

Individual Decisions

The attached reports will be taken as
Individual Portfolio Member Decisions on:

26 and 30 April 2007

Ref:	Title	Member	Page No.
ID1098	West Berkshire Council's Procurement Strategy	Cllr Zverko	1
ID1361	Bucklebury Quiet Lanes	Cllr Chopping	14

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	West Berkshire Council Procurement Strategy		
Report to be considered by:	Councillor Laszlo Zverko	on:	26 April 2007
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1098		

Purpose of Report:	To present for approval the West Berkshire Council Procurement Strategy
Recommended Action:	Approval of the West Berkshire Council Procurement Strategy
Reason for decision to be taken:	Annual publication
List of other options considered:	Not applicable
Key background documentation:	The attached Strategy, The Council Plan and the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government 2003 -2006

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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The Corporate Procurement Strategy is refreshed on an annual basis. This version has changed considerably in format from last years Strategy to take into account both the new format and content of the proposed Council Plan. It also cross refers clearly with both the West Berkshire Council Plan and the milestones contained in the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government 2003-2006.
- 1.2 The new Corporate Procurement Strategy has changed emphasis to embrace the entire procurement work of the Council. It also redefines the role of the Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit in assisting services to procure goods and services that support their service plans in the most effective an efficient way. This will also generate efficiencies that will be passed on and benefit each of the services.
- 1.3 An increased emphasis has been placed on Governance, leadership and communication with the introduction of a Corporate Procurement Network that will co-ordinate and communicate the decentralised procurement activity undertaken in each service. Additionally the strategy supports increased involvement by members in procurements over £50,000 in value. This involves full consultation with both the Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holders.
- 1.4 Cleaner and Greener has been selected as one of the key priorities in the Council Plan. This strategy addresses how procurement activity and the Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit can support this agenda in promoting sustainable procurement and sustainable communities.
- 1.5 As the Council adopts a decentralised model of procurement where services are responsible for the commissioning and procurement of their own goods and services it has been recognised that there is a need to improve procurement skills across the Council. The Council will therefore identify those officers and members across the council with responsibility for procurement and put in place a skills programme to develop these people.

Appendices

Appendix A - West Berkshire Council Procurement Strategy 2007 to 2011

Appendix B - Procurement Functions Diagram

Implications

Policy:	No implications expected
Financial:	Although some of the activity outlined in the Corporate Procurement Strategy may involve additional work these duties will be absorbed within the existing roles.
Personnel:	No implications expected
Legal:	No implications expected
Environmental:	This Procurement Strategy will address issues regarding sustainability that link and compliment the council priority of Cleaner and Greener

- Equalities:** No implications expected
- Partnering:** Opportunities for joint procurements and shared services will be considered where these benefit the Council.
- Property:** No implications expected
- Risk Management:** No implications expected
- Community Safety:** No implications expected

Consultation Responses

Members:

- Leader of Council:** Considered at Management Board
- Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman:** Cllr Brooks – No comments received.
- Policy Development Commission Chairman:** No comments received.
- Ward Members:** Not applicable
- Opposition Spokesperson:** Cllr Gaines – No comments received.
- Local Stakeholders:** Not applicable
- Officers Consulted:** Corporate Board, Head of Finance, Procurement Staff
- Trade Union:** Not applicable

Is this item subject to call-in.	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix A

West Berkshire Council Procurement Strategy

2007 to 2011

This Strategy provides the future direction of the procurement work of the entire Council for the coming four years. It supports the priorities identified within the Council Plan and within individual service plans by providing direction for the procurement process for the provision of goods and services at the right time, to the right quality and at the right price. Where procurement activity is explicit in the Council Plan, the link will be indicated this Procurement Strategy.

The Council's Procurement Strategy also reflects the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government 2003-6 and takes account of the challenges posed by the government's efficiency agenda.

Background

West Berkshire Council has always considered, and where relevant adopted innovative solutions to service delivery. In June 2002 the Council formed a Strategic Support Services Partnership with a private sector company to deliver a whole range of Council services including procurement. The Council currently has shared services arrangements or shares accommodation with Berkshire West Primary Care Trust, the Thames Valley Police Force and is in the process of setting up a Children's Trust. The Council also works closely with the South East Centre of Excellence particularly in the field of Construction and is currently taking the lead on the development of a Construction Framework cluster group on behalf of several other Berkshire unitary councils. Many of our term contracts now embrace a partnership style approach and include incremental performance improvement and savings targets.

West Berkshire Council, working with GOSE, SECE and the other Berkshire authorities, has established the Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit based at Maidenhead. This unit will promote joint working between the Berkshire authorities at a strategic level on procurement and shared services issues.

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government

Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

The Council has successfully operated a devolved model of procurement, where individual Directorates and Services are responsible for their own commissioning and procurements. This commissioning activity is supported by a Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit that provides

- strategic and tactical guidance on procurement
- advice on compliance with both the Council's Contract Rules of Procedure and the EU's Public Procurement Regulations
- the publishing of notices and advertisements of procurements
- the administration of the Pre-Qualification Process
- the provision of general support to Council services throughout the tender and adjudication processes.
- advice and guidance on efficiency and savings
- central buying of goods or services common to all directorates and services
- the maintenance of supplier databases and contract registers
- liaison with the procurement units of other Council's and public bodies
- the management of several corporate contracts.

The Future

As mentioned earlier this corporate service was 'out-sourced' to the Council's Strategic Services Partner until June 2005 at which point it was brought back in-house, along with the other services. This Strategy will address how governance of the procurement process will be strengthened.

The Council intends to maintain a decentralized procurement model therefore there is a need for co-ordination and communication between the individual Directorates/Service Units and the Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit. This will also be addressed in this Strategy.

Elected members of the Council have expressed their interest in becoming more involved in procurements over £50k in value. A protocol has been developed to facilitate this and its implementation and the evaluation of its success will also form part of this strategy.

The government's efficiency agenda has a huge impact on procurement work. This Strategy will identify how the Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit will collaborate with internal services by taking part in VFM exercises, spend analysis and re-procurement activity to identify opportunities to make procurement savings that will contribute to service efficiency targets. The Council will maintain its commitment to using innovative solutions to procurements.

Efficiencies may be identified from extending our work with other authorities or outside bodies in shared or collaborative ways. The Corporate Contract and

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government

Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

Procurement Unit will play an active part in supporting any developments of joint procurements and shared service arrangements.

This strategy summarises future procurement activity into five key aims:

- Strengthen Governance, Leadership and Communication
- Improve Efficiency
- Build Capacity and Capability
- Implementing eProcurement
- Enhance delivery of Sustainability and Equality

These five key aims are developed further in the following sections of the strategy.

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government
Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

Strengthen Governance, leadership and communication

West Berkshire Council will strengthen the governance of the procurement process and provide effective leadership on procurement matters to officers and members. The Corporate Procurement Network will report to Corporate Board and the Resource Management Task Group and will comprise a representative from each Directorate, the Head of Finance and the Corporate Contract and Procurement Manager.

Additional governance will now be provided as Elected members of the Council will now be invited in a more structured way to take part in procurement exercises on contracts over £50,000 in value.

The Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit will co-ordinate communication between services on procurement issues and provide liaison with other authorities and outside bodies such as the BP&SSU, the Thames Valley Procurement Forum and the South East Centre of Excellence.

In year one, we will:

- Establish a Corporate Procurement Network of senior officers
- Report Quarterly to Corporate Board and the Resource Management Task Group
- Implement Protocol for Member involvement
- Evaluate partners for procurement collaboration using business case methodology #
- Encourage the implementation performance management and project management methodology across the organization #
- Develop a communication protocol with the community, staff and other stakeholders
- Review relationship of procurement with the Community Plan #

In year two, we will:

- Review and report on the effectiveness of governance by the Corporate Procurement Network
- Review and report on Protocol for Member involvement
- Review arrangements on procurement collaborations #

In year three, we will:

- Review and report on the effectiveness of Corporate Procurement Network
- Review and report on the Protocol for Member involvement
- Review arrangements on procurement collaborations #

In year four, we will

- Review the effectiveness of Corporate Procurement Network
- Review Protocol for Member involvement
- Review arrangements on procurement collaborations #

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government

Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

Improve Efficiency

Corporate Board with the support of the Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit will provide strategic direction and support to West Berkshire Council that will enable it to meet the demands of the government's efficiency agenda. This will involve taking part in coordinated spend analysis, VFM exercises and re-procurements that explore and evaluate opportunities to make procurement savings that will support the general efficiency of each service.

The Council will maintain its commitment to working in shared and collaborative ways and will develop strategies that allow effective supply chain management.

In year one, we will:

- Perform Health check against National Strategy
- Review time-scales from OJEU notice to award and develop policy
- Pilot procurement cards for low value purchases
- Assist services in the delivery of procurement savings that will support the general efficiency of those services #
- Develop a policy that provides a sustainable view on best value #
- Provide strategic guidance and governance regarding efficiencies relating to shared and collaborative working #
- Provide strategic guidance and practical advice on the development of Construction frameworks
- Supporting the benchmarking services

In year two, we will:

- Perform Health check against National Strategy *
- Implement policy to reduce time-scales from OJEU notice to award *
- Roll-out procurement cards for selected low value purchases *
- Develop strategy for supply chain management *
- Agree annual targets and deliver procurement savings that will support the general efficiency of services #
- Undertake cycle of VFM/efficiency reviews

In year three, we will:

- Perform Health check against National Strategy *
- Implement Supply Chain Strategy *
- Agree annual targets and deliver procurement savings that will support the general efficiency of services #
- Monitor and evaluate Supply Chain Strategy
- Undertake cycle of VFM/efficiency reviews

In year four, we will:

- Perform Health check against National Strategy *
- Agree annual targets and deliver procurement savings that will support the general efficiency of services #
- Undertake cycle of VFM/efficiency reviews

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government

Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

Build capacity and capability

The Contract and Procurement Unit will assist services in their efforts to collaborate with partners to develop more efficient services. The Unit will also investigate factors that influence the market's ability to provide capacity and develop strategies that will provide services at the right time, to the right quality and at the right price. The Unit will co-ordinate the Councils efforts to support the initiatives of SECE and the BP&SSU that will benefit the delivery of services to our community. This will include the consideration of shared services and further joint procurements.

Working in conjunction with Human Resources the Contract and Procurement Unit will provide direction on staff development issues regarding procurement to identify those individuals within the organisation who are involved in procurement activity and enable them to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to manage procurements in accordance with legislation and the constitution. This will also involve the dissemination of good practice to enable the provision of goods and services in the most efficient manner.

In year one, we will:

- Report on partnering arrangements and collaboration in Construction * #
- Co-ordinate active involvement with the South East Centre of Excellence
- Investigate and report on possibility of shared services * #
- Implement framework agreements for Construction Consultants
- Assist the development of framework agreements for Construction Works
- Design and implement a staff development programme for all employees of WBC to improve procurement skills #

In year two, we will:

- Report on partnering arrangements and collaboration in Construction * #
- Co-ordinate active involvement with South East Centre of Excellence *
- Investigate and report on possibility of shared services * #
- Evaluate and report on framework agreements for Construction Consultants * #
- Assist the implementation of framework agreements for Construction Works *
- Monitor and evaluate staff development programme and embed good practice *

In year three, we will:

- Co-ordinate active involvement with the South East Centre of Excellence *
- Investigate and report on possibility of shared services * #
- Evaluate and report on framework agreements for Construction Contracts *

In year four, we will

- Co-ordinate active involvement with the South East Centre of Excellence *
- Investigate and report on possibility of shared services * #

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government

Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

Implementing eProcurement

The use of information technology can improve communication, produce procurement savings and deliver process efficiencies. The Contract and Procurement Unit will provide the strategic guidance to the Council on IT initiatives that will provide best value.

In year one, we will:

- Advise all significant contracts on Mytenders portal
- Investigate the practicalities of using the SECE portal
- Prepare business case/feasibility for e-Marketplace *
- Develop the procurement function of Agresso
- Develop and implement procurement communication policy
- Pilot procurement cards
- Advise on the development of the Council's Transformational Government policy

In year two, we will:

- Review advertising contracts on Mytenders portal *
- Review strategy for e-Marketplace *
- Continually develop procurement function of Agresso
- Review procurement communication policy
- Review pilot on procurement cards and roll out

In year three, we will:

- Review strategy for e-Marketplace *
- Continually develop procurement function of Agresso
- Review procurement communication policy

In year four, we will

- Review strategy for e-Marketplace *
- Continually develop procurement function of Agresso
- Review procurement communication policy

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government

Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

Enhance delivery of Sustainability and Equality

West Berkshire Council is firmly committed to sustainability. The Council will provide leadership and develop strategies on sustainability that will shape the future pattern of procurements. This will include supporting services in the development and use of whole life costing techniques, the improvement in the use of energy, the evaluation of new technologies, the use of recycled goods, the use of locally produced goods and the use of the local community in order to deliver sustainable services. The Corporate Contract and Procurement Unit will provide advice on how procurement can assist the Council Plan priority of making West Berkshire Cleaner and Greener.

The Contract and Procurement Unit will continue to monitor the involvement of various groups in our supply chain and advise on strategies to rectify issues or trends. This will include encouraging greater partnership involvement with voluntary and charitable organizations.

In year one, we will:

- Develop WBC Sustainable Procurement Policy * #
- Link in to Cleaner and Greener initiatives #
- Review Concordat with the voluntary sector * #
- Give bidders the opportunity to specify community benefits as part of tendering * #
- Review and report on equality issues * #
- Review Concordat for SMEs * #
- Run annual meet the buyer events for SMEs and BMEs #

In year two, we will:

- Implement WBC Sustainable Procurement Policy * #
- Link procurement into Cleaner and Greener initiatives #
- Review and report on equality issues *
- Run annual meet the buyer events for SMEs and BMEs #

In year three, we will:

- Review WBC Sustainable Procurement Policy * #
- Link in to Cleaner and Greener initiatives #
- Review and report on equality issues *
- Run annual meet the buyer events for SMEs and BMEs #

In year four, we will

- Review WBC Sustainable Procurement Policy * #
- Link in to Cleaner and Greener initiatives #
- Review and report on equality issues *
- Run annual meet the buver events for SMEs and BMEs #

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government

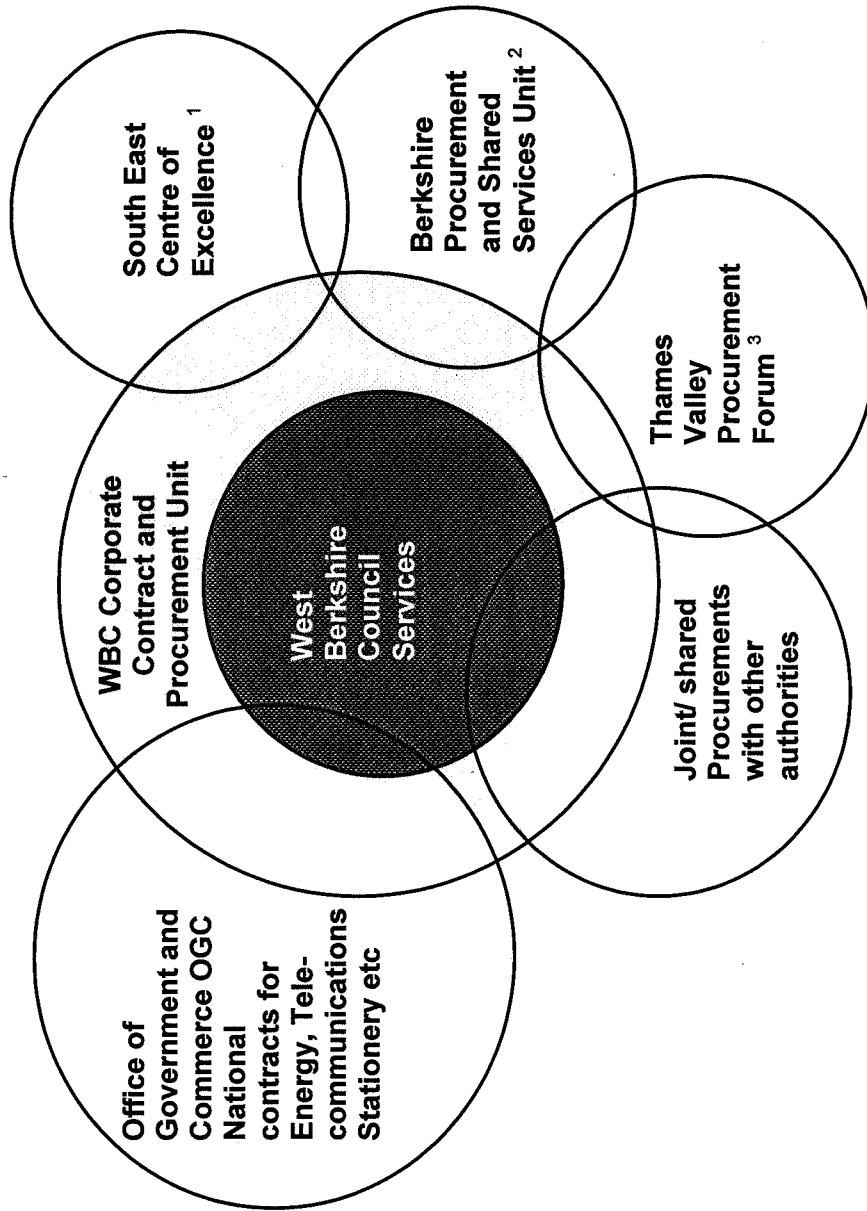
Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

The West Berkshire Council Procurement Strategy will be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis.

* Milestones from the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government
Links to the West Berkshire Council Plan

Appendix B

Procurement functions diagram for West Berkshire Council showing our various partners



Key

- ¹ South East Centre of Excellence - Government procurement best practice agency
- ² Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit - based at Maidenhead, funded by SECE and GOSE
- ³ Thames Valley Procurement Forum - Berkshire procurement managers plus neighbours, Police and Fire Services

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Bucklebury Quiet Lanes		
Report to be considered by:	Councillor Keith Chopping	on:	30th April 2007
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1361		

Purpose of Report:

To inform the Executive Member for Planning and Highways of the responses received during the statutory and public consultation on the proposal to designate a number of rural roads in Bucklebury as Quiet Lanes and to seek approval of officer recommendations.

Recommended Action:

That the Executive Member resolves to approve the recommendations as set out in section 4 of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken:

To enable the Bucklebury Quiet Lanes project to be progressed to implementation.

List of other options considered:

Not applicable.

Key background documentation:

- The Quiet Lanes and Home Zones (England) Regulations 2006.
- Plan Nos. TM/15/002 and TM/15/003.
- Consultation letter AD/MS/L13_1711/TM12 dated 23rd March 2007.

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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The 'Quiet Lanes' initiative is a national scheme intended to encourage more considerate driving along designated roads and promote greater use of country lanes by horse riders, cyclists and walkers, whilst maintaining essential access by motor vehicles.
- 1.2 A number of rural roads in Bucklebury Parish were considered suitable for the Quiet Lanes project in West Berkshire due to their physical characteristics and a close network of public rights of way which would be complemented by Quiet Lanes.
- 1.3 Initial informal consultation commenced in February 2006 when the matter was discussed with the Parish Council. Local residents were initially informed of the proposal through publication in the village magazine 'The Oaks' in April 2006. This was followed by a presentation to the Parish Council in May 2006.
- 1.4 Statutory consultation and advertisement on the proposal to introduce Quiet Lanes was undertaken between 8th and 29th March 2007. A letter detailing the principles of the scheme together with a plan of the area was also distributed to all properties on the roads included in the scheme.

2. Responses to statutory consultation

- 2.1 At the end of the statutory consultation and advertisement period a total of five responses had been received. Of these, four respondents were opposed to the proposals and one made a general comment stating that it was a token effort that would be ignored by inconsiderate drivers but did not indicate for or against.
- 2.2 All four objectors commented that they considered the proposals would result in unwelcome additional roads signs and road markings in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the scheme should therefore not be progressed.
- 2.3 Two of the objectors also objected to the cost of the scheme and considered that the budget allocated to this project could be better spent on road maintenance on the roads in question and keeping the area free of litter.
- 2.4 One objector was also concerned that no funds were allocated to the future maintenance of the scheme and there would be no lasting benefit. Comments were also made regarding a lack of accident history to justify such a scheme and that the nature of the road itself indicated that it was a 'Quiet Lane' and no further treatment should be required to point this out to drivers.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 There has been significant consultation on these proposals which has resulted in a relatively low response to the consultation.
- 3.2 Although there will be some additional traffic management measures introduced to the lanes as part of this scheme, their design will be sympathetic to the rural surroundings. The signs and road markings are a necessary and integral part of the scheme and would highlight to drivers that the road is different to roads of a similar nature in that they may see an increased use by slow moving and vulnerable traffic and should adjust their driving accordingly.

- 3.3 The budget for the introduction of Quiet Lanes is part of the approved Capital programme. If the scheme is introduced, the signs and road marking Maintenance Programme would be responsible for ensuring that the traffic signs and road markings are replaced or refurbished as appropriate.
- 3.4 Whilst there have been only three traffic accidents in the last three years on the roads subject to this proposal, all resulting in slight personal injury, this scheme is not intended to specifically address particular accident sites. The scheme is designed to highlight to drivers a change in the nature of the potential road users of Quiet Lanes when compared to roads with similar characteristics, so that drivers can anticipate hazards and adjust their driving accordingly.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 It is recommended that the proposed restrictions be introduced as advertised and that the objectors be informed accordingly.
- 4.2 That the objectors be informed accordingly.

Appendices

None

Implications

Policy:	The consultation is in accordance with the Council's Consultation procedures.
Financial:	The implementation of the physical works will be funded from the approved Capital Programme. The costs of the Statutory Consultation and Traffic Regulation Order processes are funded from the Capital Programme.
Personnel:	None arising from this report.
Legal:	The sealing of the Traffic Regulation Order will be undertaken by Legal Services.
Environmental:	The proposals will be sympathetic to the local rural environment.
Equalities:	None arising from this report
Partnering:	The Council is working in partnership with the Parish Council to ensure that the project operates as it should.
Property:	None arising from this report.
Risk Management:	None arising from this report.
Community Safety:	None arising from this report.

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: Unable to contact Councillor Graham Jones however any comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.

Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman: Unable to contact Councillor Jeff Brooks however any comments will be verbally reported when the decision is made.

Policy Development Commission Chairman: N/A

Ward Members: Councillors Graham Pask and Quentin Webb are happy to support the recommended action.

Opposition Spokesperson: Councillor Keith Woodhams is happy with the recommended action provided that the ward members support the proposals.

Local Stakeholders: Have been consulted as part of the public and statutory consultation process.

Officers Consulted: Mark Edwards, Mark Cole, Andrew Garratt.

Trade Union: Not applicable.

Is this item subject to call-in.	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
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