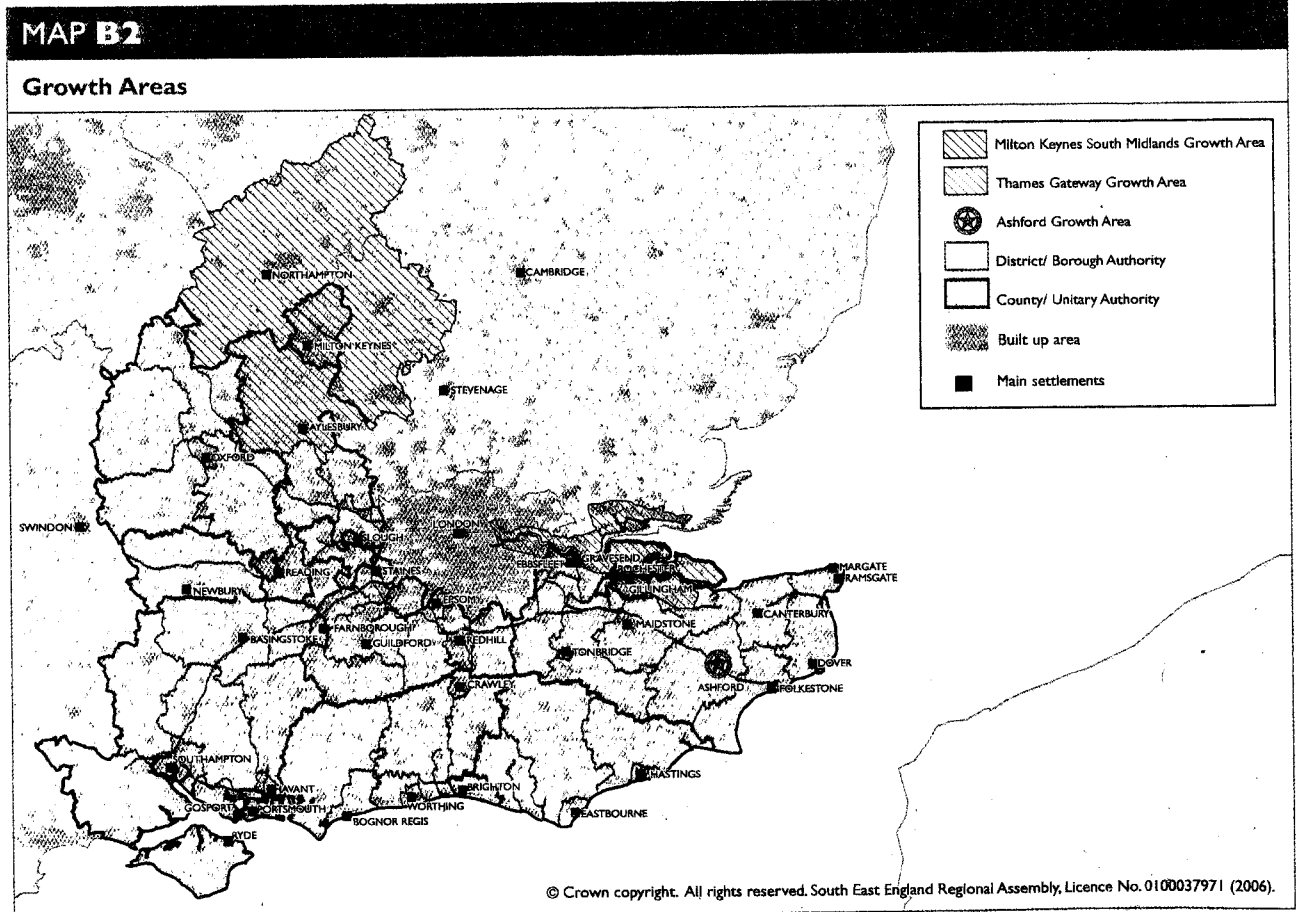
- i Transport - Approved by Secretary of State July 2004
- ii Energy Efficiency and Renewable

Energy - Approved by Secretary of State November 2004

- iii Tourism and Related Sport and Recreation - Approved by Secretary of State November 2004
- iv Waste Management - Secretary of State proposed modifications consultation autumn 2005
- v Minerals - Secretary of State proposed modifications consultation autumn 2005.

**10.6** Growth Areas – The Assembly has also taken forward proposals for the three Growth Areas approved in principle in RPG9. Again, that work is now well advanced and forms an important component of the Plan (See Map B2). Their current position is as follows

- i Ashford Sub-Regional Strategy - Approved by Secretary of State July 2004
- ii Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy - Approved by Secretary of State March 2005
- iii Thames Gateway Inter-regional Planning Statement – Published July 2004.



need to improve travel choice in rural areas for those with no or limited access to the car. Given the disparate and fragmented nature of the residual transport need in this region, these needs are unlikely to be met simply by more bus services. Targeted and innovative schemes will therefore need to be developed, making creative use of available resources.

## **POLICY T2: RURAL TRANSPORT**

**Local Transport Plans covering areas that are not wholly urban should:**

- i **Take a co-ordinated approach to encouraging community-based transport in areas of need**
- ii **Include a rural dimension to transport and traffic management policies, including looking for opportunities to improve provision for cyclists and pedestrians between towns and their nearest villages**
- iii **Develop innovative and adaptable approaches to public transport in rural areas that reflect the particular and longer-term social and economic characteristics of the region.**

### **Gateways, Hubs and Interchanges**

- 1.13 The gateway function of the South East, in providing connectivity to the rest of Europe and the rest of the world, has shaped the transport networks that are seen today. These are shown on Map T1 along with the corridors of international and inter-regional importance. This highlights the location of international gateway ports and airports which are of both national and regional importance.
- 1.14 Policy CC8b (section D1) establishes the concept of regional hubs as centres where the provision (or potential to provide) a range of multimodal transport services, which support the concentration of land uses and higher order economic, cultural and service activity. These are fundamental to the way in which the region's transport

services operate, and will need to be planned to operate into the future.

- 1.15 In some instances a high level of public transport accessibility does not in itself warrant identification of the location as a regional hub, but the high level of accessibility and interchange is of regional significance. The role of these transport interchanges should be protected and enhanced where possible. The pattern of gateways, hubs and interchanges are set out in Map T1.

### **Regional Spokes**

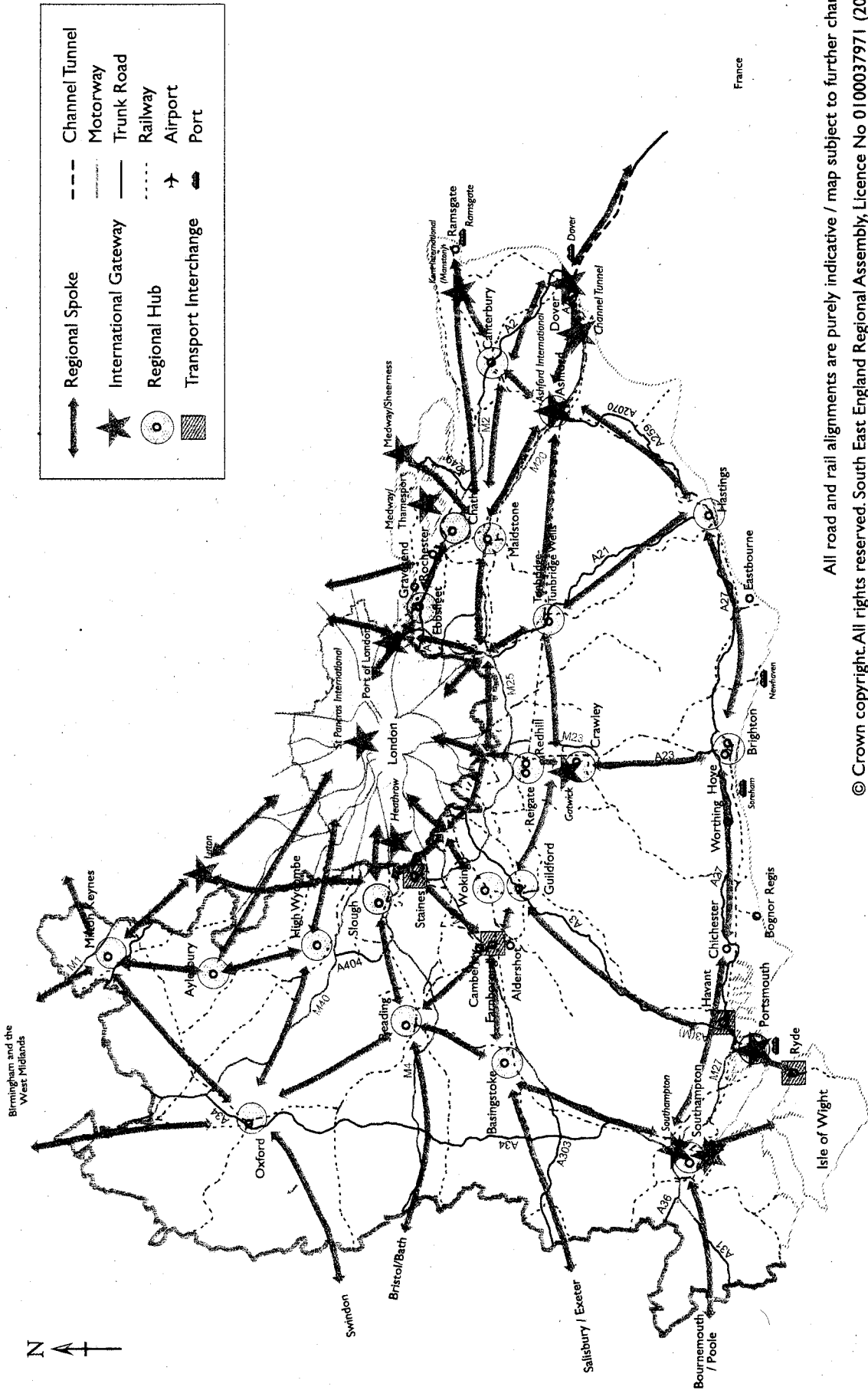
- 1.16 In order that the full potential of the regional hubs as centres of economic activity within a more polycentric structure might be realised, they must be supported by a network of regional spokes: corridors of movement that are not mode specific and whose significance is reflected in management priorities and investment proposals brought forward by delivery agencies. The pattern of spokes is set out in Map T2.

## **POLICY T3: REGIONAL SPOKES**

**Relevant regional strategies, Local Development Documents and Local Transport Plans will include policies and proposals that support and develop the role of regional spokes by:**

- i **Providing a level of service that supports the role of regional hubs as a focus of economic activity**
- ii **Delivering improvements in journey time reliability that support the rebalancing of the transport system in favour of non-car modes**
- iii **Developing a complementary and integrated network of rail and express bus/coach services along spokes and inter-regional corridors**
- iv **Addressing identified bottlenecks**
- v **Improving access to international gateways.**

Regional Hubs and Spokes



All road and rail alignments are purely indicative / map subject to further changes  
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REPORT OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (PLANNING & COMMUNITY STRATEGY)  
TO THE EXECUTIVE  
7 July 2006

**Planning Delivery Grant – Position Statement & Proposals for Deployment of Remaining Grant**

**1.0 Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 On 5 May the Executive was advised of the details of the 2006/7 Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) awarded to the Council, by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) as announced on 30 March. A further report was promised to bring forward spending proposals following discussion with the Executive's Planning Portfolio Holder. These discussions have now taken place and this report provides a brief overview of the current PDG position and puts forward proposals which would commit the remaining uncommitted grant. Delegated authority is sought for the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy) in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder, to take forward and implement the proposals.
- 1.2 The Contact Officer for this report is Rodger Hood (Deputy Director, Planning & Community Strategy) (01235 540340).

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 *The Executive is recommended to:*

- (i) *consider and endorse the proposals for planning delivery grant spending as set out in this report:*
- (ii) *delegate authority to the Deputy Director (Planning & Community Strategy) in consultation with the Planning Portfolio holder to take forward and implement the proposals ensuring that spending remains within the available budget.*

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

- 3.1 This report is consistent with the Council's vision and, in particular, supports the aim of providing and supporting high quality services which are effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of people within the Vale.

**4.0 Background**

- 4.1 The Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) system has been in place since 2003/4. PDG funding, although not ring fenced, is allocated on the basis that it should be used to drive up performance in the planning service. It is seen by Government as "an important additional resource to enable and incentivise the delivery of improved planning services". It is a performance reward payment, increasingly focussed on the achievement of development control and plan making targets, in particular the annual BVPI targets for, planning application processing, electronic delivery of the service, and meeting Local Development Framework milestones.

- 4.2 The Council has received the following PDG awards since 2003/4

2003/04	£128,821
2004/05	£388,447
2005/06	£73,260

The majority of grant awarded has been used to support and improve the planning service, in line

with the Government's PDG objectives. Grant has been (or is being) used to fund a range of performance related proposals including,

- The employment of 2 planning technicians in the Development Control teams.
- Employment of a second enforcement monitoring officer (temporary post).
- Replacement PC's for all planning officers.
- Electronic capture and storage of planning application files.
- Market premia payments for key planning personnel.
- Introduction of voicemail for development control officers.
- Employment of agency staff to provide cover in the planning applications technical support team.
- Commencement of the Council's programme of Conservation Area appraisals.
- Reintroduction of the Council's Design Award Scheme.

4.3 As reported to the Executive in May, the ODPM announced the 2006/7 PDG awards to Planning Authorities on 30<sup>th</sup> March. In total £135m was made available to support planning services nationally, and the Vale Council's award was as follows:

£ 67,248 for development control performance  
£ 14,652 for on line planning capabilities  
£124,093 for housing considerations  
£ 52,525 for plan making performance  
£ 252 upward adjustment  
£258,770 Award total

To encourage "investment" in longer term improvements to planning services the Government is tying a minimum of 25% of the 2006/7 grant award to capital expenditure. In the Vale's case this amounts to just over £64k.

4.4 A balance of £63k remains uncommitted from earlier PDG awards and proposals which were to have been brought forward to commit this sum have been reconsidered in the light of the additional and more substantial funding now available following the 2006/7 award. In total £322,470 of PDG funding is available for improvement related projects, of which a minimum of £64,692 is required to be spent on capital.

#### 5.0 **Proposals for future use of Planning Delivery Grant**

5.1 Discussions have been held with the Development Control Manager and Section Heads within the Planning Service to identify the most effective and practical options for deployment of the remaining PDG, again with the primary aim of making investment which will help to maintain or improve service performance and thereby increase the Council's chances of earning future grant award. (In December 2005 Government announced that PDG funding would be guaranteed for one more year, with £120m to be distributed in 2007/8. The Department of Communities and Local Government are examining a number of options for future resources for planning as part of a Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007, and are researching the effects of PDG on local authority performance). The proposals set out below have been discussed with and endorsed in principle by, the Executive's Planning Portfolio Holder. In some instances, costings will need to be firmed up, but before this more detailed work is undertaken it was thought prudent to secure Executive approval in principle before taking the proposals forward. Executive Members will note the strong emphasis on proposals which will help to maintain staffing levels in the Service as this is seen as the single most critical factor in maintaining and improving planning performance, given that the Service is now fully e-enabled and opportunities for further technical improvements are now more limited.

5.2 Revenue Spending proposals:

- *Establishment of a staffing contingency fund to ensure that the Service's staffing levels can be*

*maintained and the impacts of staff turnover and absences on performance are minimised:*

At its meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June the Executive acknowledged that maintenance of full staffing levels in the Planning Service and, in particular in the Development Control Service Area, is fundamental to good performance. The Deputy Director was requested to bring forward proposals to help achieve this as part of the report on future use of PDG. Executive Members will be aware that in 2006/7 the Council's Managed Vacancy system is no longer operating and, in its place, Deputy and Assistant Directors have been asked to manage their staffing levels within a budget which equates to 95% of the previous year's salary budget. The Planning Service will not be able to sustain or improve performance unless full staffing levels can be maintained throughout the year. The Executive will also recall that the Vale has been designated as a Standards Authority in 2006/7 and will be required to meet Government targets for handling Major and Minor applications by March 2007.

It is suggested that £100k of PDG be set aside in a contingency fund which can be drawn on as needed, to bring in private sector support (consultants) or agency staff to provide full cover for planning officers or key technical support staff in both the Development Control and Development Policy Service Areas. The fund would be used to provide additional resources to cover periods where performance is threatened by staff turnover and/or loss of key personnel through long term sickness. If demand on the fund in 2006/7 is limited the balance would be rolled forward to future years and could be "topped up" from any future PDG award if its use proves to be effective.

Cost= £100,000

- *Enforcement Monitoring Officer – Extension of contract for a further 2 years:*

In 2004 the Executive agreed to use PDG to provide additional support to the Planning Enforcement Team by the appointment of a second enforcement monitoring officer. The post was created and filled on the basis of a 3 year fixed term contract entirely funded by PDG. The contract is due to end in 2008.

Enforcement is a critical part of the planning process and the Council's ability to enforce against breaches of planning control has been the subject of concern on a number of occasions over recent years. The enforcement workload has also grown, particularly as a result of the introduction of the high hedges legislation. To enable the service's performance to be maintained at its current level for longer it is suggested that the monitoring officer contract be extended for a further 2 years.

Cost = £55,000

- *Market Premia Payments to planning officer posts:*

At its meeting on 22 June the Personnel, Regulatory & Appeals Committee resolved to continue market premia payments to certain planning officer posts to ensure salaries remain competitive and potential staff retention and recruitment difficulties are eased. Previous market premia payments were met from PDG and it is suggested that the new payments (which are effective from 1 July) are similarly PDG funded.

Cost = £34,000

- *Production of a new Vale Design Guide*

The Council has in place a number of advisory design guides which are used to support the development control process and promote good design in new developments across the District. These include the "New Residential Areas Design Guide", "Shop Fronts & Advertisements", "House Conversions to Flats", and "The House Extensions Design Guide".



Resource limitations and the need to prioritise work to adopt the Local Plan 2011, has meant that of these, only the House Extensions Design Guide has been reviewed, updated and progressed as Supplementary Planning Guidance to accompany the new local plan.

In March 2006 Council resolved to retain the remaining guides as development control advice once the local plan is adopted, acknowledging that they would carry less weight (as they no longer retain the status of supplementary planning guidance) and would need to be replaced in due course as supplementary planning documents under the new Local Development Framework system.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1) published in 2005 stresses the need for Local Authorities to promote high quality, inclusive design in the layout of new developments and individual buildings and urges Councils to reject design which fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area. PPS1 suggests that it is entirely “proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness particularly where this is supported by clear plan policies or supplementary planning documents on design.”

Having regard to the existing budget for preparation of the Council’s new Local Development Framework, it is unlikely that priority could be given to the preparation of updated design guidance as a supplementary planning document. It is therefore suggested that a brief be drawn up and tenders invited from suitable consultants, for the production of a new comprehensive Vale Design Guide for the Vale, updating and consolidating into a single document relevant existing Vale guidance.

Initial cost estimate = £25-30,000

- *Funding of a tree preservation order review*

The arboricultural officer has recently completed a cursory survey of the Council’s 300 plus tree preservation orders (TPOs) and found a number of serious issues that need to be addressed. The circumstances relating to many of the older orders appear to have changed dramatically. Areas around the trees have been developed, some of the trees themselves may have gone or, due to the passage of time, they no longer warrant protection. Some of the maps attached to the original orders no longer bear comparison with a modern map making tree identification difficult, and errors have also been found in the drafting of a number of the earlier orders, all of which will make TPO enforcement increasingly difficult and, in some cases impossible.

The arboricultural officer is of the view that a full re-survey of TPOs is necessary, however, given the existing pressures on his time he is unable to address the problem. To complete the survey it is proposed that a temporary member of staff (or consultant) be appointed.

Cost = £8K

### 5.3 Capital spending proposals:

- *Electronic capture of planning applications records currently held as microfiche*

At present, all planning application file records before the year 2000 are held as microfiche. This amounts to approximately 100,000 individual microfiche documents. The system for retrieving and viewing the microfiche is inefficient and slow, and where paper copies of plans held on microfiche are requested by customers or needed by staff, these need to be sent to an external company for printing, which is both costly and time consuming. The digital capture of the microfiche will overcome these problems and ensure that all planning application records are held electronically and can be accessed by planning officers, technical support staff, LSP staff and customers in the LSP, at their desks. This will improve service efficiency and better

meet the needs of customers. An initial indicative cost for the project has been sought from a major supplier but clearly alternative quotes will be required.

Initial cost estimate = To be advised, but likely to be of the order of £50-60K

- *Purchase of new digital cameras (5 no) for Committee presentation and site visit recording purposes*

The development control, enforcement and conservation teams currently record site details for Committee presentation and application processing purposes, using digital cameras purchased some 3 years ago. The cameras are in daily shared use, which can cause availability problems, particularly when repairs are needed. Some staff are using their own personal cameras to overcome the problem. Purchase of additional cameras would resolve these difficulties and provide a safeguard against availability problems caused by faults and repairs, which are increasingly likely given the age of the existing cameras and the level of usage.

Cost = £1,750

- *Purchase of new database for managing the Local Development Framework consultation process:*

Having approved the Council's Local Development Scheme and its Statement of Community Involvement the Executive will be aware of the complex, multi-document nature of the Local Development Framework system and will be familiar with the extensive consultation required throughout the new plan making process. An essential tool for managing the process is an effective data base which can retain consultee records (including details of their response to various consultation documents) and can generate the forms and letters the Council is required to produce at each stage of the process. The database is invaluable in sorting and categorising responses by, for example, policy reference, geographical location and respondent type, saving considerable officer time and ensuring accurate records are kept and updated, that consultees are not overlooked, and that the necessary information for reports can be generated quickly. There are a number of products on the market and development policy staff are currently investigating alternatives, including the latest CAP's Solutions product. Full staff training in use of the database will be part of the purchase price.

Initial cost estimate = £11K

- *Purchase of a system to provide an electronic link between the Local Plan 2011 proposals map and local plan policies, using a postcode or street search facility.*

As part of the BVPI 205 "Quality of Service Checklist" for Planning, Councils are assessed on whether they "provide the capability for an electronic planning service". Authorities score points according to the level they achieve against a "Pendleton Report Survey" which assesses them against 21 different criteria. Following completion of the Planning-on-the-Web project, this Council now scores well against the Pendleton criteria system, however, an area where it has still to improve is in providing the facility to link the Local Plan proposals map to the relevant policies and designations in the Local Plan written statement. To meet the Pendleton test users must be able to access a list of relevant Local Plan policies and designations for an individual site by clicking on that area on the electronically held version of the Proposals Map or by locating it via an address or postcode search i.e. the process must be interactive.

There are alternative systems on the market to achieve this, however, to minimise the purchase cost it is recommended that we use the system produced by Lovell Johns, the Company responsible for the production of the Local Plan proposals map, as they hold the original artwork and documentation in electronic format. (An alternative supplier would need

to acquire access to, or recreate this material at significant additional cost). The cost of the system can vary depending on the degree of functionality required. The estimate below would allow purchase of a system which would enable the Council to comply with the basic Pendleton requirements.

Initial cost estimate = £10,000

- *Transfer of English Heritage Listed building data into the Planning Service's "Uniform" system*

The Council's statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest (2,500 entries) is currently held in paper format. This includes building descriptions and map locations. English Heritage have reproduced this information in electronic form which could be transferred directly into the Council's Planning application "Uniform" system. This would enable officers and technical support staff to interrogate the information at their desks, improving service efficiency and allowing customer inquiries to be dealt with more speedily. The transfer would require acquisition of the necessary licence key, staff training and a one-off data transfer.

Cost = £2,850

- *Update the Ordnance Survey map base held in the Service's "Uniform" system*

The mapping element of the Council's planning application administration system (Uniform) is based on Ordnance Survey (OS) data, which is subject to periodic update. Consultation/neighbour notification and planning application plotting are dependant on accurate and up to date mapping records. The OS record in Uniform has not been updated for 2 years and since the departure of the Council's Data Project Manager there is no in-house expertise to carry out the update. CAPS Solution, the Uniform system supplier, have been contacted and can offer this service, together with software and staff training which would enable future up dates to be completed in house.

Cost = £4,280

## **6.0 Summary**

- 6.1 The above proposals, if approved, would commit around &317K of the available PDG funding, with some £90K being spent on capital projects. As indicated, costings for a number of the projects will need to be firmed up once delegated authority to proceed has been given. The establishment of the staffing contingency fund (£100K) and the under spend against the total available PDG (£5K) will provide a degree of flexibility within the overall budget to adjust spending with the necessary Executive or Portfolio holder approval.

RODGER HOOD  
Deputy Director (Planning & community Strategy)

TIM SADLER  
Strategic Director

Background Papers:

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH)  
TO THE EXECUTIVE  
7<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2006

**Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy**

**1.0 Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 This report recommends the adoption of a Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy to guide the Council's enforcement work on envirocrimes. This will be a working document subject to consultation and finalization in September 2006. In pursuit of this, the report recommends the adoption of a charging regime for Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) and other actions to allow their implementation from September 2006 onwards. It also indicates the offences for priority action.
- 1.2 The report also recommends consolidation of already agreed envirocrimes policies into a consolidated Environmental Health Enforcement Policy for consultation and finalization in September 2006
- 1.3 The contact officer for this report is David Stevens, Assistant Director (Environmental Health) telephone 01235 540378

**2.0 Recommendations**

- (a) *that Members approve the draft Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy attached at Appendix 1.*
- (b) *that Members recommend to Council the Charging Scheme for FPNs as attached at Appendix 3*
- (c) *that Members note the level of existing support for a Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy outlined in Appendix 2 and agree that the proposed route for consultation and engagement should be to:*
- (i) *apply the draft Strategy as an interim strategy pending consultation*
  - (i) *address the outcome of public consultation over July and August 2006*
  - (ii) *finalise the Strategy in September 2006*
- (d) *that Members approve the approach to enforcement policy changes, namely to*
- (i) *consolidate previously agreed FPN criteria and Fly-Tipping prosecution presumption into the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy*
  - (ii) *consult on the consolidated Environmental Health Enforcement Policy*
  - (iii) *bring the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy to September Council*
- (e) *that Members note the proposed implementation and priorities for FPNs from September 2006 after a period of public awareness raising*
- (f) *that Members note that with existing resources it will be possible to provide a low level reactive response to incidents but not to extend this to patrolling or surveillance*

*activities and that both the level of activity and related resource needs will be kept under review*

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

This report supports the Council's overall aim of seeking the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the Vale, protecting and enhancing the vitality of our towns and villages. In particular this report helps to create a cleaner, greener, safer and healthier community and environment

### **4.0 Background**

4.1 The Local Environmental Quality and thereby perception of quality of life of a neighbourhood, is significantly affected by the presence, absence or level of environmental crime or "envirocrimes" (a term identified by Government) in that neighbourhood. Envirocrimes may be taken to include activities which create or add to litter, graffiti, fly-posting, nuisance and abandoned vehicles, unauthorized distribution of literature on designated land, dog control, waste (including fly-tipping) and noise from dwellings and licensed premises. A comprehensive range of enforcement powers and duties are now available to the Council, particularly under the recent Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

4.2 In order to ensure take effective action about local environmental quality, Defra recommends that authorities adopt a Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy in order to promote better enforcement in their area. A draft Local Environmental Quality Strategy is attached as Appendix 1.

4.3 In pursuit of such a Strategy, various matters outlined in this report, need to be addressed. By gaining authorization for implementation of an initial enforcement phase, the Council would be able to take enforcement action on the whole range of envirocrimes, whilst concentrating on the priority issues. To achieve this, the following points are recommended for agreement.

### **5.0 Enforcement Policy Issues**

5.1 Members have already agreed criteria for the use of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) and a presumption for prosecution in fly tipping cases. These together with the overall principles of good enforcement practice recommended by the Enforcement Concordat may be brought together in a consolidated Environmental Health Enforcement Policy currently being developed for reporting following consultation to the November 2006 Council.

#### **5.2 Issuing FPNs to Juveniles.**

In law, a fixed penalty notice can be issued to anyone over the age of 10 years. However, recent Defra guidance recommends adoption of special procedures for issuing notices to young offenders (i.e. those below age 18 years). This will ensure authorities act in accordance with their duty under the Children Act 2004 which requires them to discharge their functions having regard to the need to safeguard and uphold the welfare of children.

5.3 It is therefore recommended that, in the initial phase of envirocrimes enforcement, FPNs are not issued to juveniles. Procedures and protocols will need to be developed in conjunction with the police and Youth Offending Teams, and will be incorporated into the Environmental Health Enforcement Policy.

### **6.0 Setting Fixed Penalty Levels**

6.1 In respect of FPNs for envirocrimes, the Council has to decide what penalty levels to set for those where local discretion is allowed. It also has to decide what, if any, discount will be made available for early payment of the various FPNs and what the early payment discount period shall be.

- 6.2 Members are requested to recommend to full Council the levels of fixed penalties proposed in Appendix 3.
- 6.3 Whilst it is not the intention to proceed on the use of all the different FPNs initially, it is sensible to set all the penalties at this stage.
- 6.4 Income from the receipt of FPNs will be not be significant. The Council is allowed to keep such receipts which have to be spent on the specified functions. Such income will therefore be used to offset enforcement costs.

## **7.0 Prioritisation**

There are 13 envirocrimes offences now covered by FPNs, and prosecution is available for various other offences. The following are the recommended priorities for enforcement action.

### **7.1 Fly tipping**

This illegal depositing of waste is a considerable and growing problem for the Vale and nationally. Enforcement on fly tipping already forms part of the work of the Environmental Protection Team, and this work will continue. No fixed penalty notice is available, but the Government has increased the penalty to a maximum fine of £50,000 and possible imprisonment.

### **7.2 Litter**

Litter is a universal problem and is a highly visible and public envirocrimes. A significant proportion of the street cleaning budget is spent essentially on picking or sweeping up litter. Use of the new fixed penalty notice with locally set penalty level and early payment discount is recommended.

### **7.3 Dog fouling**

A fixed penalty notice of £50 for failure to clear up dog faeces is already currently available under the provisions of the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996. In 1997 the Council made an order designating, subject to certain statutory exceptions, all land to which the public have access. Many warning notices have been posted around the Vale. No new orders can be made under this Act.

7.4 The Council and Town and Parish Councils can declare Dog Control Orders under the new legislation, which can include making it an offence of failure to clear up dog faeces. The new fixed penalty notice with locally set penalty level and early payment discount could then be used.

7.5 In terms of choice of legislation, it is suggested the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 provisions are used for enforcement for the time being, as they are already in force. They have been publicised over the years, reducing the need for more publicity.

7.6 The introduction of the new Dog Control Orders could then take a lower priority, allowing plenty of time for research and consultation as to any need for them

### **7.7 Graffiti and fly posting**

These are universal problems and are highly visible and public envirocrimes. Enforcement on fly posting already forms part of the work of the Planning Enforcement team and this work will continue. Careful interpretation of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 is required before any particular advertisement can be classed as an illegal Fly Poster (as there is no formal/legal definition of 'fly-posting') thus enabling prosecution under Section 224(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Use of the new fixed penalty notice with locally set penalty level and early payment discount is recommended.

### **7.8 Failure of business to produce authority (waste transfer notes)**

It is part of the existing requirements of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 section 34 legal "Duty of Care" in respect of waste for businesses to obtain and keep written transfer notes

when they transfer their waste to another party. This legislation has been in force for many years, contravention leading to prosecution. Lack of such transfer notes will often be an indication that the waste has entered the unregulated waste chain and is likely to be disposed of irregularly or fly-tipped.

7.9 Obtaining sufficient evidence to prosecute for fly-tipping is extremely difficult and complex in most cases. However, checking whether or not a business has transfer notes is more simple and straightforward. By enforcing this aspect of the Duty of Care, it is likely that the amount of waste entering the unregulated waste chain will decrease, thus reducing fly-tipping of such waste.

7.10 Use of the new fixed penalty notice with locally set penalty level and early payment discount is recommended. Attention will be focused on businesses implicated in fly tipping cases, those considered high risk for not having suitable arrangements, or those businesses causing problems from litter and rubbish because of inadequate waste storage and management arrangements.

#### 7.11 Householder Duty of Care

Householders have been exempt from the Environmental Protection Act 1990 section 34 legal Duty of Care. However, new regulations now require householders to take reasonable measures to ensure waste from their property is passed on to an authorised person. Much small-scale local fly tipping unfortunately is carried out by some irresponsible householders. Also waste from home improvements, gardening and driveway construction is also found in fly tips from unscrupulous traders. Householders should check such traders are registered waste carriers. Attention will be focused on those householders implicated in fly tipping.

### 8.0 **Community Engagement**

The Defra guidance on envirocrimes recommends that it is good practice to consult on, and promote to, the public the contents of a local environmental quality enforcement strategy, particularly if FPNs have not been previously used, or used widely.

8.1 However, public concern about envirocrimes has existed for some time, and has been shown to be a priority. Therefore there is no need to go out to yet further consultation at this stage to demonstrate this concern or support for moving forwards. Appendix 2 provides supporting information

8.2 Details of the draft environmental enforcement strategy and information on envirocrimes will be published on the Council's website, with the facility for feedback. Some questions on local environmental quality enforcement have been included in a forthcoming consultation with the Vale Voice Panel

8.3 It is intended to take account of feedback on the draft strategy and finalise it during the September 2006 reporting cycle.

8.4 As FPNs have not previously been used, a publicity campaign should be undertaken to further raise public awareness on envirocrimes, the impending expansion of enforcement activities (particularly FPNs) and to seek continuing feedback. However, this should be fairly "short and sharp" to again avoid undue delay. The aim will be to inform those who live, work and visit the Vale what constitutes an offence and what penalties can be expected.

8.5 The Assistant Director, Environmental Health, in discussion with the Head of Communications will devise a public awareness campaign. It will be carried out over the summer so use of FPNs can start in September 2006.

### 9.0 **Resources**

The authority to use FPNs relating to envirocrimes has already been delegated by the Executive. All Officers in the Environmental Health Service and the Planning Enforcement Team (with regard to Fly Posting and Nuisance Parking) will be authorised to serve them in addition to their existing duties. However, the focus will be the Environmental Protection Team, who are already dealing with fly tipping enforcement, with the main enforcement officer being the Environment Warden.

- 9.1 Within these existing resources it will be possible to provide a low level reactive response to incidents but not to extend this to patrolling or surveillance activities.
- 9.2 At this low level, it is considered that the necessary work involved in administration of FPNs, and prosecution in cases of non- payment, can also be carried out within existing resources.
- 9.3 If the level of activity for enforcement, community engagement were to be extended it would be necessary to fortify staff resources. It is therefore proposed that both the level of activity and related resource needs are kept under review

DAVID STEVENS  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH)



## **Appendix 1**

### **DRAFT LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY**

#### **Scope**

This Strategy covers all areas of enforcement work affecting Local Environmental Quality (LEQ), which includes the topics of litter and waste, graffiti, fly-posting, nuisance and abandoned vehicles, unauthorized distribution of literature on designated land, dog control, waste (including fly-tipping) and noise from dwellings and licensed premises.

The principles and policies for taking effective enforcement action will be set out in a series of linked Enforcement Policies, which will cover general principles and more detailed requirements as necessary.

This strategy links to other strategies and policies including those covering community safety, licensing, planning control, food safety, health and safety and pollution control.

#### **Aim**

This Strategy aims to achieve improvements in Local Environmental Quality through effective regulation and enforcement.

#### **Objectives**

To use all available powers and duties in an appropriate manner.

To ensure that the principles of the national Enforcement Concordat are applied to regulation and enforcement.

To work effectively with other service providers and regulators to maximize effectiveness and efficiency and avoid duplication.

To provide clear guidance to the community on the Council's powers and duties, and in what circumstances they will be used.

To obtain community support for this Enforcement Strategy

To work with the community to achieve implementation of this Enforcement Strategy

#### **Achieving the Objectives**

The Council will ensure it has the ability to take enforcement action on any offence falling within the remit of this Strategy. However, this will be subject to:-

#### **Allocation of Resources**

Resources, including capacity to prosecute for offences and non-payment of FPNs served on behalf of the Council by its own officers and other agencies, will be matched to the enforcement outcomes set by the Council. These enforcement outcomes include:-

- The ability to take enforcement action on any detected offence, including service of FPNs, in accordance with the Enforcement Policy principles.
- The ability to take timely prosecution where appropriate for offences or non-payment of FPNs.
- The contribution enforcement actions make to the overall vision and aims of the Council.

## **Prioritization**

- Attention and resources may be focused on priority areas for enforcement

## **Balance**

A balance will be maintained between education, awareness raising, managing public expectation and enforcement. Similarly there will be a balance maintained across the various areas of enforcement e.g. between resources devoted to FPNs and time spent on prosecutions. Both these will be pursued in the interest of good enforcement practice and high quality, efficient service delivery

## **Choice of legislation**

For many offences, there may be a range of different pieces of legislation which could be used to take enforcement action. Consideration will be given to the most appropriate choice for any particular case. In addition, it may be decided that generically certain pieces of legislation will not be used, e.g. where the Council has discretion, because other legislation is considered more appropriate and useful, or to allow proper assessment of the impact and benefits of new legislation and experience of its use elsewhere.

The Enforcement Strategy and associated enforcement policies will be publicized, along with details of legislation and an explanation of why the Council intends to use its powers. The Council will consult with other enforcement agencies, with stakeholders and with the general public. Working protocols will be established with other enforcement agencies.

## **General**

All Enforcement Officers will be given adequate and appropriate training. Standardized policies and procedures will be developed to achieve consistency in enforcement, coupled with compliance with relevant legislation e.g. on human rights, surveillance and interviewing of suspects

## Appendix 2

### Local Environmental Quality Enforcement Strategy

#### Existing Support for more formal action on Environmental Crime

##### The National Picture

Local Environmental Quality has been a major theme for the Government over the past few years. They have consulted widely, it is now a priority subject for Defra, and much new legislation has been produced on “envirocrime” (i.e. those offences which affect local environmental quality), culminating in sweeping new powers (particularly use of FPNs) with the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and much associated detailed guidance.

It should be noted that there are close links with the anti-social behaviour theme, which is also a Government priority and resulted in legislation such as the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003. Envirocrimes can be considered as acts of anti-social behaviour. Anti-social behaviour enforcement measures, such as Anti Social Behaviour Orders, have been used around the country in respect of persistent envirocrime offenders.

##### Vale of White Horse Community Safety Strategy

Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Police, the Police Authority, Local Authorities (County, District, Town and Parish Councils), Fire and Rescue Services and Primary Care Health Trusts have a statutory responsibility to work together to tackle crime and disorder. Other public sector and voluntary organisations are required to cooperate with the statutory authorities.

The statutory partners have to conduct an audit of crime and disorder, consult the public on the findings of the audit, and produce a strategy for tackling the issues identified.

The input from the statutory partners therefore represents a considerable body of opinion from those organisations that have the protection and well-being of the public as a core responsibility.

A comprehensive audit was carried out in 2004, with the volume and quality of data far exceeding that of previous audits. Key issues from the audit formed the basis of a consultation exercise.

Analysis of the audit data revealed environmental crime as one of the key issues, to quote:-

*“**Environmental crime** This includes litter, graffiti, nuisance dogs, nuisance vehicles, fly-tipping, fly posting, nuisance neighbours and abandoned shopping trolleys. It scored highly in the survey, and the emergence of new legislation and new empowerments for local authorities will almost certainly see it assume a high profile over the strategy period.”*

Subsequently environmental crime showed as a high concern in the public consultation exercise. As a consequence, environmental crime formed one of the 5 themes under which the Strategy is presented:-

*“**Environmental Crime** A significant local concern which is assuming more importance nationally and upon which the district council will lead.”*

The target for the Environmental Crime Action Group, set up to progress work on this theme, most relevant to enforcement includes *“Reduce the number of reported fly tipping incidents.....”*

Reflecting the comments under the National Picture, Anti-Social Behaviour is also a significant local concern, and a theme of the Community Safety Strategy. There are close links between the 2 themes and their respective Action Groups.

## **Existing Service Area activity**

The Council receives many complaints, service requests and comments from the public and other organisations about envirocrime, and already takes enforcement action on many issues. To quote some examples:-

### **The Planning Enforcement Service**

- This Team has always dealt with contraventions of advertising regulations, including fly posting on non-highway land
- Use of land and premises without proper planning permission, or dereliction of land, can give rise to envirocrime issues, such as pollution, offensive accumulations of materials, fly tipping

### **Services responsible for land and premises**

- All such services are affected by envirocrime, such as litter, graffiti, Fly posting, fly tipping, and dog fouling. These generate complaints about the appearance of Council land and property.

### **The Environmental Health Service**

- The Waste Management Team is responsible for the cleanliness of the public highways and various relevant land. Most of the rubbish they deal with results from litter and fly tipping, and considerable numbers of complaints and service requests are received on these issues. Dog fouling is another major topic of complaint about street cleaning.
- They receive complaints about early presentation of domestic waste for collection, which results in litter and reduction in amenity.
- They deal with abandoned vehicles, which often have associated problems of rubbish and oil pollution, as well as representing a safety hazard.
- The Environmental Protection Team has always dealt with a variety of complaints and requests for service on environmental quality issues. It has broadened its role into environmental crime enforcement, and consequently now receives many complaints on envirocrime. It has concentrated efforts to date on fly tipping enforcement and its successful prosecutions and formal cautions have received favourable comment. Public interest has been high, resulting in 2 television appearances by team members to talk about fly tipping.
- Dog fouling enforcement and stray dog control attract lots of complaints and service requests.
- The concern over fly tipping led the Council to adopt a policy of prosecuting offenders wherever practicable, because of the seriousness of the issue.

### **Local media Interest**

- The local media reflect the interest and concern of the local community on envirocrime. As well as some topics reaching television, the national and local press, community newsletters etc. have all run articles on various aspects and incidents of envirocrime.

## **Appendix 3**

### **FPNS FOR ENVIROCRIMES – SERVICE OF NOTICES, SETTING LOCAL PENALTY LEVELS AND DISCOUNTS FOR EARLY PAYMENT**

#### **Background**

There are 13 offences listed in Table 1. For 5 of these, the amount of fixed penalty has been set by the Government. For 8 offences the various Acts enable the Council to use its local discretion and specify the amount of a fixed penalty. If the Council does not make use of this power, the Acts provide that a standard default amount applies. These offences are highlighted in grey in Table1. Where the Council does decide to set its own fixed penalty amounts, these must fall within certain ranges which are also indicated below.

In addition, for all the offences listed (with the exception of noise from licensed premises) the Council may offer a discount for early payment of a FPN. The amount below which the discounted penalty must not fall is also shown in the table.

#### **Setting the penalty levels**

Defra guidance offers the following advice on setting penalty levels:-

*'In determining the level for a fixed penalty, local authorities will need to take into account the deterrent effect of different levels and also peoples' readiness to pay and the levels of fines imposed locally for the relevant offence in magistrates courts. Fixed penalties that are too high for local conditions, and lead to substantial non-payment rates, will be counter-productive as will penalties that are higher than the likely fine in the event of non-payment'*

However, the offences listed have generally not been pursued in the Courts in Oxfordshire, so local information on levels of fines is not available. Similarly there is no information on people's readiness to pay.

The Defra guidance strongly recommends consulting the police when setting penalty levels. This has been done, and a response received suggesting use of the default penalty levels. There was also support for consistency across Oxfordshire. It had been suggested that neighbouring authorities of similar nature set similar penalty levels for consistency. However, it can be argued this goes against the principle in the legislation of allowing local discretion. To date, no information has been received from the other Oxfordshire authorities as to any penalty levels they have set or are considering setting.

The Council's Community Safety Team have also been asked for their views. In the absence of available information on these topics, they have also suggested use of the default penalty levels.

In drawing up the relevant legislation, the Government has consulted widely over the past few years, and has drawn on a wealth of research and expert opinion. It can therefore be argued that, in the absence of local information to the contrary, the default levels they set are fair and reasonable. It is therefore suggested the default penalties be adopted.

The use of FPNs will develop nationally over the next few years following the implementation of the clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. It would therefore be sensible for the Council to review the penalty levels after a reasonable time, and 3 years is suggested.

#### **Setting early payment discounts.**

There is a standard period for payment of fixed penalties, set in the legislation at 14 days. Once a fixed penalty notice has been issued, an authority cannot prosecute for the alleged offence if the fixed penalty is paid within this period. For this reason, the period during which a discount for early payment

is offered must be less than 14 days and, to avoid confusion, Defra recommend that it should not be more than 10 days and it is suggested this period be adopted.

It is considered important to offer a reasonably large early payment discount for a fixed penalty notice. This will encourage prompt payment and help achieve high payment rates. The Government has set the amounts below which the fixed penalty levels may not fall. Again, in the absence of local information to the contrary, these offer reasonably large discounts so it is suggested these are adopted.

**Table 1**

**Offences for which fixed penalties are available**

The table below lists the fixed penalty notice issuing powers covered by Defra guidance. The shaded rows represent those FPNs where the local authority may use its discretion to set its own penalty levels within the specified range. If the local authority does not set its own penalty levels, the default penalty which applies is shown.

The local authority may also set an early payment discount for all the fixed penalties listed, unless otherwise indicated. The amounts below which the discounted penalties may not fall are:-

- For offences with a default rate of £75, £50.
- For offences with a default rate of £100, £60.
- For offences with a default rate of £200, £120.
- For offences with a default rate of £300, £180.

Section & Legislation	Description of Offence	Penalty Amount for fixed penalty notice set in legislation	Amount below which discounted penalty may not fall	Recommended VOWHDC local penalty	Recommended Discounted level for early payment of fixed penalty notice
s. 6(1) Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005	Nuisance parking	Amount fixed at £100.	£60	Not applicable	£60
s. 2A(1) Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978	Abandoning a vehicle	Amount fixed at £200	£120	Not applicable	£120
s. 88(1) Environmental Protection Act 1990	Litter	Can be set at local level (between £50-£80). Default £75	£50	£75	£50

s. 94A(2) Environmental Protection Act 1990	Street litter control notices and litter clearing notices	Can be set at local level (between £75- £110). Default £100	£60	£100	£60
Schedule 3A, para.7(2) Environmental Protection Act 1990	Unauthorised distribution of literature on designated land	Can be set at local level (between £50- £80). Default £75	£50	£75	£50
s. 43 Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003	Graffiti and fly- posting	Can be set at local level (between £50- £80). Default £75	£50	£75	£50
s. 5B(2) Control of Pollution (Amendment) Act 1989)	Failure to produce authority (waste transfer notes)	Amount fixed at £300	£180	Not applicable	£180
s. 34A(2) Environmental Protection Act 1990	Failure to furnish documentation (waste carrier's licence)	Amount fixed at £300	£180	Not applicable	£180
s. 47ZA(2) Environmental Protection Act 1990	Offences in relation to waste receptacles	Can be set at local level (between £75- £110). Default £100	£60	£100	£60



s. 59(2) Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005	Offences under Dog Control Orders	Can be set at local level (between £50-£80). Default £75	£50	£75	£50
s. 73(2) Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005	Failure to nominate key holder (within an alarm notification area) or to notify local authority in writing of nominated key holder's details	Can be set at local level (between £50-£80). Default £75	£50	£75	£50
s. 8 Noise Act 1996	Noise from dwellings	Can be set at local level (between £75-£110). Default £100	£60	£100	£60
s. 8 Noise Act 1996	Noise from licensed premises	Amount fixed at £500	Not applicable <b>(NOTE NO DISCOUNT AVAILABLE ON THIS PARTICULAR PENALTY FOR EARLY PAYMENT)</b>	Not applicable	Not applicable

**REPORT OF THE LANDSCAPE OFFICER (ARBORICULTURE)**  
**TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**7 JULY 2006**

**Vale of White Horse Tree Policy**

**1.0 Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 The Government recognizes the value of trees and the need to plan for a more sustainable future so it encourages Local Authorities to produce long term plans for the care of its trees. This policy document is our response to this encouragement and it sets out a series of actions that will help maintain and increase the number of trees within the Vale.
- 1.3 The contact officer for this report is George Reade, Landscape Officer (Arboriculture) 01235 520202 x 504.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 *that the Council adopts the policy document.*

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

This report relates to the Council's Vision in that it supports objectives A, D and G.

**4.0 Background Information.**

- 4.1 This is the first time the District Council has set out its plans for trees throughout the Vale and it is important for a number of reasons.
- Firstly, it shows the Council's long term commitment to maintaining and improving its tree stock by itemising what works it will and will not carry out and what it will sanction other tree owners doing. It also underlines the importance of tree planting and woodland maintenance. Tree protection, through the law and by advice, is outlined along with the need to retain and maintain trees in relation to development.
  - Secondly, by having a document such as this there is the ability to achieve a continuity of approach in the way we handle trees. Most of the policies are long term and, if approved, it means these aims can be carried on into the future.
  - Thirdly, the public has an understanding of the Council's aims and reasons for tree work or a refusal to carry out requested work. It is hoped that, in time, a pro active way of working will be more efficient than the current ad hoc system.
- 4.2 This document shows that the Council regards trees as an asset that adds to the local community and to the environment, an asset that should be protected and encouraged to grow.

Steve Bishop  
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

**Background Papers:**

1. Report 138/00 A Tree Strategy for the Vale of White Horse District Council
2. DeTR report 1993

## **An Overview on the Vale of White Horse District Council's Policy for Trees**

This area suffered greatly at the hands of Dutch elm disease in the early 1970's, some say we lost over one million trees. This policy document outlines ways we can retain and maintain our existing trees and increase the number of flourishing new trees through out the Vale.

Trees by their very nature contribute significantly to the environment and their protection and promotion is a significant contributor to the Council's "Clean, Green, Safe and Healthy" policy. As well as their role in removing CO<sup>2</sup> from the atmosphere trees improve the environment visually and historically and can have a significant economic value in some areas.

This document is supported by a series of local and national environmental policies.

There are a number of landowners throughout the Vale who own and manage trees. Besides the District Council there is Oxfordshire County Council Highways department, Town and Parish Councils, Vale Housing and the Forestry Commission, but the greatest number of trees are in private ownership.

### Objectives

The objectives of this document are for trees within the Council's ownership to:

1. Have an active and defendable inspection programme;
2. Have a set of maintenance standards conforming to British Standard 3998 and its revisions;
3. Have clear criteria for the maintenance of trees;
4. Have a reasonable approach, in conjunction with the Council's Insurers, on how to deal with trees in relation to buildings;
5. Have a willingness to plant more trees as new opportunities arise.

For trees in the ownership of others:

1. Advise the public and local organisations and interest groups about maintaining and protecting their own trees;
2. Use the current law to protect trees;
3. Protect trees in relation to development according to British Standard 5837-2005;
4. Foster and increase community involvement in planting, monitoring and protecting the Vale's trees;
5. Encourage the planting of new and replacement trees and woodlands.

### **The Rural Landscape of the Vale**

The topography and the geology divides the Vale into four landscape zones.

1. The North Vale Area – this includes the river Thames and the edge of the Thames Valley;
2. The Lowland Clay Vale – the pastoral central strip drained, mainly, by the river Ock;
3. The Lower Chalk – the land at the base of the Berkshire Downs;
4. The Middle and Upper Chalk – the Berkshire Downs and the Ridgeway.

## **Management of Trees in Council Ownership**

The Council has a duty to inspect and maintain its trees to ensure public safety and a duty of care to know the location and condition of the trees for which it is responsible.

1. All Council trees will be inspected on a regular basis;
2. The frequency of inspections will be linked to the potential risk of the trees to buildings and people;
3. The computer inventory will be updated with inspection information;
4. A regular review of the system of tree inspection and how it is implemented will be carried out.

In 2002/03 we had a full survey of Council trees which showed the distribution, age range, condition and species range and identified a programme of remedial works starting with the removal of dead and dying trees.

1. Council trees will be maintained in accordance with the specification British Standard 3998 Tree Works;
2. The recycling of arisings following maintenance work shall be encouraged.

Further maintenance of our trees will be carried out with certain criteria in mind.

1. Trees within the Council's ownership will be managed to promote public safety;
2. Formative pruning of young trees will be encouraged;
3. Nuisance such as leaf fall, TV reception or light obstruction etc will not normally provide a reason to fell a tree.

Where our trees have the potential to directly or indirectly damage buildings we will assess possible causes of action.

1. All related building damage claims will be investigated and all relevant information from the Claimant will be required;
2. During all future inspections trees within 10m of a structure will be recorded;
3. Trees recorded within these criteria will be assessed as to their future potential.

## **Tree Planting**

The Council recognises that trees are important to our well being and to the environment so it would like to plant more trees on its own land and encourage planting throughout the Vale especially native species.

1. For every tree removed by the Council it should look to replace it with at least one tree, more if possible, if not in the same place then in the same locality;
2. The Council should replace older trees it owns with new planting to ensure succession;
3. A wide range of species should be planted to prevent over dependence on one species;

4. Planting sites should be chosen with regard to possible nuisance or tree roots and building claims in the future;
5. Grants and incentives should be provided at the Council's Area Grant Committees discretion to encourage other organisations and private individuals to continue tree planting.

## **Woodlands**

Woodlands are an important element in the landscape of the Vale so their upkeep and increase should be encouraged.

1. Woodlands within the Council's ownership should be managed with recreation, ecology, access, education and landscape values as goals;
2. Private woodland owners should be encouraged to manage their woods along similar lines;
3. The amount of woodland cover, both private and Council owned, should be increased;
4. Ancient woodlands should be protected and maintained to ensure their continuance.

## **Tree Protection**

There are two ways that trees in the Vale can be protected.

Firstly there are the legal means at the Council's disposal. Tree Preservation Orders allow the Council a degree of control over a tree deemed worthy enough to be protected by such an order. It means that only appropriate works can be carried out and felled trees can be replaced where necessary. Conservation Areas also give trees a degree of protection. Any tree greater than 7cm diameter at 1.5m from the ground is protected if it is within a Conservation Area and cannot be worked on without prior written permission of the Council.

We can also protect certain hedges using the Hedgerow Regulations.

Secondly we can protect trees by giving advice. Many people either telephone or write requesting information regarding the status of a protected tree or how best to deal with a tree on their land that needs attention. We are happy to give them the information or advice that will help them retain their trees.

1. Using current planning legislation the Council will protect those trees it feels are threatened or that it values;
2. Applications to carry out work to protected trees will be evaluated carefully before permission is given;
3. There will be an ongoing review programme of the current T.P.O's to ensure they are current;
4. The Council will continue to provide advice on trees to private landowners when it is requested.

## **Trees and Development**

Any development that impacts on trees should be guided by British Standard 5837-2005 Trees in Relation to Construction.

Before any decision is made regarding the trees on a development site we will need a tree and site survey, a site layout, a pre-construction and construction agenda and finally details of post-construction and landscaping.

1. The retention of existing trees will be encouraged on new development sites;
2. All tree protection measures agreed with the Council will be fully implemented and monitored;
3. Developers will be encouraged to carry out new tree planting within current sites and beyond.

### **Community Involvement**

The Council currently works in partnership with the Oxfordshire Woodland Project and the Great Western Community Forest and links directly with the Forestry Commission.

1. The Council should also look at a Tree Warden Scheme to see if it would be appropriate for our use.
2. Notification of nearby residents regarding significant tree works will be encouraged.

By adopting this policy for trees the Council will be helping to safeguard a valuable ecological resource for the future and give the Council some rigid guidelines by which to manage this resource.

This policy should be reviewed at least every five years.

## **Executive Summary of the Vale of White Horse District Council Tree Policy**

In 1992 the Earth Summit Conference recommended that through Agenda 21 Local Authorities should work with communities to achieve local action plans and a comprehensive tree policy would be an important part of this.

Our policy will help to protect and care for trees in the Vale. It was compiled by first finding out what the District Council has in terms of tree stock. A full survey was carried out in 2002/03 and from that we could help decide what we want to do with this resource and how it can be improved.

The document contains:

1. A description of the treescape and landscape of the Vale;
2. An explanation of the parameters through which we manage our trees;
3. Our policy for tree planting and how we encourage others to plant trees;
4. The methods by which we protect trees through the legal and planning processes;
5. Our link with other organisations that help increase community involvement.

We have drawn together a range of actions that will help improve our existing trees and help increase the number of trees on both Council land and land within private ownership.

The policy also looks at what we do and how we do it. This document will enable us to justify our actions and decisions and give us a measurable standard to judge the quality of our tree work. We will be able to identify areas of low tree cover and target these areas for new planting as well as help correct problems such as age imbalance (large numbers of over mature trees) where they occur.

By continuing to survey and monitor our trees we will be able to tell if the objectives of the policy are working.

This is not a “one off” document it will evolve and need to be revised on a regular basis to improve and expand its scope.



# VALE OF WHITE HORSE

## POLICY FOR TREES



## Contents

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- 2.0 The Rural Landscape of the Vale
- 3.0 Management of Trees in Council Ownership and Jurisdiction
- 4.0 Tree Planting
- 5.0 Woodlands
- 6.0 Tree Protection
- 7.0 Trees and Development
- 8.0 Community Involvement
- 9.0 Monitoring the Policy

Appendix 1 - Arboricultural Maintenance

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Imagine turning the clock back 40 years to the mid 1960's and standing on the White Horse Hill looking out over the Vale. The amount of extra trees you would see, in comparison to today, would astound you.

Now turn the clock back 3000 years to the time when the White Horse was actually carved into the hillside. You would be looking at a mainly wooded landscape for as far as the eye could see.

So where have all the trees gone?

Agriculture and the spread of population have accounted for the disappearance of the original Bronze Age woodland and Dutch Elm Disease in the early 1970's, meant the loss of thousands of mature trees (nearly 20 million elms were lost throughout the country at this time).

This created a major change in the landscape. So what can we do to try and redress the situation?

**The aim of this document is to outline ways we can retain and maintain our existing trees and increase and help new trees flourish throughout the Vale for the future.**

- 1.2 The policies upon which this document is based are both local and national. From the Council's Vision the document will help to:
- a). Improve the level of public service by making the management of trees more effective and efficient;
  - b). Increase public involvement by including a new district-wide parish tree warden scheme and increase public awareness of trees;
  - c). Protect the local environment through the legal and physical protection of trees and improve it by encouraging more tree planting and maintaining existing trees to the correct standards;
  - d). Support the regional economy as trees enhance the environment where people live and work and so help to attract inward investment;
  - e). Improve the quality of life of all members of the community by creating a healthier and more attractive environment.
- 1.3 The document also complies with the Council's environmental policy in that it will help:
- a). Minimise waste management;
  - b). Protect and enhance the natural environment and open spaces;
  - c). Protect and enhance the character of the built environment;
  - d). Improve healthy living and working conditions for all;

e). Seek to reduce air, water, land and noise pollution and minimise light pollution in new developments;

f). Raise environmental awareness.

1.4 On a national level the Government recognises the value of trees and the need to plan for a more sustainable future, particularly in an urban context, so it encourages Local Authorities to produce long term plans for the care of their trees, and through various bodies, e.g. the Forestry Authority, it seeks to encourage tree planting.

1.5 As a landowner and a Local Authority the Council has duties, both moral and legal, that effect the management of its own trees and those belonging to private individuals

The trees through the Vale are owned and cared for by a number of different organisations.

#### Vale of White Horse District Council

The Council looks after around nine thousand trees throughout the Vale in a variety of situations. Many are trees in urban areas such as parks, open spaces and streets, but it also owns areas of woodland in various stages of development.

#### Oxfordshire County Council Highways

The trees along most of the important highway routes and many roads and streets in the urban areas are the responsibility of O.C.C Highways.

#### Abingdon, Faringdon and Wantage Town Councils

These three Town Councils look after trees within their boundaries. Abingdon is the largest of the three with between 500 and 600 trees in its care. Faringdon and Wantage do not have this many but they do look after the more significant trees in the two towns.

#### Vale Housing Association

All trees within the gardens of their properties and open spaces within their ownership are the responsibility of Vale Housing Association.

#### Parish Councils

There are 68 Parishes within the Vale with varying numbers of trees to look after. Some of the smaller Parishes have none, where others such as Shrivenham or Steventon look after a number of significant trees.

#### Private Ownership

Some individuals own one tree while others own thousands, but put together this is the biggest tree ownership sector in the Vale.

#### Forestry Commission

There are a number of large Forestry Commission plantations within the Vale some of which are currently undergoing strategic evaluation.

- 1.6 Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999, the Council has a duty to protect trees that it feels may be under threat. This is done by administering Tree Preservation Orders and the Conservation Area Legislation.
- 1.7 The Council has a duty to maintain its own trees to best current management and maintenance standards and encourage private individuals to do the same. It also has a duty to expand and nurture a diverse tree population for the public and for the benefit of wildlife throughout the Vale.
- 1.8 This document looks in detail at how the Council will manage and value its trees. It will lead to changes in how it views and uses this valuable resource and in how it will seek to promote tree importance and awareness amongst the general public, other Local Authorities and interest groups. This document will be reviewed every five years.
- 1.9 The document sets out a programme of policies and actions as a framework for the Council's future arboricultural work.

The objectives are:

a). For trees in its ownership to:

- Have an active and defensible inspection programme;
- Have a set of maintenance standards conforming to British Standard 3998 Tree Work;
- Have clear criteria for the maintenance of trees;
- Have a reasonable approach in conjunction with the Council's insurers on how to deal with trees in relation to buildings;
- Have a willingness to plant more trees as new opportunities arise.

b). For trees in the ownership of others:

- Advise the public and local organisations and interest groups about maintaining and protecting their own trees;
- Use the current law to protect trees within its jurisdiction;
- Protect trees in relation to development according to British Standard 5837-2005;
- Foster and increase community involvement in planting, monitoring and protecting the Vale's trees;
- Encourage the planting of new and replacement trees and woodlands.

## **2.0 The Rural Landscape of the Vale**

2.1 An important element of any tree document like this should be an understanding of the character of the landscape within which this document will apply. The topography and geology of the Vale leads to four distinct landscape zones.

### **2.2 The North Vale Area**

The water meadows of the upper Thames are in Oxford's clay and alluvial valleys, along with the East West ridge of high ground formed by Corallion limestone. This runs from Wytham to Buscot and constitutes a distinct northern landscape zone. Most of the Vale's existing woodland, including much ancient woodland, is found in this zone.

In the river valley, moisture loving trees such as willow and poplar are common, where as the much drier limestone ridge is more suitable for conifers.

Country houses in parkland enjoy magnificent views of the Thames Valley, as they are situated along the ridge, and the limestone of which it is formed is commonly used as a building material.

### **2.3 The Lowland Clay Vale**

This is the pastoral central strip of the Vale which was formed by a swathe of Gault and Kimmeridge clay. Hedges and woodlands are common, with oak and ash being the dominant species. Willows line the streams that drain the River Ock.

This area was most affected by Dutch Elm disease with the dead suckers of the original elm trees still common in hedgerows.

### **2.4 The Lower Chalk and Upper Greensand**

Between the clay vale and the upper chalk lays a narrow band of fertile soil with a string of settlements which follow the spring line and old track ways such as the Portway.

### **2.5 The Middle and Upper Chalk**

This zone is formed by the upper slopes of the Berkshire Downs. Large open arable fields or an area of grassland broken only by hedges and clumps of beech trees is typical. The Ridgeway follows the top of the scarp.

## **3.0 Management of Trees in Council Ownership and Jurisdiction**

3.1 The Council has a duty to inspect and maintain its trees to ensure it meets all legal obligations and maintains public safety.

The Council also has a duty of care to know the location and condition of the trees for which it is responsible.

During 2002/2003 the Council carried out a survey of its trees for the first time from which the following conclusions can be drawn.

### 3.2 Distribution

Of the approximate 9,000 Council owned trees surveyed 61% are located in Abingdon. The other 39% are spread across various towns and villages within the Vale; Wantage has the next largest concentration at 16% of the total.

### 3.3 Age

The age range distribution is relatively healthy with nearly 75% of the trees being no older than semi mature (between 20-30 years old).

This is probably due to extensive planting schemes that accompanied the housing developments in the Vale from the middle to late seventies, and the Council's continuing willingness to plant trees.

### 3.4 Condition

The condition survey reflects the age survey in that the majority of younger trees are in relatively good health.

Over 90% of the Vale's trees are in either good or reasonable condition.

### 3.5 Species

The range of species is typical of most urban areas. Norway maple and sycamore are particularly prevalent with cherry, thorn and whitebeam also commonly found. It would be worth increasing this species range with any future plantings.

It is important to maintain a healthy age structure and species range to ensure the Vale would still have a healthy tree population should something equivalent to the storm of 1987 occur again; or a particular species of tree is affected in the way that Dutch Elm Disease ravaged this area.

### 3.6 Inspections

The majority of the Council's trees have been inspected during 2002-2003 and as resources allow it should inspect its trees on a regular cycle, every 5 years at least. In more "high use" public areas the inspection cycle should be more frequent. In future inspections any tree within 10m of a structure should be recorded for risk assessment provision.

For details of the inspection process – see Appendix 1 Arboricultural Maintenance.

#### Actions

1. All Council trees will be inspected on a regular basis;
2. The frequency of inspections will be linked to the potential risk of the trees;
3. The computer inventory will be updated with inspection information;
4. A regular review of the system of tree inspection and how it is implemented will be carried out.

### 3.7 Maintenance

All Council trees will be maintained in accordance with the agreed specification – see Appendix 1.

All works will be carried out in line with BS3998 Tree Works and any subsequent amendments. All staff carrying out these works will wear the appropriate safety clothing and be adequately trained in up-to-date techniques in working and safety.

The magnitude of crown reductions will normally be no greater than 30%. Heavy crown reduction of trees leads to excessive re-growth and consequent poor growth habit.

The exception to this is pollarding. This is an ancient method of management involving removal of all branchwood to leave a bare trunk that was widespread throughout rural parts of the Vale, carried out mainly on willows. Originally practised to produce fodder and fencing materials it has fallen into decline with the result that the old pollards are breaking up due to the excessive size of the re-growth.

The Council is keen for pollarding to continue so that the old willows can survive and to this end offer grant aid for this practise to carry on.

As part of taking an environmental and responsible approach to tree work the Council will seek to send as little material as possible to landfill. All branchwood below 200mm should be chipped with the resulting material either used by the contractor or collected for bio energy use. Any trees to be felled should have their potential timber value assessed with the resulting work maximising this value.

#### Actions

1. Council trees will be maintained in accordance with the specification (Appendix 1) and British Standard 3998 Tree Works;
2. The recycling of arisings following maintenance work shall be encouraged.

### 3.8 Safety

The Council should manage its trees with the safety of the public in mind. Following the inspection programme a list of works has been generated. This has been put into priority, firstly on the grounds of safety. Those trees that present a significant risk to the public e.g. dead or poor condition trees are being dealt with. Remaining trees will be assessed as to their risk factor and dealt with accordingly. This assessment must be carried out by a person trained in arboricultural matters. Unless there is a very good reason removal of trees will be resisted.

### 3.9 Good Husbandry

Works to trees, mainly those not yet mature, that will prolong their life and create a good structure should be carried out. This will include removal of low branches, crossing branches, double leaders and any diseased material.

### 3.10 Nuisance

Throughout the Vale, but mainly in urban areas, the Council has trees impacting on residents and their properties. Pruning work will not normally be carried out to alleviate seasonal occurrences unless an acute problem is identified. The main nuisances associated with such trees are blocking of light, leaf fall and T.V reception.

### Light Obstruction

To determine how much of a shading problem a tree presents its amenity value is compared with its shading potential and a decision is based on the outcome. It is usually very difficult to prune a tree to give lasting increases in light levels to a property, although crown lifting can help in certain situations, therefore, the Council will resist this course of action.

Quite often the amount of pruning required would damage the tree or destroy its amenity value. However, where trees are blocking street lights etc and jeopardising public safety the Council will consider carrying out work that will help solve the problem and retain the tree. In extreme cases removal of the tree and replacement with a less troublesome species or finding a nearby replacement planting site would be considered.

### Leaf Fall

The Council is not legally responsible for fallen leaves; they are described as seasonal embarrassments. Pruning of existing trees is not a solution to this occurrence and care should be taken in future species selection to try and diminish it. The same criteria apply to trees with associated aphid problems or trees that produce large amounts of fruit.

### T.V Reception

The Council will not carry out major works to trees, or remove them, to improve T.V reception. Careful positioning of aerials and satellite dishes at the time of installation is advised with the thought of how trees may grow in the future taken into account.

### Actions

1. Trees within the Councils ownership will be managed to promote public safety;
2. Formative pruning of young trees will be encouraged;
3. Nuisance such as leaf fall, T.V reception or light obstruction etc will not normally provide a reason to fell a tree.

- 3.11 The last 15 years has seen a huge rise in the number of claims of direct and indirect damage to properties that have involved trees. Direct damage is that caused by the physical presence of roots which is usually restricted to walls and paths and is relatively minor – but there are exceptions. Indirect damage is that caused by the extraction of water by plant roots from soils and the subsequent soil shrinkage caused. This is by far the largest problem of the two.



3.12 The Council has been fortunate in not being hit by an avalanche of such claims but neighbouring authorities have not been so lucky. The Council should take adequate steps in dealing with any claims should they arise by assembling the relevant information:

- a). Tree species;
- b). Age of tree;
- c). Condition survey and past pruning history;
- d). Tree root survey;
- e). Dimensions (height, crown spread, trunk diameter);
- f). Distance from tree to building;
- g). Amenity value of tree;
- h). Recommendations for tree management;
- i). Age of property;
- j). Depth of foundations;
- k). Extension history;
- l). Drainage construction and condition;
- m). Spatial arrangements and amplitude of damage;
- n). Monitoring results to determine movement cycles in relation to tree growth and time of year;

and by following a recognised tree damage assessment protocol.

3.13 Why the Council has not received large numbers of claims could be down to a variety of factors.

The three main population centres are situated on what is not considered to be highly shrinkable clay soils. Faringdon is on sand and limestone Corralian Beds. Wantage is mainly on greensand and Abingdon is a mixture of glacial drift, alluvium and, in the case of Peachcroft Estate, Kimmeridge clay. This estate is the largest area of dense population on shrinkable clay in the Vale with a high proportion of trees close to buildings.

#### Actions

1. All related building damage claims will be investigated and all relevant information from the Claimant will be required;
2. During all future inspections trees within 10m of a structure will be recorded;

3. Trees recorded within these criteria will be assessed as to their future potential.

#### **4.0 Tree Planting**

4.1 Trees are an important resource and are essential to our health and well being so the District Council would like to plant more trees on land within its control and to encourage the planting of trees throughout the Vale.

4.2 It aims to maintain and extend its current tree cover and introduce new and varied planting. Careful consideration as to the siting of these new trees will be necessary in order to attempt to avoid nuisance problems such as honeydew and fruit. Honeydew, the sugary substance excreted by aphids, can at certain times of the year make hard surfaces close to trees sticky and dirty. Trees that produce large quantities of fruit such as horse chestnut or certain varieties of ornamental crab apple cause problems when the fruit falls to the ground.

4.3 The Council will encourage other organisations and private landowners to plant trees.

4.4 Parish Councils will be offered advice on the best sites and species of tree to plant and those Parish Councils that currently do not plant many trees will be encouraged to do so.

#### Actions

1. For every tree removed the Council should look to replace it with at least one tree, more if possible, if not in the same place then in the same locality;
2. The Council should replace older trees with new planting to ensure succession;
3. A wide range of species should be planted to prevent over dependence on one species;
4. Planting sites should be chosen with regard to possible nuisance or tree roots and building claims in the future.

#### **5.0 Woodlands**

5.1 Woodlands provide an important element within the landscape of the Vale. The Council supports and works in partnership with the Oxfordshire Woodland Project to arrange the proper management of small woodlands throughout Oxfordshire (and the Vale).

5.2 The Council owns a small number of woodlands in various stages of development, Besselsleigh being our one large area of mature woodland (10 ha). However, most of the woodlands within the Vale are in private hands or are owned by such organisations as the Woodland Trust.

5.3 Woodlands require regular maintenance to ensure they develop healthily and provide a varied habitat for wildlife and a safe environment for the public.

- a). Woodlands should be checked periodically to ensure safety and good development;

- b). With developing woodland, trees should be thinned to allow development of long term species;
- c). When trees reach maturity some should be removed to allow room for succession;
- d). Some older trees, as long as they are safe, should be left for their wildlife value;
- e). When woodlands are established weeds and grass should be controlled around whips by chemical spray or mulch mats (See Appendix 1);
- f). Paths that promote public access should be maintained on a regular basis.

5.4 Along with the developing woodlands there are a number of ancient woodlands situated throughout the Vale. These are sites that have been continually wooded since 1600 AD, and have a high ecological value. Should these woods disappear it is unlikely they could ever be recreated.

### Actions

1. Woodlands within the Council's ownership should be managed with recreation, ecology, access, education and landscape values as goals;
2. Private woodland owners should be encouraged to manage their woods along similar lines via the Oxfordshire Woodland Project;
3. The amount of woodland cover, both private and Council owned, should be increased;
4. Ancient woodlands should be protected and maintained to ensure their continuance.

## **6.0 Tree Protection**

There are two ways trees in the Vale can be protected. One is through the Council using the legal means at its disposal, the other is by giving advice to tree owners.

### **6.1 Legal Means of Protection**

As a general rule the Council does not impose legal protection on its trees. It is deemed to be a responsible tree owner and, as such, will follow the best current practice.

### **6.2 Tree Preservation Orders (T.P.O)**

The Council has a duty to protect trees that it decides are of a public amenity value that may be under threat by use of a Tree Preservation Order through the powers of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999. These powers will be used following the guidelines of the D.E.T.R publication Tree Preservation Orders – A Guide to the Law and Good Practise.

Currently the Council administers in the region of 300 Tree Preservations Orders but this is rising all the time.

A Tree Preservation Order takes away none of the responsibility of the owner towards their tree but it does give the Local Authority a degree of control about what happens to it. Only trees that fulfil the criteria in the Council's checklist (see Appendix 3) will be considered for protection unless they are of exceptional amenity or historic value.

A Tree Preservation order allows the Council to make sure only appropriate work is carried out to the tree, and that felled trees are replaced where necessary. Applications must be made in writing to the Council in order to carry out works to protected trees, and applicants are encouraged to consult with a tree surgeon or arrange a pre-application site meeting or discussion with the Arboricultural Officer before applying. There is an 8 week period between receiving the application and works being able to be carried out.

Poor quality applications will be discouraged and where it is claimed that a protected tree is dangerous then, if a visit from the Arboricultural Officer cannot be arranged, a thorough arboricultural report must be submitted.

Applications to fell protected trees to allow for development will be resisted. Alternative construction methods such as "no-dig" drive construction or pile foundations should be considered and if these are not suitable then a new design should be found.

For those people who have trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order, the Council operates a grant scheme that enables up to 40% of the cost of works to a protected tree to be claimed back as long as the works are carried out in line with British Standard 3998.

The Council has a duty to review and rationalise its Tree Preservation Orders. Orders should be checked to make sure the information contained in them is correct and up to date. Are the trees correctly plotted on the plans and are they the correct species? Are the trees still there?

Also the Council will review:

1. Tree Preservation Orders with woodland classification made pre- 1988;
2. Tree Preservation orders made pre-1975;
3. Area Tree Preservation Orders;
4. Multiple orders on the same tree;

and consider whether to revoke these orders and re-serve them should they no longer be relevant.

### 6.3 Trees in Conservation Areas

Trees that are sited within a Conservation Area are protected under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Anyone wishing to carry out works to a tree in such an area must give the Council 6 week's prior notice. During this time the Council can consider whether the tree is worthy of a Tree Preservation Order.

Any tree greater than 7cm diameter at 1.5m from the ground is protected within a Conservation Area.

There is still an amount of unauthorised tree work going on within Conservation Areas so we must continue to inform residents of their responsibilities in order to try and prevent this.

#### 6.4 Hedgerow Regulations

Any person wishing to remove a hedgerow should first issue the Council with a Hedgerow Removal Notice. If a hedgerow meets certain criteria concerning its historical aspect, its number of woody species and its associated features then it can be classed as important and so protected by the above regulations. This means that the hedge can not be removed without prior permission of the Local Authority and an unlimited fine can result if it is.

#### 6.5 Felling Licence

Felling licences are operated by the Forestry Authority. In a calendar quarter landowners can fell up to 5 cubic metres of timber on their property without a licence. Any more than this may require permission.

#### 6.6 Protecting Trees through Advice

The other way the Council can help protect trees, especially those on private land, is through the giving of advice.

Many people either telephone or write requesting information regarding the status of protection of their trees and a representative of the Council is happy to attend sites for pre-application advice. These are beneficial for both parties. Detailed reports, as sometimes requested, are not usually possible but general advice on the type or species of tree to plant or the extent and nature of tree surgery can be provided.

#### Actions

1. Using current planning legislation the Council will protect those trees it feels are threatened or that it values;
2. Applications to carry out work to protected trees will be evaluated carefully before permission is given;
3. There will be an ongoing review programme of the current T.P.O's to ensure they are up to date;
4. The Council will continue to provide advice on trees to private landowners when it is requested.

### **7.0 Trees and Development**

7.1 The Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan states:

Existing landscape features, trees, hedgerows and ponds can make an important contribution to the character and biodiversity of an area and it is essential that new development does not lead to the loss of, or pose a future threat to, such features. The location and siting of new developments, and in particular buildings, should seek to retain important landscape features and integrate them into the design of the development. The provision of new landscape features can often be an essential prerequisite for creating an attractive development which complements and enhances its surroundings. It can also enhance the quality of life of local people and contribute to local biodiversity through the conservation and creation of new wildlife habitats. For these reasons the Council will seek a high standard of landscaping associated with development proposals.

When designing a scheme careful consideration should be given to the functional and aesthetic aspects of landscaping. A survey of existing features will often be required from the applicant. Such surveys will be expected to include site contours, accurate positions of trees and shrubs, their condition, height, stem diameter, extent of canopy, species and details of other aspects of the sites ecology. The Council considers it particularly important to maintain mature trees and conditions will be attached to planning permissions to protect existing trees during and after site works. Where appropriate regard will be paid to the impact of landscaping on important views. Care should be taken to ensure that new planting will not impair visibility at access points or obstruct footpaths and cycle ways.

7.2 Any development that impacts on trees should be guided by British Standards 5837:1991 Trees in Relation to Construction (and its subsequent revisions) as well as the Councils Supplementary Planning Guidance currently in preparation. Following is a brief summary of this.

### 7.3 Pre-Application

Discussions, if necessary a meeting, are encouraged at this stage.

#### Site Survey

Should show all existing features and levels.

#### Tree Survey

- Species
- Dimensions
- Vigour
- Age
- Amenity Value
- Indicate Retention/Removal

#### Site Layout

When laying out the development at its initial stages there should be adequate provision for retaining existing trees and hedgerows and replacement planting following agreed tree removal. Exclusion zones around trees should be identified.

Predictions of the mature height and spread of trees, and their impact on the design should be made e.g. are the gardens big enough, will the trees affect the sunlight in the future, will the trees need to be continually pruned. Access and service routes should be designed so as not to impact on trees. Planting of new trees should be considered in order to maximise their future benefits and minimise future problems e.g. shading and root problems. Choice of species and planting position should be made with care. Trees on adjacent sites should be considered.

### Planning Permission

All tree details should be submitted with completed application.

### Pre-Construction

All agreed tree removal and surgery should be carried out at this point. Protective fences should be installed and agreed on site with the Arboricultural Officer.

### Construction

Care should be taken through this phase that no fences are moved and there are no machinery mishaps regarding trees.

### Post Construction and Landscaping

Once the protective fences have been removed, care should be taken that no trenching or soil dumping takes place within the formerly protected area. Driving vehicles and storage of such items as fuels and other toxic substances should also be avoided. Fires should be no closer than 20m to retained trees.

### Actions

1. The retention of existing trees will be encouraged on new development sites;
2. All tree protection measures agreed with the Council will be fully implemented and monitored;
3. Developers will be encouraged to carry out new tree planting within current sites and beyond.

## **8.0 Community Involvement**

Within the Vale there are 65 Parish Councils and 3 Town Councils most of which the District Council deals with on a variety of tree based enquiries.

### **8.1 Tree Wardens**

It would be beneficial to the District Council and to Parish Councils to establish a Tree Warden Scheme. Tree Wardens are volunteers, appointed by the Parish Council, who gather information about their local trees, get involved in local tree matters and encourage local practical projects to do with trees and woods. Tree Wardens need not be experts but they need to be enthusiastic. Gathering information and doing surveys, liaising with the community, informing the District Council of threats to local trees and working with schools etc are just some of the tasks of this post.

The Tree Council/National Grid Scheme is the best model to use at present. This scheme provides a ready made framework to use and also allows for training days and gives national and regional support in the form of 13 years experience with around 7,000 wardens already in place.

## 8.2 Partnership Working

The Council also has links with the public through other organisations it is in partnership with.

### 8.2a Oxfordshire Woodland Project

The Oxfordshire Woodland Project was jointly set up in 1991 by the 4 District Councils and the Oxfordshire County Council to provide advice to woodland owners. Small woodlands are an important element within landscapes and many were not being maintained. The Woodland Project Office provides advice to landowners. In 1999 the Vale purchased Besselsleigh Wood ancient woodland for public benefit. The Woodland Project Office provides management advice on the wood and organises events to promote the wood.

### 8.2b Great Western Community Forest

The Western end of the Vale comes into the area covered by the Great Western Community Forest. The Council works in partnership with the Forest Team at Watchfield on projects such as Folly Park at Faringdon and schemes in the Shrivenham area. The Community Forest also offers improved grant aid for tree planting and advice on stewardship both within and beyond its current boundaries.

The Council also links with the Forestry Authority directly on new planting and felling proposals and indirectly through the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Woodland Forum.

#### Actions

1. The Council will investigate with the Parish Councils the feasibility of a Tree Warden Scheme, and should support be forthcoming implement such a scheme;
2. Notification of nearby residents regarding significant tree works will be encouraged;
3. The Council will continue to support and work with our partners, the Oxfordshire Woodland project and the Great Western Community Forest.

## 9.0 **Monitoring the Policy Document**

This is the first policy document regarding the Vale's trees and, as such, it will develop over the next few years.

It should be reviewed every 5 years to account for changes in law and practice but at this initial stage a one year review would be beneficial.





## Glossary of Terms

<b>Ancient Woodland</b>	Woods in existence since at least 1600 A.D.
<b>Suckers (elm)</b>	Prolific re-growth from root systems of large elm trees killed by Dutch Elm Disease in the 1970's.
<b>Pollarding</b>	Cyclical removal of re-growth leaving a bare trunk usually between 2m and 4m high.
<b>Crown Reduction</b>	Process of reducing the area of the branch structure of a tree usually between 10% and 30%.
<b>Aphids</b>	Greenfly and blackfly.
<b>Glacial Drift</b>	Material left by melting glaciers which is now part of the soil structure.
<b>Alluvium</b>	Material laid down by rivers which is now part of the soil structure.
<b>Whip</b>	A small tree usually 1 to 3 years old.

## Documents Used in Compiling the Policy

1. Town and Country Planning Act 1990
2. Town and Country Planning (Trees) Regulations 1999
3. Hedgerow Regulations 1997
4. The Forestry Act 1967 and subsequent revisions
5. Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
6. New Road and Streetworks Act 1991
7. Common Law and How it Relates to Trees
8. British Standard 3998 Tree Work
9. British Standard 5837 Trees in Relation to Construction
10. NJUG 10 Guidelines for Utilities
11. Numerous other Local Authority Tree Strategies especially those produced by Aylesbury Vale District Council.

## **APPENDIX 1**

# **ARBORICULTURAL MAINTENANCE**

- 1. General Requirements**
  
- 2. Routine Maintenance**
  
- 3. Tree Pruning**
  
- 4. Tree Felling/Thinning**
  
- 5. Non-Routine Tree Works**

## ARBORICULTURAL MAINTENANCE

### 1.0 General Requirements

#### 1.1 British Standards

Unless otherwise stated all works shall be carried out to a minimum of British Standards 3998:1998 and subsequent amendments together with all applicable Arboricultural Industry Safety Guides and E.C Member Standards.

#### 1.2 Tree Climbers Safety Equipment

All safety equipment shall be in accordance with Health and Safety Executive (H.S.E) leaflet 401.

Any person who climbs a tree shall at all times use:

- a). A safety harness as recommended by the H.S.E consisting of either a sit harness with leg straps (half harness), or a harness with shoulder straps (full harness).
- b). Climbing rope with a minimum diameter of 12mm conforming to BS4928. Slings and straps shall be of the same construction and minimum diameter for climbing ropes and any karabiners must have a minimum rating of 23kN with an approved locking gate that requires at least 3 distinct movements to open it.
- c). As recommended by the H.S.E the following rescue items must be within easy reach:
  1. First Aid Kit conforming to H.S.E leaflet INDG214
  2. A climbers harness and rope as defined above
  3. Other items of equipment as may be necessary for the individual to climb safely e.g. karabiners and straps.

All equipment should be inspected by the climber before use and should be inspected by a responsible person at least once a month with the inspection being recorded in a suitable book.

#### 1.3 Chainsaw Operators Safety Clothing

- a). As recommended by the H.S.E all persons using a chainsaw off the ground **MUST** wear:
  1. Chainsaw protective trousers or leggings which should have all round protection to reduce the risk of cutting injuries complying with EN381.5;
  2. A suitable helmet conforming to BS5240 with ear and eye protection complying with EN352;
  3. Safety boots incorporating chainsaw protection to the upper foot complying with EN345.

The operator may also wear a chainsaw protective jacket and chainsaw gloves complying with EN381-7.

b). Ground staff using chainsaws **MUST** wear:

1. Chainsaw protective trousers or leggings which should have all round protection to reduce the risk of cutting injuries complying with EN381-5;
2. A suitable helmet conforming to BS5240 incorporating ear and eye protection complying with EN397, 1731,352;
3. Safety boots incorporating chainsaw protection to the upper foot complying with EN345-1;
4. Chainsaw protective gloves complying with EN381-7.

Ground staff may also wear a chainsaw protective jacket.

c). Ground staff using wood chipping machinery **MUST** wear:

1. Heavy work gloves and suitable clothing without loose or flapping impediments
2. A suitable helmet conforming to BS5240 incorporating eye and ear protection complying with EN397, 1731,352.
3. Safety boots conforming to EN345-1.

Additional high visibility clothing shall be worn when working on or close to public highways.

#### 1.4 Training

All tree climbers shall undertake a ‘**tree climbing/working within trees**’ training course that is recognised by the Health and Safety Executive (leaflet 805).

a). Chainsaw Training

No person shall use a chainsaw unless they hold a valid certificate. Under no circumstances shall a person use a chainsaw unless a competent person is within sight of such an operator.

b). Rescue Techniques

It is recommended that training in the rescuing of tree climbers who have sustained injury or have become ill whilst working in a tree, is carried out at least on an annual basis.

#### 1.5 Warning Signs and Safety Zones

Prior to any works taking place, an adequate safety zone shall be established around the working area, cordoned off on the ground and policed by the Contractor to ensure

no unauthorised entry. This zone shall include all equipment which may be hazardous to the public e.g. wood chippers, etc.

All signing of highway works must conform to the Code of Practice as outlined in the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. It is the Contractors responsibility to erect and maintain appropriate warning signs and barriers and to ensure the safety of both staff and the general public whilst working adjacent to highways.

## 1.6 Machinery and Equipment

### a). Climbing Irons

The use of climbing irons will not be permitted on a tree except when the tree is being completely felled.

### b). Sterilisation of Equipment

All tools shall be sterilised with an approved sterilant after contact with diseased areas of trees and shrubs, or where disease is suspected, to prevent the spread of infection

### c). Wound Treatment

Wound sealants shall not be used without the prior approval of the Supervising Officer.

### d). Winching Works

See H.S.E Leaflet 310

It is permissible to use existing trees as anchor points for winching equipment provided that the tree to be used has been deemed suitable by the Supervising Officer. Where such a tree is used, it will be protected against damage by the placing of protective materials around the trunk so that the winch cable can not harm the tree.

## 1.7 Disposal of Timber/Wood Chipped Materials

The Contractor shall be responsible for the disposal of all timber and wood chipped material unless specified by the Supervising Officer. All arisings shall be removed immediately and the area left clean and tidy before the contractor leaves the site. If ground conditions are such that an unacceptable amount of damage will occur to the site the arisings shall be removed as soon as the ground conditions improve. The contractor shall be responsible for informing the Supervising Officer of any delay and for all subsequent re-instatement works.

## 1.8 Nomenclature/Location

- a). Trees shall be described by the current nomenclature e.g. Fagus sylvatica. The location will be indicated by one of the following: a plan, a grid reference or a number affixed to the trunk of the tree. Trees may also be defined as being situated in streets and roads, their location described as being outside or opposite a particular house or on an area adjacent to a definable structure.

b). Tree categories shall be defined as follows:

Street Tree: Defined as a tree which is planted immediately adjacent to a minor highway, cycle path or footpath

Highway Tree: Defined as a tree which is planted immediately adjacent to a major highway or bus route

Estate Tree: Defined as a tree which is planted in a public open space within an estate

Park Tree: Defined as a tree which is planted within parks, country parks and open space etc away from highways and footpaths.

## 2.0 Routine Maintenance

### 2.1 Tree Inspections

On request the Contractor shall carry out a ground based visual inspection of specified trees from a schedule supplied by the Supervising Officer. The Contractor shall inspect for any signs of damage, disease or defective growth to the trunk or branches of the tree as well as for the following conditions:

- Signs of root movement
- Trip hazards (e.g. surface roots)
- Loose or peeling bark
- Dead wood
- Distance from wall or building
- Epicormic growth
- Mower damage
- Crown clearance
- Stake and tie/guard
- Tree details

The inspection shall be recorded on the schedule or on a hand-held computer in a form compatible with the Arbortrack Tree Management System. All records shall be returned to the Supervising Officer on a monthly basis during the inspection period.

### 2.2 Sapling Trees

On request the Contractor shall carry out the following works to specified sapling trees.

- a). Inspect any tree stakes, guards, ties and blocks for firmness, refirming, straightening, adjusting or replacing if required, to prevent damage to the tree. Any litter present within the guard shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.
- b). Inspect the tree for any signs of damage, disease or effective growth and carry out a formative prune on the tree to produce a balanced crown, removing all crowded or crossed branches as well as any dead or diseased wood and any epicormic growth without tearing or leaving snags. The amount of crown



removed must not exceed 10% and all arisings shall be removed to the Contractor's tip. Any badly damaged, dead or dying trees shall be reported to the Supervising Officer for replacement.

- c). On an instruction from the Supervising Officer, the Contractor shall completely remove a failed or vandalised tree up to Advanced Nursery Stock size, including any stakes or protective guard before reinstating the root hole area with top soil and grass seed, the final surface after consolidation being level with the surrounding area. All arisings shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.
- d). On an instruction from the Supervising Officer, the Contractor shall remove any stakes, ties and guard supporting the tree, taking care not to damage the roots, trunk or branches of the tree, filling and firming the hole left by the stake. All arisings shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.
- e). On an instruction from the Supervising Officer, the Contractor shall supply and re-stake/tie the tree.

### 2.3 Street Trees

- a). Specified trees shall be inspected by the Contractor during July for epicormic growth and any material growing from the base of the tree and up to a height of 2 metres from ground level, shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.
- b). During July, the Contractor shall maintain a clearance of 3 metres under specified trees overhanging pavements, highways and other hard surfaces, the clearance being measured from the ground when the tree is in full leaf. All arisings shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.

### 2.4 Highways Tree

- a). Specified trees shall be inspected by the Contractor during July for epicormic growth and any material growing from the base of the tree and up to a height of 6 metres from ground level, shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.
- b). During July, the Contractor shall maintain a clearance of 6 metres under specified trees overhanging pavements, highways and other hard surface areas, the clearance being measured from the ground when the tree is in full leaf. All arisings shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.

### 2.5 Estate Trees

Specified trees shall be inspected by the Contractor during July for epicormic growth and any material growing from the base of the tree and up to a height of 2 metres from ground level, shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.

### 2.6 Tree Grilles

In January, the Contractor shall lift the tree grille; loosen the shingle or soil to a depth of 150mm beneath the grille, supplying and applying as necessary, additional shingle or soil approved by the Supervising Officer. Before levelling and replacing the grille. On completion, the grille shall lie flat and level with the surrounding surface, ensuring that the grille is adjusted so that the trunk of the tree is not constricted and that the

surrounding area is left in a tidy condition. If the tree trunk size is such that it cannot be replaced without causing damage to the tree, the Contractor shall remove the tree grille to store and inform the Supervising Officer. All arisings shall be removed to the Contractor's tip.

### **3.0 Tree Pruning**

Unless otherwise specified, pruning shall be carried out from November to March inclusive with the exception of certain ornamental species which shall be pruned after flowering during the summer months and other species with special requirements e.g. walnuts.

Where branches are removed they shall be cut back to the branch collar or in the absence of a collar cut back as far as possible without exaggerating the size of the wound. The final cut shall be smooth, in one plane and without tearing the bark or inner tissue. Where branches are reduced, they shall be cut back to positions just above a good growing point or back to the main branch. All arisings to be removed from site for disposal in accordance with Clause 1.7.

During pruning operations, the Contractor shall carry out a visual inspection of the tree and report any defects or abnormalities to the Supervising Officer on an approved inspection form.

Pruning operations shall be specified as follows:

#### **3.1 Crown Reduction**

a). Light Reduction (10%)

Remove all dead and diseased wood in excess of 15mm diameter, all stumps and reduce crown overall by 10%.

b). Medium Reduction (20%)

Remove all dead and diseased wood in excess of 15mm diameter, all stumps and reduce crown overall by 20%

c). Heavy Reduction (30%)

Remove all dead and diseased wood in excess of 15mm diameter, all stumps and reduce crown overall by 30%

#### **3.2 Crown Reduction (side only)**

a). Light Reduction (side only – 10%)

Remove all dead and diseased wood in excess of 15mm diameter, all stumps but with the sides only being reduced by 10%. The overall height of the tree shall not be reduced.

b). Medium Reduction (side only – 20%)

Remove all dead and diseased wood in excess of 15mm diameter, all stumps but with the sides only being reduced by 20%. The overall height of the tree shall not be reduced.

c). Heavy Reduction (side only – 30%)

Remove all dead and diseased wood in excess of 15mm diameter, all stumps but with the sides only being reduced by 30%. The overall height of the tree shall not be reduced.

### 3.3 Crown Lifting

a). Park/Street Trees

The crown of the tree shall be lifted by the removal of primary and secondary limbs up to a height of 3 metres above ground level, this being measured at the branch tip from the ground when the tree is in full leaf.

b). Highway Trees

The crown of the tree shall be lifted by the removal of primary and secondary limbs up to a height of 6 metres above ground level, this being measured at the branch tip from the ground when the tree is in full leaf.

### 3.4 Removal of Deadwood

a). Deadwood

Remove dead, diseased and dying branch wood and broken stumps larger than 15mm diameter throughout the crown of the tree. All final cuts shall, where possible, be made into living wood.

b). Major Deadwood

Remove dead, diseased and dying branch wood and broken stumps of 40mm branch diameter and above, only throughout the crown of the tree. All final cuts shall, where possible, be made into living wood.

### 3.5 Crown Thinning

The crown of the tree shall be thinned by removing up to 20% of secondary and small live branch growth throughout the crown to produce an even density of foliage around a well spaced and balanced crown. Chaffing, weak and damaged branches shall be removed.

### 3.6 Pollarding

a). Remove all branch growth back to a point at the junction between the trunk and the base of the crown. Remove all epicormic growth.

b). Where a tree has been previously pollarded, remove all branch growth back to the original pollard points. Remove all epicormic growth.

### 3.7 Bark Wounds

Specific bark damage shall be repaired by paring back to undamaged tissue leaving an oval shaped wound of consistent outline to a maximum size of 500cm<sup>2</sup>.

#### 4.0 Tree Felling/Thinning

##### 4.1 Felling

Where possible, all specified trees shall be clear felled. If this is not possible and unless otherwise instructed by the Supervising Officer, the Contractor shall use their discretion as to the exact method of felling to be used and the direction in which the tree is to be felled.

Unless otherwise stated by the Supervising Officer, all trees shall be felled so as to obtain the maximum economic timber value which shall be used to offset the cost of the work as agreed with the Supervising Officer prior to commencement of work.

The tree shall be felled as close to the ground as possible and that all cuts are made to ensure no splitting of the timber occurs. All felled timber shall be trimmed out so that all branch stumps are flushed off, leaving the bole/trunk in all respects ready for sale or transportation. All buttresses shall be flushed off to leave a round stem base and the hinge portion of the trunk shall be flushed off to leave the trunk base in one plane. The hinge portion remaining on the stump shall also be flushed off and the stump edges rounded off so as to prevent any sharp edges. All arisings to be removed from site for disposal in accordance with Clause 1.7.

The following treatment of the stumps resulting from the felling works described above shall be completed as soon as practical after each felling operation unless otherwise specified by the Supervising Officer.

- a). Stumps from trees growing in grass which are less than 350mm in diameter shall be ground out to a depth of 150mm and the ground immediately reinstated to an acceptable standard for mowing.
- b). Where specified by the Supervising Officer, stumps shall be killed by cutting a groove in the sapwood around the diameter of the stump and applying a suitable approved brushwood killer such as ammonium sulphamate (Amcide). Within school grounds and certain other specified sites, the treated stump shall be immediately covered with black polythene and secured in place.

**Note! The appropriate treatment of the stump resulting from a tree felling operation shall be considered an integral part of that operation and payment for this work shall not be made until both operations are completed to the satisfaction of the Supervising Officer. Similarly, any other grounds maintenance operations which can not be completed as a result of incomplete tree felling works may result in further financial penalties.**

##### 4.2 Thinning/Coppicing

The Contractor shall fell individual trees within the woodland as identified by the Supervising Officer, taking care not to damage any of the surrounding trees. Thinning works shall be carried out throughout the year to an agreed programme whilst coppicing works shall only take place between November and February. All woodland

works shall be in accordance with good forestry practices (Forestry Commission Bulletin No 14).

a). Fell Only

Trees shall be cut unless otherwise specified between 50mm and 75mm above ground level so as to avoid cutting into any roots systems. Coppiced stumps shall be left with the hinge portion flushed off and the trunk base in one angled plane. The tree shall then be trimmed out removing all side growth; the resulting brush wood may be left in the immediate vicinity but clear of cut stumps. The resulting trunk shall remain laid on the ground within the woodland, clear of cut stumps topped of at minimum diameter off 40mm.

b). Fell and Clear

Trees shall be cut unless otherwise specified between 50mm and 75mm above ground level so as to avoid cutting into any root systems. Coppiced stumps shall be left with the hinge portion flushed off and the trunk base in one angled plane. All suitable brushwood shall be chipped and spread evenly as a thin layer within the woodland area and all cordwood and other arisings to be removed from the site for disposal in accordance with Clause 1.7.

## 5.0 Non-Routine Tree Works

### 5.1 Cabling

All cable shall conform to the appropriate British Standard and shall be of either flexible steel or multi-stranded steel. Splices may be of either wrap type or by the use of steel "bulldog" clips. Thimbles of ether stainless or galvanised steel must be used to secure cables to bolts. The size of cable shall be of sufficient strength to ensure security of the branches to which it is attached. Cable less than 8mm diameter will not be acceptable on mature trees. Stainless or galvanised steel bolts shall be used to attach the cable to the branch. Screw eyes shall not be used except with prior consent of the Supervising Officer.

The bolt shall be fitted with a secure eye on the cable end and a nut and thread on the opposite end. There shall be an oval shaped steel washer fitted between the securing nut and the branch being cabled, a segment of bark matching the size of the oval washer shall be removed prior to the washer being fitted. Steel oval washers shall be made from 6mm metal plates, the short axis being at last 2.5 times the bolt diameter. Spacers shall be fitted to ensure that bolts remain in line with cables. The surplus portion of the bolt shall be cut off approximately 12mm from the securing nut and peened over to prevent the nut unscrewing. On completion the nut washer spacer and splice shall be sealed with an approved waterproofing compound to prevent rust. The Contractor shall ensure that only one cable is attached to one pair of bolts. The Contractor shall ensure that at least two "bulldog" clips per splice are fitted.

Cables shall be fitted so that there is neither slackness in the cable nor undue tension. When the works are being carried out on trees that are in leaf, due allowances shall be made to ensure slackness does not occur when the tree loses its leaf.

### 5.2 Propping

The Contractor shall supply and install wooden or metal props as specified by the Supervising Officer to support limbs or trunks from below. Props shall be supported at ground level by a foundation sufficient in strength to take the weight of the limb-trunk being propped. The size, type and position of the prop shall be specified in each case by the Supervising Officer.

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR (COMMERCIAL SERVICES)  
TO THE EXECUTIVE  
7 July 2006

**The Viability of the Direct Services Organisation**

**1.0 Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 This report relates to the Direct Services Organisation (DSO) performance and financial review and its viability as a Council service.
- 1.2 It also relates to Address Management which has been integrated into the DSO administration.
- 1.3 The Contact Officer for this report is Bill Farrar, Deputy Director (Commercial Services), Tel: 01235 540202 ext 356

**2.0 Recommendation**

*The Executive is recommended to:*

- 2.1 *Recognise the high performance of the DSO during the past 12 months and its continuing improvement.*
- 2.2 *Endorse the continuation of the DSO subject to its ongoing financial viability and achievement of its Business Plan.*

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

This report:

- 3.1 relates to the entire Vision Statement, in particular
- (a) creating a cleaner, greener, safer and healthier environment and
  - (b) the Medium Term Financial Plan
- 3.2 relates to the Best Value Performance Plan and Corporate Plan and
- 3.3 complies with the Corporate Timetable

**4.0 Background and Supporting Information**

- 4.0 As a part of the Council's Priorities and Medium Term Plan in 2005, members decided to allow time to evaluate the viability of the DSO. The service was placed under the control of the Assistant Director (Building Control) in order that a proper review could take place.
- 4.1 The DSO's work consisted of a wide range of useful services to the Council and external customers, eg.
- sewer treatment works, sewer blockages and emptying septic tanks
  - minor building works and repairs and maintenance of car parks and public conveniences
  - emergency call-outs, flood prevention, committee set-ups and internal office moves
- 4.2 Address Management, which is the generic term for the statutory duties relating to street and property naming and numbering, (as well as road closures), was also given to the AD (BC). In order to manage both aspects, Address Management was linked to the DSO which enabled them both to share admin resources with additional support from Building Control.

- 4.3 In October 2005, the AD (BC) submitted an interim report to the Executive and Directors, which provided optimistic early indications as to the future of the service.
- 4.4 In March 2006, the AD (BC) was appointed as the Deputy Director (Commercial Services) with a portfolio including DSO and Address Management.
- 4.5 Over the 12-month period, the Deputy Director worked closely with the DSO introducing significant improvements, such as:
- Increased income through generating more business and setting relevant operative rates
  - Prompt recharging and termination of DS recharging back to itself
  - Better financial control with simplified accounting and reporting systems
  - Reduced expenditure through better procurement and operational and admin efficiencies
  - A overall commercial approach
- 4.6 The DSO has risen well to the challenge and shows all the signs of being a strong successful business-like unit that has real potential to develop.
- 4.7 It provides excellent minor building and drainage services to various external bodies and generates substantial income. It also provides similar services to many Council departments and is always on hand to deal with emergencies.
- 4.8 The professional and committed attitude of the workforce adds confidence in this well-organised and efficient unit, which is a credit to the Council. The high demand for its services and the quantity of compliments illustrate the popularity of the section.
- 4.9 It should be noted that a large part of the DSO's success is due to the management skills of the DSO Team Leader and Technical Admin Officer. Both of these posts require redesignation and evaluation as soon as possible.
- 4.10 There is much on the reorganising agenda (e.g., vehicles, property, contracts, etc.) and given the time and support, if the DSO continues in its momentum, it should prove to be a worthwhile asset.

## **5.0 Future Actions and Timescales**

- 5.1 The most significant issue is that of Finance. At the beginning of the year 2005-06 there was considerable concern with regard to the DSO costs to the Council. Because of the confused financial reporting it is unclear as to the actual original situation and accuracy of the income and expenditure budgets
- 5.2 The first analysis, after 6 months, suggested a deficit of £150k net of Address Management costs.
- 5.3 A reduction to £120k deficit was later identified with a further saving of £50k offered at the time of the Council Budget (predicting a £70k final deficit). The actual out-turn of £47k final deficit was beyond any expectation
- 5.4 It is important, however, to keep the overall situation in perspective. Although the target is to continue to reduce cost it should be noted that it may be difficult to maintain the same rate of improvement and some allowance must be made for unexpected contingencies, e.g. replacement vehicles, the state of the national economy, etc.
- 5.5 Assuming a steady plan of improvement is applied it is hoped that the deficit may reduce by 25% to £35k during 2006-07 and £20k in 2007-08. A 5-year Business Plan is being prepared in which there is a real expectation to financially break even in 2008-09



## 6.0 Considerations and Options

6.1 The DSO provides the community with a cost effective quality service which could enhance and support the Council through its e-working and procurement of contracts.

6.2 The scope for business development is demonstrated by the recent return of the Vale public conveniences cleaning contract - this addition to the DSO portfolio should produce an effective saving to the Council as well as providing more control and improved standards.

6.3 The DSO is continuing to explore with other Authorities ways of making services better and more cost effective through possible partnering and joint working.

## 6.4 Alternatives

The option of ceasing the DSO function would have two significant effects:

- i. **Council Work** (*eg. office moves, committee set-ups, minor works, etc*)
  - the Council would need to commission external services (ie. either private companies or other local authority direct services) to perform these task
  - there is a risk that these costs would be greater than that recharged by DSO and more difficult to acquire within short deadlines
- ii. **Community Work** (*ie. services purchased privately by householders and private businesses*)
  - there is no legal obligation for the Council to provide such services. However, an adverse perception may develop with the public especially as many customers have relied on these services for many years.
  - as much of the DSO work is not financially worthwhile to private contractors this could result in reductions in local standards, which, in turn, may damage the amenities of the Vale

## 6.5 Appendix A

This report is obviously a concise summary of the DSO situation. Appendix A provides a more detailed account of the DSO work and its finances over the past 2 years.

BILL FARRAR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR (COMMERCIAL SERVICES)

Vale of White Horse District Council

## **APPENDIX A**

### **A Report on the Performance and Prospects of the Direct Service Organisation**

**1 June 2006**

#### **Introduction**

The Vale has for many years operated its works unit called the Direct Service Organisation (DSO). Following the Council's Priorities and Medium Term Plan in 2005, members decided to allow time for a review of the viability of the service.

On 1 April 2005, the DSO, (previously with Technical Services), joined Building Control under the management of the then Assistant Director (Building Control) with an objective to assess and improve the workings and finances of the service. The Executive required a full report at the end of the first year preceded by an "early indications" report after 6 months.

Having analysed the DSO finances and its performances over a 12-month period this report is intended to provide a reliable assessment of its likely viability for the future.

#### **Background**

The DSO's work consisted of a range of useful building- and drainage-related services to the Council, SODC and various parish Councils, other organisations and local residents:

- Sewer treatment works and pumping stations - repairs & maintenance
- Sewer blockages clearances
- Septic tanks and cesspools emptying
- Car parks - repairs & maintenance
- Public conveniences - repairs & maintenance
- Emergency call-outs
- Flood prevention and recovery
- CCTV drainage surveys
- Minor building and civil engineering work
- Street naming and house numbering and road closures
- Committee venues set-ups
- Office moves

#### **Improvements and Actions**

As in any successful business it was essential first to:

- determine whether there was a demand for the services on offer
- decide on the standard or quality of the service
- ensure the resources were available, and
- ensure the financial situation was sound and robust

In March 2006, as a part of the Senior Management Restructuring, the AD (Building Control) was appointed to the new post of Deputy Director (Commercial Services), and the DSO was confirmed as a part of that Service Area.

During the 12-month period, the Deputy Director having worked closely with the DSO, with support from Building Control, has introduced some significant improvements:

#### 1. Rate Changes

- Operative rates were increased by approx. 30% to more realistic and competitive levels.
- Final invoices for jobs without fixed prices are now based on actual costs.

#### 2. Recharging Scheme

- The unusual and convoluted practice of recharging DSO costs back to itself was terminated.
- Priority has been given to promptly recharging internal and external customers.
- Invoices for SODC “Housing Act Works” jobs are now issued to SODC rather than to their householders.

#### 3. Financial Control

- Financial control has been improved with simplified accounting.
- A closer working relationship is being developed with Financial Services (e.g. debt recovery).
- A commercial approach was introduced with respect to job estimating.

#### 4. Business Issues

- A business enterprise approach has been introduced generally
- Admin processes and customer approach have been improved.
- Staff are now consulted and involved in most aspects of the business.
- The “Housing Act Works” contract was further extended by SODC *“for the foreseeable future”*.
- “Preferred Contractor” status has been achieved with several parish Council clients

### **General Observations**

#### 1. Address Management

Street and property naming and numbering, as well as road closures, are statutory duties, which are delivered, to a high standard by DSO admin. Future recovery of costs is proposed by introducing Charges as per Service Prioritisation Plan no.24 approved in the 2006 Council Budget.

#### 2. Sewer Treatment Works and Pumping Stations

This service deals with the repair and maintenance of units which serve houses in the Vale and SODC that are either privately owned, belonging to Housing Associations or subject to Housing Act agreements. It provides substantial revenue that is expected to continue to produce a working surplus.

#### 3. Emptying Septic Tanks

This is a competitive service to mainly private householders in the Vale and SODC. The Vale acquired SODC sewage related work when that Council ceased providing such services 6 years ago. This arrangement works well producing a current financial surplus with real potential for developing the business further on an established client base.

#### 4. Car Park Maintenance

This is a successful partnership with the Car Parks service where the work carried out is by staff

dedicated to these premises. Car parks satisfy a social need in a cost effective way. Therefore, the DSO not only meets the specification of its internal partner, by ensuring the premises are kept safe and clean for the public who use them, but it also recharges at a competitive rate.

#### 5. Clearance of Sewer Blockages

This work attracts customers including Housing Associations, public bodies, private companies and private householders. Sewer problems must be resolved quickly to avoid public health problems. This priority can inhibit the production of a surplus for each job. The current Charges are under review and will be re-set to ensure economic viability within an aggressively competitive private sector market.

#### 6. Contract and Minor Works

The DSO completes many jobs for domestic and commercial external customers. There is potential for growth and surplus generation. The Council also benefits from the control and flexibility it has through having its own work performed by its in-house unit. It is able to complete tasks to a high standard and on time. A significant amount of work is also commissioned by various Council services.

For example

- flood prevention
- office moves
- property alterations
- committee room set-ups
- emergencies, etc.

The DSO contributes to the Council Objectives with respect to:

- creating a cleaner, greener, safer and healthier environment
- the Medium Term Financial Plan

### **Specific Observations**

1. The DSO has clearly risen well to the challenge posed over the past 12 months and shows all the signs of a strong business for the future.
2. It is currently preparing a 5-year Business Plan to achieve Break Even (ie. for income to cover direct costs, excluding internal recharges) by the end of 2008-09 or before.
3. The DSO should prove to be a direct service group that could support the Council and enhance its reputation.
4. Whilst charges will be set at competitive rates in order to achieve success and market share the additional benefit to the Council will be to provide its community with a cost effective quality service.
5. Charges have already been increased for 2006 in order to come into line with “going business rates”.
6. Purchase cards, e-payments, e-communication and procurement of new contracts, (such as cleaning of Public Conveniences), should continue to improve the quality of service and viability
7. The progress made in the last year with no loss in momentum suggests an optimistic future

### **The Financial Aspect and Final Out-turn**

The Deputy Director found the management and methodology of DSO finances complicated and confused. Although it became obvious that there was a need to reduce the 19 cost centres it was agreed to leave this change until the DSO future was confirmed. A number of simple issues were addressed, e.g.:

- Income has increased by generating more business and increasing charging rates
- Expenditure has reduced through better procurement and operational and admin efficiencies

- Accounting and reporting systems are simplified
- Appendix A shows the comparison between 2004-05 and 2005-06 cost centres and accounts (excluding Support Services Recharges and Depreciation) which is summarised below:

2004-05	2005-06	Improvement	
£168k deficit	£77k deficit	£97k	<i>Including Address Management</i>
£140k deficit	£47k deficit	£94k	<i>Excluding Address Management</i>

- Appendix B refers to the DSO Accounts for 2005-06

After 6 months the expected final net deficit was expected to be in the region of £150k. After 9 months the indication was that of a further reduction to a £120k deficit.

Although a saving of £50k was offered to the Council budget at that stage the final actual net deficit of £47k was beyond any expectation.

It is important, however, to keep the overall situation in perspective. Although the target is to continue the reduction in cost it should be noted that it will be difficult to maintain the same rate of improvement. Some allowance must be made for unexpected contingencies, e.g. replacement vehicles, the state of the national economy.

Assuming a steady plan of improvement is applied it is hoped that the deficit may reduce by 25% to £35k during 2006-07; £20k in 2007-08 and breaking even in 2008-09.

### **Future Developments**

There is scope for further development, for example:

#### 1. Cleaning Contract for Vale Public Conveniences

The DSO is reversing the trend of externalising local authority services by taking back, as from 6 June 2006, the cleaning contract of the Vale's public conveniences. This addition to the DSO portfolio should produce an effective saving and provide the Council with more control and improved standards.

#### 2. Partnering and Joint-working

The DSO is continuing to explore, with other Authorities, ways of making services better and more cost effective. There are areas of common interest with SODC, Oxford City, WODC and Swindon BC.

#### 3. Housing Associations

The DSO will continue to develop its relationships with bodies within and outside of the Vale.

### **Conclusions and Summary**

- After a full year it would appear that the DSO has all the signs of being a successful business-like unit that has real potential to develop.
- It provides excellent minor building and drainage services to the various external bodies generating substantial income. It also provides similar services to many Council departments and is always on hand to deal with emergencies.
- The professional and committed attitude of the workforce also gives further confidence that the unit is

well organised and efficient and a credit to the Council.

- The high market share and quantity of compliments, both internally and externally, illustrate the popularity of the section.
- It should be noted that a large part of the DSO's success is due to the management skills of the DSO Team Leader and Technical Admin Officer. Both of these posts require redesignation and evaluation as soon as possible.
- There is much on the reorganising agenda (e.g., vehicles, property, contracts, etc.) and given the time and support, if the DSO continues in its present momentum, it should prove to be a worthwhile asset.
- The most significant issue is that of Finance. At the beginning of the year 2005-06 there was considerable concern with regard to the DSO costs to the Council. Because of the confused financial reporting it is unclear as to the actual original situation and accuracy of the income and expenditure budgets.

The greatest achievement is the massive net financial saving compared with the previous year.

The original hope was to

- (a) simply reduce the overall cost to the Council
- (b) contribute towards the Council Priorities in the MTFP and
- (c) determine whether the DSO was a "viable" service and worth keeping.

### **Recommendations**

The Executive is recommended to:

1. Recognise the high performance of the DSO during the past 12 months and its continuing improvement
2. Endorse the continuing provision of the DSO subject to its ongoing financial viability and achievement of its Business Plan

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH)**  
**TO THE LICENSING COMMITTEE**

**Gambling Act 2005 – Draft Statement of Gambling Policy**

**1.0 Introduction and Report Summary**

- 1.1 The Gambling Bill was introduced into Parliament on 18th October 2004. Following consideration by the House of Commons and the House of Lords, it received Royal Assent on 7th April 2005, and became the Gambling Act 2005.
- 1.2 The Gambling Act 2005 will modernise gambling legislation, which is currently regulated by the Gaming Board, local magistrates and local authorities. The existing three Acts, the Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963; the Gaming Act 1968; and the Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976 will be consolidated into a single Act. These will all be repealed in September 2007. Further information can be found in Appendix A
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the scope of the Gambling Act. It also sets out a programme to develop a draft statement of policy, to consult upon its contents and to publish a final statement in line with legal requirements.
- 1.3 The contact officer for this report is Nicola Dearling, Principal Licensing Officer, telephone (01235 540304).

**2.0 Recommendations**

*Members are requested*

- (a) *to note the scope and likely implications of the Gambling Act 2005 and the proposals for drafting, consultation and finalisation.*
- (b) *to consider the draft Statement of Gambling Policy and make recommendations to Council as appropriate.*
- (c) *to consider the results of the consultation in due course and make further recommendations to Council for the final Statement.*

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

This report supports the Council's overall aim of seeking the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the Vale, protecting and enhancing the vitality of our towns and villages. In particular this report helps to create a cleaner, greener, safer and healthier environment

**4.0 Background Information**

- 4.1 The Gambling Act 2005 will modernise gambling legislation, which is currently regulated by the Gaming Board, local magistrates and local authorities. The existing three Acts, the Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963; the Gaming Act 1968; and the Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976 will be consolidated into a single Act. These will all be repealed in September 2007.
- 4.2 As part of the changeover, the Council is required to prepare and publish a "Statement of Gambling Policy" every three years. This policy statement details how the Council will carry out its function as a licensing authority under the terms of the Act with a view to promoting the following three licensing objectives:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime,
  - Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way;
  - Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.
- 4.3 The Statement of Gambling Policy must be published before the Council can carry out any function in respect of individual applications made under the authority of the Gambling Act 2005.
- Current expectations from the Gambling Commission are that, the new Act will be brought fully into effect on 1 September 2007. They will invite applications for Operating licences from 1 January 2007 and licensing authorities will begin to accept applications for Premises licences from 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007. We therefore must have our Statement of Gambling Policy in place by December 2006.

## **5 Consultation Programme**

- 5.1 Before determining policy for any three-year period, licensing authorities are required to consult the Police, one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons carrying out gambling businesses in the authority's area; and one or more persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of functions under the Act. The Draft Statement of Gambling Policy, which has been produced in compliance with DCMS regulations, Gambling Commission and LACORS guidance is attached to this report as (Appendix B.) The policy has been produced by the Oxford Licensing Group, which has resulted in a generic policy across Oxfordshire, with slight amendments to cover local needs.
- 5.2 The statutory guidance was released on 28th April 2006, giving local authorities approximately 32 weeks to draft a policy, carry out a wide consultation, obtain final full Council approval and publish the policy. Consequently, the timescale for obtaining final approval is tight, bearing in mind the length of time required to carry out the consultation process, review comments and the availability of Council meeting dates.
- 5.3 The Gambling Commission has issued guidance on the consultation process recommending a 12 week consultation period, and local authorities are encouraged to follow it. It is intended to carry out the consultation process over approximately the maximum time period available in order to complete the process and obtain approval of the full Council by the end of this calendar year.
- 5.4 The planned public consultation exercise, which will run from the 4<sup>th</sup> August to the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2006, will include the following elements:
- Area consultation meetings involving presentations, displays and question times, utilizing Area Forums wherever possible
  - Mail shots to local gambling businesses and key partners
  - Mail shots to residents groups and trade organizations
  - Mail shots to organisations including faith groups, voluntary groups working with children and young people, groups working with problem gamblers, medical practices, primary care trusts, advocacy groups such as the CRB and Trade Unions



- Mail shots to Responsible Authorities under the Act
  - Mail shots to Town & Parish Councils
  - Access to the consultation through the Council Web Site
- 5.5 At the end of the consultation period, the final Policy Statement will be submitted for consideration at a further Licensing Committee and then onto Full Council on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2006

## **7 Financial & Resources Implications**

- 7.1 It is for Members to decide the full extent of the consultation it is to carry out. The Secretary of State advises that licensing authorities should have regard to cost and time. The program set out in section 5 is considered to be feasible within existing resources.
- 7.2 Government guidance indicates that fee levels (yet to be released to licensing authorities) will provide full cost recovery of all licensing functions including the preparation and publication of a Statement of Gambling Policy. Where authorities exceed these requirements, they will have to absorb those costs.
- 7.3 Financial implications of the Act relate to staff resources for administration, enforcement, consultation and community engagement.
- 7.4 As the Government has not released the fee levels, it is not possible to assess fully the financial burden on the licensing budget.
- 7.5 The net cost in 2006/07 will be managed as far as possible within the overall licensing budget.
- 7.6 The budgetary position will be kept under review and a report will be presented to Executive as the information becomes clearer.
- 7.6 The new licensing duties will be carried out by the Licensing Team located in Environmental Health. We do not expect the workload to be as extensive on resources, unlike the Licensing Act 2003. The extra duties will be consumed into the day to day workload of the unit.

## **8 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 The Council cannot undertake its role as a licensing authority until it has approved and published its Statement of Gambling Policy. The policy must be reviewed every three years. However, it can be reviewed more often if appropriate.
- 8.2 The licensing function is to be carried out by the Council's Licensing Committee, however the policy must be approved by Council.

David Stevens  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH)

# GREEN TRAVEL PLAN

June 2006



*"It's not about feeling bad about using a car;  
it is about feeling good when you do not"*

# FOREWORD



**T**he Vale of White Horse District Council's new Green Travel Plan, for Council staff and elected Members, offers a range of incentives for them to use the car less, in favour of more environmentally friendly modes of transport.

With the help of the new Green Travel Plan the Council is in a better position to lead by example and encourage residents, who live and work in the Vale, to try travelling by means other than the car. The more people who do this the better it will be not only for decreasing air pollution and helping to combat global warming, but also for reducing traffic congestion on our streets and roads and improving our fitness and health.

Green Travel Plan measures which are already in place, and those which we are still formulating, support one of the Vale's key Corporate Aims: to create a cleaner, greener, safer, and healthier community and environment, as well as the Council's Vision Statement.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Johnston".

**Councillor Bob Johnston**  
*Executive Member, Portfolio Holder  
for the Vale Green Travel Plan.*

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## LOCATION

This Green Travel Plan will embrace both Staff and Elected Members of the Vale of White Horse District Council, who are based at The Abbey House, Abingdon, Oxfordshire. However, some of its aims, policies and proposals will be relevant to Council activities carried out throughout the District.

## SENIOR MANAGEMENT SUPPORT AND COMMITMENT

The Council's Senior Management Team fully supports the Council's Green Travel Plan and recognises its importance not only in relation to the Council's Aims and Objectives but also in the context of wider county, regional and national policies relating to sustainable transport and greener travel. The Senior Managers will therefore encourage and positively promote "travelling thoughtfully" throughout their individual service areas.

## MANAGEMENT OF THE PLAN

The Deputy Director (Planning and Community Strategy) is the officer responsible for the management and development of this Green Travel Plan. The role of coordinating the operation of the plan will fall to the Section Head (Transportation). Monitoring the plan will be the responsibility of the Executive Member and Portfolio Holder for the Green Travel plan, who will regularly report on the plans progress to the Executive.



## BACKGROUND

Travel Plans are one of the corner stones in Central Government transport policy, which instead of promoting road building as a way of increasing road capacity, seeks to manage increasing traffic congestion by reducing the dependency on travel by car and encouraging alternatives such as walking, cycling and car sharing.

For many years the volume of traffic has been rising inexorably as the frequency and length of individual journeys has increased. Current annual traffic growth in Oxfordshire is about 2.8%. Similarly, car ownership for households in the Vale continues to grow faster than the national averages, and if these trends continue they will have significant impacts on our environment in terms of congestion and pollution.

Many local employers, both large and small, now have Green Travel Plans; and some of the major local organisations, for instance Oxfordshire County Council, Milton Park, Harwell International Business Centre and Sophos, are leading by example. The Vale as Planning Authority, when granting planning permissions for significant new commercial developments, often requires developers to provide a Travel Plan for their employees. It is therefore not surprising that the Council is committed to putting its own house in order through the development of its own travel plan.

Protecting and improving our environment and improving the quality of life for all members of our community is fundamental to the Council's Vision and Aims, and these are underpinned by a Corporate Aim: to create a cleaner, greener, safer and healthier community and environment.

The Government's Transport White paper "A New Deal for Transport: Better for Everyone", in July 1998, set out the Government's aims for transport into the 21st century. One of the key aims was to encourage travel awareness amongst employers and individuals. The White Paper introduced the Local Transport plan (LTP) process, which gave local highway authorities responsibility for developing integrated, long-term transport plans at a local level.



The Oxfordshire County Council's first LTP (2001–2006) included two specific aims which were designed to encourage greener travel:

- Dependence on travel by private car is reduced by increasing the choices available to meet transport needs;
- An increasing proportion of trips made on foot, by bicycle and by public transport.

The County Council's second LTP (2006–2011) continues to support greener travel and contains a strategy aimed at influencing travel behaviour. The strategy includes, amongst others:

- Encouraging further introduction and promotion of travel plans;
- Better provision of information for all sustainable modes of travel to assist in encouraging more sustainable travel choices;
- Parking controls and pricing mechanisms;
- Encouraging car sharing through travel plans and car clubs.

The Vale Council at its meeting 27 November 2002 adopted the framework "Towards a Transport Strategy" and in doing so committed itself to the preparation of a Green Travel Plan. The Council has declared its specific intention to seek to reduce the need to travel in the Vale, and in doing so it adopted a travelling thoughtfully policy statement which says:

**"It's not about feeling bad about using a car; it is about feeling good when you do not".**

In February 2004 the Council adopted its Sustainable Transport Strategy which contains a specific objective to produce a Travel Plan for Council employees and elected members.

The Council's Local Plan 2011 has an overall aim of finding "an acceptable balance between maintaining a thriving economy, enabling social progress which meets the needs of everyone and protecting the environment and character of the area for future generations." It contains the specific aim of reducing the need to travel and the harmful effects of traffic on people and the environment.



In September 2003 work started on researching and developing a Green Travel Plan for Vale staff and elected Members. A Travel Survey was conducted which sought to establish:

- Where people live and how they travel to work, and how often
- The extent of school drop-off journeys
- The existence of car sharing and lifts
- The reasons why people choose to drive
- The extent of business travel

The survey was supported by 82% of staff and the results were published in July 2004.



- The main findings were:
- 33% of the Vale staff live in Abingdon.
  - Walking and cycling are principally confined to people living in Abingdon.
  - Most staff living outside of Abingdon, choose to drive to work.
  - In total 76% of staff travel to work by car.
  - Other modes of travel are extremely low, particularly the number who travel by public transport (2%).
  - A large number of people said YES to requiring a car for work, then confirmed that their use was only occasional.
  - Speed, flexibility and reliability were the main reasons given for choosing to drive.
  - Generally, the school drop off trip does not appear to be a big issue.
  - In relation to public transport, 78 staff live close to a bus route which has a 30 minute (or less) service frequency.

In February 2004, the Aims and Objectives for the Vale Green Travel Plan were adopted, following formal consultation with the Staff Consultation Advisory Group. These are set out in section 4 of this Plan. In February 2005 staff and elected Members were consulted on a draft Green Travel Plan. Whilst the plan set out a wide range of measures to encourage and persuade staff to think about the way in which they travel to, from and at work, staff reaction to the plan was largely negative. The Council recognised the concerns raised by staff and as a result, produced a revised plan which contained those measures which would be less contentious to staff and which would be relatively easy to implement. In doing so the Council signalled its commitment to green travel, and to providing a platform for implementation of more difficult measures, should these be needed in the future.

In December 2005 unions at the Vale reaffirmed their commitment to green travel and confirmed their support for the revised plan.

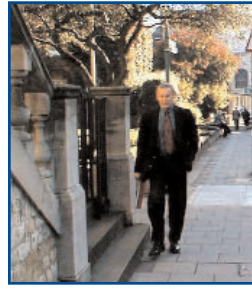
The measures contained in the first phase of the revised Vale Green Travel Plan were agreed by the Council's Executive in February 2006, and form the basis of the current document. All those involved in its development hope that the time taken to consult and seek agreement on its content has resulted in a plan which is deliverable and which focuses on outcomes rather than processes.

**AIMS:**

To encourage staff and Members of the Council to:

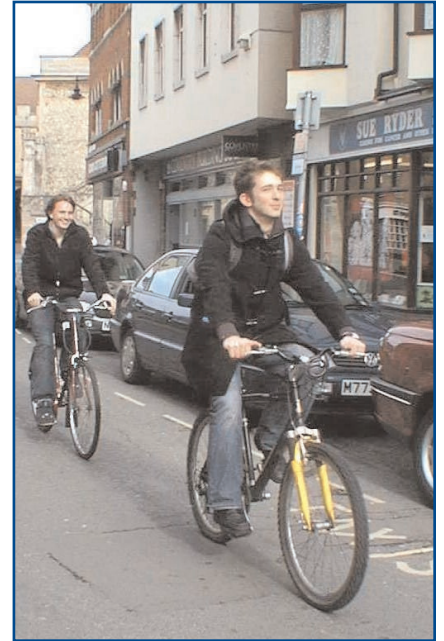
- travel in a more sustainable way; and
- reduce the number of journeys they make to, from and at work,

and, therefore help protect the environment and the quality of life in the Vale, and provide an example to others.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- a) In seeking to encourage staff and Members to, "travel in a more sustainable way"
- to increase walking and cycling by, for example, providing better cycle parking facilities, giving interest free loans to assist the purchase of cycles, providing shower facilities, etc.
  - to increase the use of public transport by, for example, giving subsidised bus passes, providing better route and timetable information, etc.
  - to reduce unnecessary journeys made by private car, in particular single occupancy journeys by, for example, promoting car sharing, extending control over staff and Member parking, etc.
- b) In seeking to "reduce the number of journeys they make to and from work"
- to increase the opportunity for home working by, for example, developing electronic home/work links, etc.
  - to encourage linked trips by, for example, better planning of out-of-office business appointments, etc.
  - to reduce the need to travel by, for example, developing video conferencing, etc.

The production and implementation of this first stage of the Vale's Green Travel Plan is in itself a significant achievement; however this is the beginning not the end of the process. The Plan is a statement of the Council's intent. It sets out the measures in phase one, both those implemented and those still being developed. However, the Council recognises that the Plan must evolve, and a phase two containing further initiatives will be brought forward in due course.



The Council acknowledges that winning the minds staff and elected Members to produce major changes in the way that people travel, model shift, will take time. Accordingly only one target has been set for the first year of the Plan, which focuses on reducing the percentage of staff commuting to work alone by car.

Indicator Reference	Description	Baseline	Target	% Change
LPI TR1	Staff commuting alone by car	185 (from 81% of staff)	176 (based on 81% return)	5%

The base line data is derived from the staff travel survey undertaken in February 2005. It is intended that a further travel survey will be undertaken in the summer of 2007.





This section of the plan looks at the measures already being implemented and those agreed for implementation in the near future. The focus of these measures is to provide incentives to encourage walking, cycling and using public transport. Furthermore, a measure will be introduced to encourage car sharing in order to reduce the number of staff travelling to work alone by car.

### **GENERAL:**

#### **TRAVEL PLAN INTRANET SITE**

An intranet site will provide access to all the latest Travel Plan information. This will be the main source of information for staff and elected Members, and the site will be regularly updated to advise people of news and progress. Details of all travel plan measures will be provided by links from this site.

#### **MANAGING YOUR BUSINESS JOURNEYS**

A good practice guide will be produced which demonstrates to staff and Members practical ways in which they can "travel thoughtfully" by better planning of their business journeys, eg. car sharing where they are travelling to the same destination, linking a number of visits into one journey, etc. Managers will be encouraged to promote good practice through their team briefings.



### **WALKING:**

Almost all journeys start and finish with a walk. Walking is clearly a vital element to any travel plan and although walking could never be a substitute for other modes of transport on some journeys, for journeys less than a mile it is often the most efficient, cheapest and healthiest way to go. The Vale, Abingdon Town and Oxfordshire County Councils have all worked to enhance the footpath network in the Abingdon area, to make walking a safer and more convenient means of travel.

#### **WALKING MAPS**

Maps showing walking routes in Abingdon and to the adjacent villages will be available on the web site.

### **PUBLIC TRANSPORT:**

Abingdon is well served by a range of good bus services, particularly the Oxford to Abingdon express route which has a 10 minute service throughout the day. This premium route will be further enhanced as the County Council rolls out its programme of real time information at bus stops. The Green Travel Plan contains a number of measures to encourage bus travel.

#### **BUS TIMETABLES**

Details of current published bus timetables, in a simplified form concentrating on the routes that are most useful to staff and members when travelling to and from Abingdon, will be available on the web site.

#### **SUBSIDISED BUS PASSES**

The Council will give a 20% subsidy to staff on home to work (return) bus passes.

#### **ABINGDON/OXFORD BUSINESS TRAVEL**

It is now a requirement that all staff and members use public transport for business journeys to and from central Oxford.

## CYCLING:

Cycling has the potential to be one of the most healthy and accessible forms of physical activity as it can often be integrated into daily life. Regular cycling has been found to lead to significant improvements in people's health. The benefits of cycling do not stop at improvements to physical health; it is also beneficial to wider public health through reduced adverse impacts associated with motor traffic. These include improving air quality and reducing noise pollution. In 1996, the Government adopted a National Cycle Strategy, with the ambitious target of quadrupling cycle trips by 2012. As with walking, the local Councils, together with other groups such as Sustrans, have worked to enhance the cycle route network in this area.

## CYCLING MAPS

Maps showing cycling routes in Abingdon as well as to Oxford and the adjacent villages will be available on the web site.

## CYCLE PURCHASE LOANS

The Council has signed up to a national cycle loan scheme which enables staff and Members to lease a new bicycle from the Vale. The cost of the new cycle will be exempt from Income Tax, National Insurance and VAT and after the lease period the cycle is purchased from the Council for a nominal sum.

## CYCLE MILEAGE ALLOWANCE

The cycle mileage allowance for local business journeys has been increased from 12p per mile, to £1-00 per mile (this equates to 82.4p per mile after tax).

## USE OF COUNCIL BICYCLES

Staff will be encouraged to use the Council's own bicycles. These will be available to staff when making local journeys.

## CYCLE PARKING

New secure cycle parking will be provided adjacent to Abbey House.

## STAFF SHOWERS

Showers have been provided adjacent to the Staff Room in Abbey House.

## STAFF LOCKERS

Lockers will be provided within Abbey House to compliment the staff showers, allowing staff to safely store their clothes and cycling equipment.



## CAR SHARING:

Stand by the road side at peak commuting times in the morning and evening and you soon observe the overwhelming fact that most cars are only occupied by a driver only. It is clear that one of the best ways to reduce the number of cars on our roads is to promote car sharing. It is encouraging that the promotion of a car share club was well supported during consultation with staff on the draft Green Travel Plan.

## CAR SHARE CLUB

The provision of an interactive web site enabling staff to advertise directly their car sharing needs and availability. Participants will be asked to sign up to the Car Share Club which would require them to car sharing for a minimum number of times per month. Members of the Car Share Club will receive preferential parking space, closer to Abbey House, and will be guaranteed a free lift home in circumstances such as, a home emergency or a late request from their senior manager to work late.



The Council's aspiration is to have a Travel Plan which reflects best practice, encourages staff and elected Members to think carefully about how they travel and to embrace the philosophy of greener travel. Those measures which the Council has committed itself to implement (phase 1) will need to be carefully monitored and adapted.

The Council will wish to consider including further measures in the plan, such as those listed below. Clearly, the success of phase 1 and the improvement targets set for future years will play an important role in determining the need for and the pace at which these additional measures are brought forward.

- Review of staff and Member parking.
- Introducing Member parking charges.
- Introducing staff parking charges.
- Removing free parking for staff and Members.



This list is by no means definitive. It does not imply that all of these measures will be put in place, nor does it exclude measures not mentioned. Particular emphasis will be placed on the cost effectiveness of new measures in terms of meeting the aims and objectives of the Green Travel Plan.

Suggestions for measures not mentioned in the Green Travel Plan will be welcomed and given appropriate consideration.

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

Document is Restricted

By virtue of paragraph(s) 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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