

Agenda



Listening Learning Leading

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A MEETING OF THE

Cabinet

WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY 4 DECEMBER 2014 AT 6.00 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNCIL OFFICES, CROWMARSH GIFFORD

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Members of the Cabinet

Member	Portfolio
Anna Badcock	Cabinet Member for housing
David Dodds	Cabinet Member for waste, parks and Thame
Lynn Lloyd	Cabinet member for IT, HR, legal and technical services
Judith Nimmo-Smith	Cabinet Member for health, community safety and central parishes
Angie Paterson	Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for planning policy & customer services
Bill Service	Cabinet Member for leisure and Didcot
John Cotton (Chairman)	Leader of the Council, Cabinet member for Corporate Strategy, Economic Devt & Wallingford
Elizabeth Gillespie	Cabinet member for development, building control, grants and the northern parishes
Will Hall	Cabinet member for finance
Robert Simister	Cabinet member for property, technical services and southern parishes

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ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC PRESENT

Reports considered with the public present are available on the council's website.

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest**
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting - 9 October 2014**
- 4 Public participation**

CABINET DECISION

- 5 Future of corporate services** (Pages 5 - 40)

To consider the strategic director's report.

- 6 Review of mixed recycling bring sites** (Pages 41 - 46)

Purpose: to consider the results of the recent consultation with regards to removing the mixed recycling bulk bins at bring sites and confirm the course of action.

- 7 Car park fees and charges** (Pages 47 - 68)

To consider the report of the head of IT, HR and technical services.

- 8 Oxfordshire LEADER Project** (Pages 69 - 104)

To consider the head of economy, leisure and property's report.

- 9 Business rate pooling and business rate distribution** (Pages 105 - 110)

Purpose: to provide delegated authority to the head of finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance in respect of annual decisions about collaborating with other nearby local authorities on business rates arrangements.

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

10 Council tax base (Pages 111 - 114)

To consider the head of finance's report.

11 Council tax reduction scheme grant to towns and parishes
(Pages 115 - 120)

To consider the head of finance's report.

MARGARET REED

Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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Joint Cabinet report



Report of Strategic Director

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Wards affected: All (indirectly)

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To: CABINET

DATE: 4 December 2014

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DATE: 5 December 2014

Future delivery of corporate services

Recommendations

The Cabinets are recommended to:

- (a) confirm the following services should be jointly market-tested in 2015: revenues, benefits and associated financial services in the current contract; accountancy, internal audit, land charges, licensing, debt recovery legal activity, car park administration, data capture, human resources, street naming and numbering, IT applications support, IT helpdesk, IT infrastructure support, IT security, facilities management, procurement, engineering and property services.
- (b) confirm that the following services should not be jointly market tested in 2015, but included in the procurement as potential future contract additions: canteen, democratic services, professional legal services, mobile home parks management, CCTV operations, public conveniences cleaning and treasury management.
- (c) approve two service package procurements, being one package comprising 'citizen, corporate, support services', and, one package comprising 'technical, asset and location-based services'.

- (d) delegate authority to the Strategic Director in consultation with the leaders to approve the details of the joint procurement strategy.
- (e) delegate authority to the Strategic Director in consultation with the leaders to negotiate an agreement with other council partners and to approve it.

Purpose of Report

1. The financial services contract expires in July 2016 and officers are about to start preparing for that major procurement exercise. The existing contract has brought the councils many benefits and financial savings. Following the Cabinets' decisions in October, draft service specifications have been completed and our consultant has worked with our partner councils and the market to assess procurement options. This report proposes the final list of services which should be market tested, sets out the optimal joint procurement strategy and recommends inter-council governance arrangements.
2. At this stage Cabinet is being asked to agree to market test, not commit now to an outsourcing of, a range of services. Appropriate consultation processes (as advised by the external legal advisors) will be undertaken following the confirmation of the project scope, together with the sets of potential service requirements and standards.

Corporate Objectives

3. This report addresses the corporate priority both councils have of managing our business effectively and of providing value for money services that meet the needs of our residents and service users.
4. 'Value for money' is measured by comparing quality with cost/price. The councils continually strive to improve the value for money offered to residents and service users by assessing alternative ways to deliver services which may achieve higher quality and/or lower cost. The re-tendering of the financial services contract, and its expansion to encompass other corporate services, provides the greatest potential opportunity for the councils to significantly improve value for money in the foreseeable future.

Background

5. The local government financial landscape is changing as the government seeks to substantially reduce public sector spending. Government grant formula has changed from a needs basis to an incentive basis. The recent windfalls in New Homes Bonus may be curtailed after next year's general election which would cause medium term financial pressures to South and Vale councils, as well as many other councils. To stay 'ahead of the curve' the Strategic Management Board is looking to use every opportunity to make further efficiency savings without cutting frontline services.
6. South and Vale have a successful track record of sharing services and undertaking joint procurements which now provide some of our best ever service delivery performance and save the councils over £4 million annually.

7. For the past year members of the Strategic Management Board have been assessing the market's appetite for delivering the councils' corporate services. Officers have also been exploring opportunities to involve other district councils.
8. Since January, when officers briefed cabinet members on progress, three other district councils have expressed an interest in procuring corporate services jointly with us. The market research and a recent successful 'suppliers day' have confirmed the potential to secure substantial improvements in value for money if a broader range of services are offered alongside revenues and benefits.
9. In order to commence a formal joint procurement and to agree partnering arrangements with the other councils, the cabinets are asked to approve the recommendations above.

Options

10. In reaching this point, the Strategic Management Board has considered the following three options.
11. **Option 1 (outsource nothing):** An option is to insource financial services and for the councils to deliver all corporate services themselves. Most of the £600,000 annual savings and the resilience benefits generated from outsourcing those services eighteen (South)/eight (Vale) years ago would be reversed. The councils would take back the significant operational risks. For these reasons the Strategic Management Board has not pursued this option and the Cabinets rejected this option at their October meetings.
12. **Option 2 (outsource the same):** The 'status quo' option would be for South and Vale to simply re-tender the financial services which have already been outsourced. These services comprise:
 - Council tax and non-domestic rates collection
 - Benefits administration
 - Accounts receivable and payable
 - Payroll
 - Integrated financial management information system
 - Cashier services
 - Customer contact services (front of house and switchboard)
13. This option represents low risk. Re-tendering would provide an opportunity for further service investment, efficiencies and financial savings. However market research has confirmed that these benefits would be on a modest scale given the significant investment and efficiencies already achieved by the current contractor, Capita. Without additional council volumes there would be no scope for greater economies of scale. If this option is pursued, cabinet members are asked to insource the provision of the financial management system as its separation from the accountancy service has caused problems. The cost of procuring a new

system (approximately £0.5 million across the two councils, plus annual support) would need to be budgeted for.

14. At their October meetings the Cabinets confirmed the intention to market test a broader range of services, thereby rejecting this option.

15. **Option 3 (outsource more):** The Strategic Management Board considers that there is potential benefit in outsourcing an additional range of services to those covered in option one. This view was endorsed by the Cabinets at their October meetings. The services are examined in the section below.

The services

16. additional to the already outsourced revenues, benefits, and associated financial services, council customer services and switchboard were originally proposed by the Strategic Management Board:

- car park administration
- engineering/drainage
- legal
- facilities management
- IT security
- land charges
- canteen operation
- IT helpdesk
- licensing
- human resources
- data capture
- accountancy
- IT applications support
- street naming
- internal audit
- IT infrastructure support
- CCTV operation
- Property services (added by Cabinets)
- procurement
- democratic services

17. The optimum scope of services depends upon a number of factors such as market appetite, synergies, potential for scale efficiencies and the ability to deploy new technologies to achieve improvements in quality/efficiency of services. Our project consultant has compiled an evidence base through consultation with potential suppliers ('market engagement'). His detailed draft report is appended to this report (appendix B), which will be firmed up as the procurement strategy and inter-council agreement discussions are concluded in the coming months in accordance with recommendations (d) and (e).

18. Our consultant recommends the exclusion of democratic services, legal services and canteen operations from the joint procurement as they are markedly different to the remaining services, unlikely to be of interest to the suppliers attracted by the remaining services. The professional legal advice services are less transactional and less repetitive than many of the other services and outsourcing companies have been unable to demonstrate the potential for significant value for money improvements over in-house provision. Their inclusion in the procurement could even put off some suppliers and compromise the benefits arising from the exercise. The Strategic Management Board shares this view, although recommend retaining in-scope the debt recovery legal activity which is more repetitive.

19. Our consultant also recommends the exclusion of other services in the same service area - general/taxi licensing, debt recovery work and land charges – for the same reasons. However, the Strategic Management Board believes these smaller services are more transactional in nature and would attract market interest. Being more repetitive and transactional the Strategic Management Board believes they could be provided more cost-effectively by an outsourcing company and they should therefore be market tested.
20. The mobile home parks management service, being delivered by one full time equivalent and requiring onsite physical presence, is unlikely to contribute significant value for money improvements and would not be cost-effective to take forward. This service, as well as CCTV operations and public conveniences cleaning are not of interest to our three council partners, therefore are not going to contribute significant volumes to the joint contract. In addition the CCTV operations are subject to a Thames Valley Police review and we need to retain flexibility of service delivery to facilitate their wider area solution. For these reasons the Strategic Management Board recommends that these services should be excluded from the procurement exercise.
21. The in-house treasury management team invests hundreds of millions of pounds of the councils’ financial balances and annually outperforms the councils’ previous outsourced fund managers. The higher investment returns are used to fund high quality service delivery and projects. To outsource the function would probably reduce the councils’ investment income streams which would cause budget pressures. To avoid this the Strategic Management Board recommends not outsourcing the service, therefore it should be excluded from market testing. Instead, the councils should discuss with other partner councils the merits of providing this as a shared in-house service to all five councils.
22. Taking all of the above into account, and for the avoidance of doubt, the Strategic Management Board recommends market testing the following services alongside the already outsourced financial services:

Services to be included in market testing

- revenues, benefits and other currently outsourced services
- procurement
- street naming and numbering
- car park administration
- engineering/drainage
- land charges
- facilities management
- IT security
- licensing
- human resources
- Property services
- accountancy
- IT applications support
- IT helpdesk
- internal audit
- IT infrastructure support
- data capture
- debt recovery legal activity

23. The Strategic Management Board recommends removing the following services from the scope of the project, in other words not market testing them:

<u>Services to be excluded</u>	<u>Reason for exclusion</u>
• canteen operation	Different market to the main outsourcing suppliers, physical onsite presence required (paragraph 17 above)
• democratic services	Different market to the main outsourcing suppliers (paragraph 17 above)
• professional legal services	Different market to the main outsourcing suppliers (paragraph 17 above)
• mobile home parks management	Small service, physical onsite presence required, low prospect of value improvement, no interest from partner councils (paragraph 19)
• CCTV operation	Physical onsite presence required, retain flexibility ahead of Thames Valley Police review, no interest from partner councils (paragraph 19)
• public convenience cleaning	Different market to the main outsourcing suppliers, Physical onsite presence required, no interest from partner councils (paragraph 19)
• treasury management	In-house function demonstrably outperforms external fund managers, seek to create shared client-side service (paragraph 20)

24. Whilst the services under paragraph 23 above would not be subject to market testing during 2015, the Strategic Management Board recommends including them in the procurement advert, to provide the option of adding them to the contract at a later date should circumstances change and that option becomes more attractive.

Procurement strategy

25. Our consultant has identified that the services recommended for market testing fall into two packages, each package attractive to a specific market of interested suppliers:

Citizen, corporate and support services (professional support services)

- revenues, benefits and other currently outsourced services

Technical, asset and location-based services

- car park administration

- human resources
- IT applications support
- IT infrastructure support
- procurement
- IT security
- IT helpdesk
- data capture
- street naming and numbering
- land charges
- licensing
- accountancy
- internal audit
- facilities management
- engineering/drainage
- property services

26. It is proposed that these two service packages should be market tested as two parallel procurements. This will appeal to the two different markets, ensuring best package proposals by the two separate groups of suppliers.

27. The market engagement exercise has also identified that the larger outsourcing suppliers may also be attracted to a more sophisticated 'managing agent' model where they act as prime contractor for delivering all services in both packages, but commission specialist 'best of breed' suppliers for certain services. Officers would structure the procurements and tender documents to allow for individual package tenders as well as aggregated managing agent tenders. This will test whether one model offers greater benefit (and lower risk) over the other.

28. The consultant has started to work with other council partners and lead officers to design other elements of the procurement strategy including the specific EU procurement route (likely to be a form of competitive dialogue), the form of contract, length of contract period, and the clienting arrangements. These need to be agreed and approved in the next two months ahead of the formal procurement exercise commencing early in 2015. In order to allow ongoing negotiations across the five councils and to avoid delays in obtaining the necessary approvals, it is recommended that the cabinets delegate authority to the strategic director in consultation with both leaders to approve the procurement strategy. Details will also be discussed at the project board meetings which both leaders and the chief executive attend.

Inter-council governance arrangements

29. South and Vale councils have earlier contract re-tender deadlines and have therefore proposed much of the project arrangements up to this point. It is vitally important that all five councils feel equal partners in any joint procurement exercise. That includes agreeing joint governance (decision-making) arrangements, risk-sharing and bearing fair shares of the financial burden. It is proposed that an agreement be agreed by all council partners in the next four months to cover the various mutually binding commitments needed to proceed through to contract.
30. It is recommended that the cabinets delegate authority to the strategic director in consultation with both leaders to negotiate the agreement with other council partners and to approve it.

Financial Implications

31. When financial services were last re-tendered eight years ago together with the creation of a joint client team, South achieved annual savings of over £400,000 and Vale saved £240,000 per annum. The one-off cost of the procurement in consultancy fees was approximately £125,000. This excludes the cost of officer time which was a 'sunk' cost.
32. The cost of consultancy this time will vary according to the breadth of services and number of councils involved. The technical consultant has been appointed on a flexible contract allowing South and Vale to flex the cost according to available budget. The existing budget of £100,000 will be utilised this financial year. Additional budget will be required for external legal expertise, which is the subject of a 2015/16 budget growth bid. These costs will be shared with other participating council partners. In addition, the councils have successfully won £125,000 of the government's Transformation Challenge Award (TCA) bid this year. Given these uncertainties the total cost of procurement to each of South and Vale councils will vary between £25,000 and £63,000, plus legal costs.
33. This one-off cost should be compared with the potential annual savings arising from the procurement. If South and Vale were simply to re-tender financial services, without the involvement of other councils, it is likely that the market would provide modest additional savings compared to current contract prices. Any contractor would inherit high-performing services which benefit from the previous investments and efficiencies introduced by Capita. These modest savings would be enhanced by the economies of scale available from other councils' service volumes. (This saving could be outweighed by the cost of procuring a new financial management system given the cabinet decisions in October to synchronise the responsibilities of financial staff with financial software.)
34. The market has confirmed that a joint procurement of broader service mixes presents unique opportunities for multiple services across multiple councils. The scale and volume of services would attract great market interest and investment proposals from tenderers which could lead to a step-change in both service investment and efficiency savings. For the purpose of the TCA bid officers have suggested a savings target of £4.5 million over the ten year contract life, which is very modest. The flexibility offered by broader joint procurements means that the

councils are not committing to outsourcing any services until tenders are received and until any increased value is tested. Therefore, in the unlikely event that additional savings are not available, the councils could choose to simply award a financial services contract.

35. Staff engagement is a key aspect. Teams will be encouraged (though not pressured) to consider introducing further 'lean' improvements to their services, restructuring, streamlining, rationalisation and budget cuts in the run-up to market testing in order to be as cost-efficient as possible and delivering to the same levels of quality and volume by the time the market's value for money proposals are compared with in-house service value for money. In practice this is likely to drive further efficiencies even if ultimately councillors decide to retain services in-house rather than outsource them. So the process itself as well as the specific outcomes should deliver value for money improvements.

Legal Implications

36. The council must comply with EU procurement regulations to secure competitive tenders and to minimise the risk of challenge. The appointed consultant, our procurement officers, in-house legal and external legal advisors will advise on a compliant and successful procurement exercise. The procurement strategy, which will set out our approach, will be discussed with leaders, the project board and approved in due course.
37. Partnering with other councils besides South-Vale introduces added complexity and risks, which are likely to require new legal agreements between all councils and strong governance arrangements, starting with an inter-council agreement in early 2015.
38. Should the council choose to outsource any in-house services there will be further complexities and liabilities such as arising from the transfer of staff to the preferred contractor. Any resulting issues and risks will be identified through the process, reported to councillors and mitigated/managed through the development of the new outsourcing contract.

Risks

39. This will be a major procurement and project with significant risks arising. The consultant and strategic director will be responsible for managing and mitigating the risks in accordance with well-established risk management and project management toolkits. The following risks have already been identified and will be added to throughout the project:
- Political/reputational – that the project attracts negative publicity (mitigate by regular updates to politicians via the strategic management board and project board)
 - Professional – that by outsourcing certain professional skills, the partners lose that expertise in-house (mitigate by each partner carefully assessing the outsourcing of each service and ensuring contractual provision of such services)

- Value – that the tenders are higher cost, the project savings targets and/or specified service standards are not achieved (mitigate by carefully drafting the specification and draft contract, choice of procurement route to provide flexibility, establishing accurate cost base on which to benchmark tender costs, identifying volumes, thorough consideration of risk allocation - ultimately the councils can choose not to accept any tender that does not offer better value for money)
- Legal – challenge possibly due to breach of procurement regulations (mitigate by inclusion of procurement and external legal expertise on project team to ensure compliance)
- Partnership – that the partnership breaks down and we fail to agree single specifications (mitigate by upfront acknowledgement of equal partner status and collective acceptance of compromise, chief executives and leaders on the project board to escalate and resolve disagreements, partnership spirit embraced by all, clear inter-council agreement)
- Staffing – the uncertainties around job security and long term prospects may cause some staff to look elsewhere and resign rather than be TUPE-transferred to an outsourcing company. This could disrupt service delivery causing extra management pressures, for example reduced responsiveness (mitigate by staff representation on the project team, frequent communication, staff involvement at three influential stages and the parallel delivery of a separate change support programme to support teams and individuals)

Other implications

40. This procurement is a major project giving rise to many implications over the next two years which cannot be adequately covered here. It will be managed in accordance with the council's project management process, including strong governance in the form of a project board comprising the leaders and chief executives of participating councils, as well as a multi-disciplinary project team under the direction of the technical consultant, with a lead strategic director being held accountable for the project's success.
41. The strategic director will ensure any major implications are escalated to the project board and/or cabinets for resolution as required. The project timescales are set out below.
42. The councils' Equalities Officer has assisted the strategic director by undertaking an equalities impact assessment on the potential changes arising from outsourcing more corporate services (appendix A to this report). The equalities officer has made recommendations in the draft service specifications to ensure that the relevant equality elements are included. This will help to ensure compliance with the public sector equality duties of the Equality Act 2010. Discussion will take place with council partners to agree mitigating actions to reduce the impact relating to relocating staff..

Project timescales

43. The main project milestones are summarised below:

Jan – June 2014 :	market research and identification of potential council partners
July :	staff briefing
July – Aug:	pros and cons appraisal of market-testing in-house services
October :	cabinets to endorse approach
Oct – Dec :	services write detailed specifications consultant engages market consultant and procurement officers formulate procurement options
December :	cabinets to finalise services to be market tested and approve procurement approach (this report)
Jan 2015:	services finalise specifications approve procurement strategy
Jan – Nov 2015 :	procurement exercise in-house services prepare for market testing and comparison
March:	approve inter-council agreement
Nov – Dec 2015 :	tender evaluation and comparison with in-house services
Jan – Mar 2016 :	cabinets to award contract and decide which, if any, in-house services to outsource in the contract
Mar – July 2016 :	prepare transition to new contract at South-Vale including any staff transfers
August 2016 :	South and Vale new contract commences
Early 2017 :	prepare transition to new contract at other councils including any staff transfers
Mid - late 2017 :	other councils new contract commences

Conclusion

44. The re-tendering of the financial services contract is the single largest opportunity in the next five years to achieve a major step-change in council value for money. By market-testing a broader range of corporate services alongside the re-tendering of financial services, in partnership with other councils, we expect to secure

substantial efficiency savings, improve resilience and secure ongoing service quality.

45. What we are setting out to achieve as described in this report is ambitious and pushes the boundaries of outsourcing, both in terms of the range of services covered and the number of partners involved. But the potential rewards are substantial, both financial and reputational. Both councils have always been at the forefront of innovation in service delivery and have seen how effective outsourcing can deliver financial and service quality benefits. This is the opportunity to move to the next level.

46. If the cabinets agree the list of services as set out in the recommendations officers can prepare the detailed procurement strategy and agreement, to be agreed with partner councils, in order to conduct the formal procurement during 2015 as set out in the above timetable.

Background Papers

None

Equality Act 2010 and human rights check

SERVICE NAME: CORPORATE STRATEGY

- Is this review:
- covering a function/service for **South only**
 - covering a function/service for **Vale only**
 - Yes covering a function/service across **both councils**

Briefly outline the changes you are proposing:

With less grant funding, council tax capping and New Homes Bonus money possibly disappearing, we need to be as innovative and resilient as we've ever been to keep us ahead of the curve and continue to find substantial savings without having to cut services or make redundancies. We want to be proactive & positive now rather than reactive and cutting later.

What we are looking to do

With the end of Capita contract in sight we want to use this as an opportunity to test the market for alternative service delivery that offers better value for money than our traditional in-house delivery. We would also be looking to:

- add other services to financial services
- add other councils to drive up volumes and get greater economies of scale work with the other councils to create joint clientside for associated services not being market tested
- there has been no decision to outsource any services other than those already outsourced. But SMB intention to market test a much broader range of transactional services
- if the market responds with better value for money offer than our in-house service, then SMB is likely to recommend outsourcing those services too
- single contractor for the services/councils. But each service will be 'a lot' individual councils can choose to outsource or not, depending upon their respective value for money assessments and political appetite
- a bid for TCA funding (Transformation Challenge Award - the grant pots which DCLG introduced last year, some of which we were awarded for The Big Move) and consultancy support.

Equality Act duty	Yes/No	Impact or notes to demonstrate compliance
<p>Will any changes to the service or policy directly or indirectly discriminate against people who are protected by the Act¹ and eliminate harassment?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The proposals would not directly or indirectly discriminate against particular groups as this decision is a proportionate means to meet a legitimate aim. The councils need to be innovative and resilient to ensure it can still deliver quality services and balance their budgets and take positive proactive steps now, rather than reactive and cutting later.</p> <p><u>Staff impact</u> If a service is outsourced some staff may face relocation or redundancy. Staff affected would TUPE transfer to the successful organisation retaining all major terms and conditions (grade, salary, working hours, right to enhanced redundancy, continuous service etc). A few minor terms (such as pay date) may change. It is very likely that the company which wins the contract will be very large national or Multi national service organisation, much larger than South-Vale. Therefore it will offer far greater job opportunities if staff wished to try something new and more promotion prospects to progress their career.</p> <p>If the new employer suggests relocating a job an unreasonable distance from the member of staffs' current workplace, they will be offered the choice of re-locating or redundancy on your council-enhanced redundancy terms.</p> <p>A long and carefully-managed transfer plan, including detailed consultation with staff, would commence after the January-March 2016 outsourcing decision in the months leading up to 1 August 2016 transfer date. Staff would not be forced to move and if chose not to be relocated by a new employer would be made redundant.</p> <p><u>Negative impact of relocating staff</u> It may not be possible for staff to relocate particularly if the new place of work is outside of South Oxfordshire or the Vale of White Horse at one of the other council offices in (Hart</p>

¹ Protected characteristics 'age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation' marriage and civil partnership applies to discrimination but not to advancing equality of opportunity

Equality Act duty	Yes/No	Impact or notes to demonstrate compliance
		<p>District Council & Havant Borough Council in Hampshire and Mendip District Council in Somerset). Staff with child care or caring commitments, without access to their own vehicle or who have children at school will be affected the most. Their partners work may also impact upon where the member of staff could relocate to, particularly if their partner is the main income earner.</p> <p>Child care or caring responsibilities if based in a new location</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff with children at school may not want to move if the decision was taken to locate the services at Havant DC in Hampshire or Mendip DC in Somerset – due to the impact it would have on their children’s education and family support networks etc (Hart DC may be commutable for some, but the impact identified below on child care arrangements or access to transport would still apply) • Staff with children who’s partner is the main income earner may not feel it possible to move due to cost implications/financial viability • Due to increase in distance to travel the parent/carer may need to consider changing their child care arrangements. This can take time and is really important for the person to be happy / confident with their provider, particularly given that some staff may have already had to do this when moving to Crowmarsh recently. • There may also be cost implications of changing their child care arrangements that could impact on their decision to remain working at the council. • Staff may need to negotiate hours or days that they work in order to meet any new child care arrangements, stay with their current provider or to continue providing care for a relative/partner – due to distance they will need to travel. <p>Staff without access to a vehicle/rely on public transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff may need to negotiate hours or days that they work in order to use public transport – due to distance they will need to travel. • Cost of longer journey may also impact on their decision to remain working at the council if they are relocated. • Alternatively, staff may need to purchase another vehicle if they currently do not need a vehicle to get to work.

Equality Act duty	Yes/No	Impact or notes to demonstrate compliance
		<p>Other SMB and other senior managers whose roles disappear in a smaller structure will be at risk of redundancy, without any option to transfer. There does not appear to be any particular equality impact on staffing groups (i.e. all women/part time, however majority of middle managers are women). It will be important to ensure that the roles that disappear do not mean a drop in service that then impact on vulnerable customers.</p> <p>Customers Frontline services which require face to face interaction with residents will locate some staff locally. Services that require a physical presence for internal customers will similarly locate staff locally. The following services will be market tested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenues and benefits • Customer services • Car park administration • Facilities mgt • Engineering/drainage • IT security, applications support, infrastructure support, helpdesk • Data capture • Street naming and numbering • Land charges • Licensing • Debt recovery legal activity • HR • Accountancy • Internal audit • Procurement • Property services

Equality Act duty	Yes/No	Impact or notes to demonstrate compliance
<p>Have reasonable adjustments been made for people with disabilities to ensure they can use the service? This might mean treating disabled people better than non-disabled people in order to meet their needs</p>		<p>Outsourcing any service areas should not impact on the disabled person’s ability to access the service. Services that require face to face interaction will continue to be delivered locally. Services delivered from another location via telephone, letter and online will need to ensure they comply with the councils translation and interpretation policy, e.g. staff know how to use typetalk and letters continue to promote this, letters available in alternative formats if requested, websites to meet AA accessibility standards.</p> <p>We will assess whether any physical changes are required to the buildings for customers and staff locally as the new structures emerge, though it is not anticipated.</p>
<p>Will the service changes advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic? This means will they</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics. • Take steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people. 		<p>The equalities officer has made recommendations in the draft service specifications to ensure that the relevant equality elements are included in the specifications. This will help to ensure compliance with the public sector equality duties of the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Staff impact – mitigating action Any staff affected by potential transfers to the contractor or to other partner councils will be fully consulted in advance on the likely personal implications to them including relocation. Corporate Management Team is putting an extensive service development and staff support programme into place over the period of corporate service market testing. This programme will continue throughout 2015/16. Although the programme isn’t yet finalised it’s expected to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The High Performing Teams programme to be refocused on providing support for staff during the period of challenge and change. • Corporate Services Contract and Change Support Programme Alignment : Corporate Management Team will oversee these programmes and ensure they are joined up and that all staff in their services are kept up to date and have opportunities to share ideas and concerns • We will offer a package of coaching and development opportunities for staff teams, including, programme management, assessing competitiveness, and analysing business processes and costs, plus a range of support projects. • We will launch the change support programme in late November, once we complete

Equality Act duty	Yes/No	Impact or notes to demonstrate compliance
		<p>the tender process to appoint the consultants who will take this forward over 2015/16.</p> <p>Customer impact – mitigating action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure customers whose first language is not English have equal access to services, the outsourcing company will need access to telephone interpreting and face to face translation services. • Any changes relating to the delivery method or reducing the level of a service, whether in-house or by the potential outsourced company would require input from the equalities officer to ensure it did not impact on customer access, e.g. online and telephone only would not meet our legal duties.
<p>Will the service changes help to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it e.g. will the changes help to tackle prejudice and promote understanding between the different groups</p>	<p>No</p>	
<p>Will the service change protect and promote human rights</p>	<p>N/A</p>	

Action plan for mitigating action or advancing equality of opportunity

Action	Person responsible	Target completion date
<p>Discussions to take place with council partners to agree mitigating actions to reduce the impact relating to relocating staff.</p>	<p>Steve Bishop</p>	<p>December 2015</p>

Once completed:

Date completed: 21/11/2014

Signed *S. Bishop* (Officer and Corporate Management Team representative)

Signed *C.Reeves* (Cheryl Reeves, Shared equalities officer)

Draft Procurement Strategy : Corporate Services Project

Author:	John Newton
Date:	September 2014
Service / Dept:	Management

Approvals

By signing this document, the signatories below are confirming that they have fully reviewed the Procurement Strategy Document for the Corporate Services Project and confirm their acceptance of the completed document.

Name	Role	Signature	Date	Version

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version History

Version	Date	Author(s)	Summary of Changes
0_1	09/09/14	JN	First draft
0_2	29/09	JN	Incorporated items from Oxford City PS template
1.0	30/09	JN	Reviewed and approved SB amendments
2.0	18/11	JN	Updated in line with Project Board views 18/11/14

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1. Introduction and Strategic Context

Introduction to the Project

South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Hart District Council, Havant Borough Council and Mendip District Council (hereafter referred to as “The Councils”) are considering entering into a procurement of a range of support and transactional services. In some cases this represents a re-provisioning of services that are already externalised and for others this is a market test of functions currently performed in house.

The Councils have been engaging for some time with a view to collaborating on the procurement. It is considered that individual re-procurements of services already outsourced would provide only marginal benefits. Approaching the market collectively, with a set of requirements of greater scale and ambition, may well obtain greater benefit for all of the participants.

In addition the procurement of a ‘strategic partnership’ model of contract offers the opportunity to market test a wider range of services that are currently in house, or are outsourced already but due for re-procurement in the near future.

Strategic Context

All UK public sector organisations have been impacted by the adverse economic environment since 2008. Local authorities have been particularly affected by real-terms reductions in funding from Central Government and this has resulted in sustained exercises in cost reduction over the period.

Some councils have approached this through incremental reductions in budgets and staffing and tightening of spend with suppliers. Others have recognised that this is at best a necessary but insufficient response. It is clear that the next government is unlikely to release significantly more resource irrespective of its political make-up. Therefore a strategic and structural response is required.

The councils have already responded to the structural challenge in a range of initiatives:

- (i) South Oxfordshire DC and Vale of White Horse DC (South and Vale) merged their senior management structure as described above, achieving cashable savings and allowing a scale approach to common issues. Havant BC has developed a similar relationship with East Hants DC.
- (ii) externalising a number of services (including those highlighted for re-procurement) to achieve cost savings, resilience and flexibility;
- (iii) sharing services with other councils;
- (iv) rationalising property assets by sharing accommodation with other public sector organisations and contractors;

Most of these initiatives have been in place for a number of years and can be described as 'road tested'. The councils have extracted substantial savings and in doing so have built up a capability and confidence in managing strategic relationships with key service providers and partnerships between peer local authorities.

At the same time the Councils have constantly challenged services delivered in-house to demonstrate and improve their value for money positions.

For example the External Auditor to both South and Vale councils noted that each continued to "...challenge how it delivers services to look for further efficiency savings" and acknowledging that "There have been no cuts to key services".

However it is reasonable to assume that 'austerity' – in terms of pressure on centrally provided funding - is not over, irrespective of the outcome of the next general election.

The Councils recognise that, in order to safeguard the provision of frontline services, they must be relentless in their pursuit of efficiencies in corporate and transactional support functions. Typically in the sector, these have been found through a combination of process standardisation and simplification.

However as these opportunities are exhausted more structural transformation approaches must be considered. These include:

- the adoption of scale solutions to the delivery of transactional services;
- demand management initiatives;
- technology-led opportunities arising from the cloud, mobile devices and application rationalisation.
- Better commissioning of service from the councils supply chains

At the same time district councils in particular need to retain the flexibility to be in a position to capitalise on opportunities for growth, in order to supplement/replace central funding streams with new and enhanced income from the local economy.

Therefore it is likely that the councils will need to reconfigure themselves over the coming decade and therefore re-procuring a series of relatively inflexible contracts for service provision will no longer be appropriate.

2. Rationale

South and Vale currently procure a range of services from an outsourced relationship with Capita. These include:

- Revenues and Benefits
- Exchequer Services
- Payroll

Hart has a number of services in an outsourced contract with Capita.

- Customer Services

- Information Technology
- Human Resources
- Financial Services
- Payroll
- Print Services

Havant has a contract for Revenues and Benefits and Customer Services

Mendip currently outsources Revenues and Benefits, IT, Financial Services and Customer Services

South and Vale's contract is due to expire in August 2016, with the others reaching expiry within the following 2 years.

Each council is currently minded to continue with these as externalised services. This intention, with the close alignment of the contract expiry dates, presents an opportunity to aggregate the re-procurement exercises.

Typically a procurement of this complexity, with appropriate contingency for the transition of services, will take approximately 18 months to activate the new operations. South and Vale will thus have to start their re-procurement exercise in early 2015 whether alone or in partnership. Thus it is now appropriate for each of the Councils to determine whether this collaborative approach should be adopted.

3. Scope

The potential scope of services considered for inclusion in the procurement included:

<p>Revenues: Council tax Business rates</p>	<p>Benefits CTRS Housing benefits Counter fraud Benefit checks</p>
<p>Exchequer Accounts payable (creditors) Accounts receivable (debtors)</p>	<p>Payroll Data input Running the payroll (payments)</p>
<p>Accountancy s.151 duties Management accounting (regular budget monitoring and routine budget/ledger advice) Financial accounting (closedown & producing annual accounts) Provision of the financial management system (general ledger, accounts payable, accounts receivable, budgeting) Treasury management (investing and borrowing)</p>	<p>IT IT strategy IT infrastructure support (maintain desktop PCs, network & other hardware) Applications support (maintain purchased applications and software) Helpdesk & customer interface IT security Applications design (develop and maintain in-house bespoke applications) Data capture and GIS Street Naming and Numbering</p>
<p>Internal Audit System audits (regular checks of internal controls) Counter fraud work (regular checks of high fraud risk areas) Investigation of suspected fraud and irregularity (reactive)</p>	<p>HR Strategic HR (workforce planning) Employee relations (collective bargaining, reacting to performance issues, investigations, terminations) Policies General advice on recruitment, training, restructuring, policies (to managers and staff)</p>
<p>Legal and democratic services Elections & support to returning officer Democratic services General and taxi licensing CCTV Community Safety (excl cctv) Strategic legal advice Legal services (excluding strategic legal advice) Debt recovery legal actions incl court work Land charges</p>	<p>Property and Facilities management Property services (advise on and maintain other council property) Building services (maintain council office buildings) Cleaning Postal Service Design & Print Mobile home parks management Canteen</p>
<p>Procurement Procurement strategy Advice and support</p>	<p>Engineering Engineering incl flood alleviation and drainage Cleaning public conveniences</p>

<p>Car parks</p> <p>Car park management (maintenance, income collection)</p> <p>Car park operations (patrolling and excess charge notices)</p>	<p>Routine and administrative operations</p> <p>Customer services - reception/other remote council access points</p> <p>Customer services - switchboard/contact centre</p> <p>Insurance Administration</p>
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The list above is an amalgamation of all services suggested by the councils for consideration within the scoping exercise. The councils acknowledged that it was likely that some components within certain services would need to be retained (for legislative or operational reasons) irrespective of any choice made. However to retain the maximum discretion (and also to provide a similar level of accountability for services ultimately deemed not in scope of any procurement) specifications were commissioned for the full set of services. Those services excluded from scope for South and Vale are 'greyed out' in the table above.

4. Market Analysis

The local authority business process outsourcing (BPO) market has matured over the past twenty years. The supplier market comprises a range of providers of different scale and specialisation arguably capable of delivering any service commissioned by a local authority.

These suppliers include:

- BPO firms that are able to take on most services and generate value through focusing on (for example) the management of common processes, performance, technology platform and opportunities to integrate with existing similar operations;
- BPO firms that prefer to concentrate on a more limited set of areas – for example around corporate and transactional services, or property/technical;
- Specialist providers who are likely to have a specific focus on individual services, or a small core of related activity – e.g. ICT/Customer, or property/asset management.
- Single providers who may fill in gaps as consortium partners, or respond to a single service tender opportunity.

They have engaged with local authorities across a range of externalisations from single service outsourcings, through to multiple service packages and partnerships based on an initial scope with an ability to add other services and projects incrementally.

Typically a single service outsourcing will have a contract period from 3-7 years, whilst more complex strategic partnering deals are generally between 10-15 years in length. These generally require substantial service transformation and/or updates to technology and so tend to require a longer period of operation in order that the partner may recover its up-front investment.

The value of outsourcings has tended to increase over time with some of the larger corporate services partnerships (e.g. Barnet, South Tyneside, Glasgow) covering annual expenditure of between £20m and £50m.

With the increase in scale comes an increase in bid costs and suppliers are increasingly careful in qualifying whether to bid or not for opportunities. This takes into account factors such as size of opportunity, their likely competitive position and the perceived risks associated with the deal, or the client. A key factor for potential bidders is the degree of confidence that they have that the procurement will reach a successful conclusion. Not unreasonably, bidders may consider a multi-client project as containing more risk than a single party deal of similar size.

At the time of writing there are a number of procurements already in progress, or about to come to the market. It is therefore important to understand what will attract the market and enable them to present compelling offers to the councils.

To obtain this information the councils advertised the potential procurement via a PIN notice, and issued a short brief and a questionnaire to firms expressing an interest in response to the PIN. The councils also held a briefing session at South Oxfordshire's offices to set out their thinking to date and invite initial observations from suppliers.

The questions asked by the Councils comprised:

- 1 *Given the potential scope of services and client organisations which (packaging) model would provide the best likelihood of meeting the objectives of the CSP project and why?*
- 2 *What would the Councils need to do to make the preferred option work most effectively?*
- 3 *Which, if any, services would suppliers consider to be not appropriate to outsource? What aspects of the services potentially in scope do you consider to be more appropriate to be retained by the client(s)*
- 4 *How would you recommend packaging the services within the preferred model identified in question 1 above?*
- 5 *On the basis of the financial information provided above and assuming a general maintenance of current service quality, broadly what percentage savings against current budgets should the Councils be targeting if they:*
 - (i) *procured separately?*
 - (ii) *procured jointly?*
- 6 *On the basis of the performance information provided above, what key opportunities for service improvement can be targeted without material adverse impact on operating costs?*
- 7 *What level of additional benefits might the Councils achieve from collaboration over and above a single procurement/re-procurement?*
- 8 *What level of consistency in commercial and operational requirements is necessary to secure these benefits?*
- 9 *How would suppliers retain an individual relationship with client Councils and their stakeholders within such a solution?*
- 10 *What effective clienting structures would suppliers wish to see developed in a partnership involving these Councils and why?*
- 11 *Based on their initial understanding of the scope and wider understanding of the current market, which model(s) would suppliers be interested in using for a partnership? Are there any potential variants or aspects that suppliers would consider to be less attractive?*
- 12 *The Councils current contracts are generally of the order of [X+X+X years] in term. Given the location, current service configuration and benefits requirement of the*

- Councils, and the level of transformation that this implies, what initial contract length do you envisage as optimal?*
- 13 *What information would suppliers require in any 'virtual data room' created for the purposes of this procurement?*
- 14 *What support would suppliers require from the Councils in undertaking due diligence?*
- 15 *How can the Councils help suppliers obtain maximum value from a competitive dialogue process?*

The individual responses to these questions have informed the procurement options assessment set out below

5. Targeted Benefits

The general aspirations shared with the market were:

- Deliver at least the current standard of service at a reduced cost to the councils
- Support the delivery of and improvement in key Council outcomes
- Provide enabling capability to support future transformation within the Councils; and
- Bring flexibility in provision to match the needs of the Councils as they change over time

After consulting the market it is considered that the councils should seek a minimum of 10% saving on those services being retendered.

The councils will also seek additional savings based around integration of operational processes, technology platforms and interfaces for these and any services outsourced for the first time during this procurement

The councils will achieve a harmonisation of service standards based on a 'best of breed' principle – i.e. in general uplifting performance of each council's operations to the one currently delivering best value for money.

The councils will seek a flexible operational model for support functions that can match the trends in demand over the period of the contract. They will agree a pricing model with their chosen supplier that reflects this.

The councils will collaborate to provide a more strategic and effective client function

The councils will obtain commitment from their supplier(s) to deliver operational transformation and enable better management of their wider services and supply chains

Measurable outputs and outcomes for each of these objectives will be included in a set of specifications (currently being prepared)

6. Procurement Options Assessment

At this point the councils have to make the following decisions:

Scope Options – which of the services identified as candidates for outsourcing should be included

Packaging Options – how should the services that are deemed to be in scope be grouped?

Choices may include:

- Single vendor/consortium
- Multiple packages/Lots
- Master vendor/managing agent approach

Collaboration and Contracting Options – to consider:

- Outsourcing contract vs joint venture arrangement
- Joint vs separate contracts
- Contract length
- Joint/single client vs separate clients
-

These choices have been informed through consultation with the Project Board, together with the leaders and chief executives of the five councils. Supplier feedback has been taken into account as has the experience of the councils' appointed project manager.

Scope

If the procurement proceeded at the maximum potential scope as set out in Section 3 - and including all five councils - it is estimated that the value of services being market tested would be of the order of £20m per annum.

Factors to consider in assessing whether services should be included in or out of scope include:

- Ability to generate service/financial benefits;
- Ability to contribute to strategic ambition for the partnership
- Geographic/scale opportunity
- Market Appetite
- Tactical Intent (e.g. acknowledging the re-tender requirement for existing contract)
- Viability of retained components (this to sweep up services that would otherwise be stranded)

Market responses generally did not name any definite “no”s . It is acknowledged that not all individual components of the specifications being drafted currently would be suitable (e.g. elements that would need to be retained for strategic or legislative reasons).

Work to refine this will be part of later iterations of the specification drafting. Only one organisation commented on the issue of scale but it may be presumed that there would be a

de minimis limit to the attractiveness of smaller services were suppliers to be given the individual choice.

Improvement activity at the individual service level was identified within a number of common themes – generally around standardisation of process, rationalisation/consolidation of platforms etc. In responding to questions on the benefits of multi-council collaboration, these extended to economies of scale, resilience etc.

There is an extensive track record in outsourcing most if not all of these services individually or as part of a package. Clearly the ability of certain services to generate synergies as part of an overall package will be more limited than others.

Using the criteria above, it is considered that the services that offer limited potential against these factors are:

- Legal and Democratic services (acknowledging the non-transactional elements could be outsourced as part of a package, there is little market appetite or track record for taking on the professional service components within a general corporate services scope)
- Canteen (for reasons of scale, geography and lack of synergy with the other potentially in-scope services)

Individual councils will determine which services from the list they wish to include in the combined scope as part of their individual approval processes.

Packaging Options

The services may be 'packaged' in a number of ways. A single contract allows economies of scale to be achieved in both contract operation and management. However certain of the functions may be regarded as non-core by the supplier and fail to achieve their potential. Performance management tools may be diluted due to an overly large number of key performance indicators. Critically, the market of suppliers capable of delivering this breadth of services may be limited.

On the other hand procuring on a service by service basis could result in the appointment of several 'best of breed' suppliers, providing focus to each service, but potentially lacking in ability to secure the savings that come from integrating and aggregating services across the councils. Future transformation may require the close management of a number of suppliers. Larger suppliers may view the opportunity for them as limited and the effort required by the Councils to procure and then manage the many individual relationships would be substantially higher than currently resourced.

Grouping the services into functional packages such as Corporate (e.g. ICT, Revs & Bens, Finance/HR, Customer...), Regulatory (e.g. Legal and Democratic services) and/or Technical (Property/FM, Car Parks, Canteen...) may be more attractive to certain suppliers in the market and this could offer a compromise between scale and specialism.

It will involve more than one procurement, and there will be multiple contracts to manage.

A fourth potential option blends the flexibility of multiple supplier solutions with the integration capability of a single partnership. This managing agent approach is increasingly common in central government contracts and is starting to be adopted in local government particularly for ICT. In this model a prime supplier is responsible for ensuring outcomes are delivered by a

supply chain of providers (including itself), but the Councils retain the ability to re-procure or remove individual components that are underperforming or no longer fit with their requirements.

This model also opens up the opportunity for services to be delivered by third sector or 'spun-out' entities, with them being subject to the same accountability as those 'outsourced' to the private sector. It may ultimately provide more flexibility to the individual Councils, and would allow them to hold suppliers to the delivery of overall outcomes as well as individual service outputs.

It would however be a more complicated model to introduce. Care would need to be taken to ensure the benefits outweigh any additional overhead incurred by the managing agent (which of course would be passed on as part of its own service charges).

Relevant criteria for appraising these options are:

- Cost/complexity of procurement;
- Ability to attract good competition;
- Cost/complexity of contract management
- Synergies/Economies of Scale vs Best of Breed achievement

A number of suppliers suggested the creation of Lots based around functional groupings.

Typically these were combinations/variations of:

- citizen-based functions (e.g. customer services, revs & bens)
- corporate support (IT, transactional finance, HR, procurement, exchequer, payroll)
- technical/asset/location based services (property, FM, engineering, car parks management)
- professional services (e.g. legal advice)

A number of respondents supported the incorporation of a managing agent approach. None were hostile to the concept.

Given the potential scope of services option that best addresses these criteria is likely to be a package of more than one Lot. Subject to the choice of services to take forward being finalised by each council it is recommended that the procurement strategy is developed around :

1. A Lot containing citizen-based and corporate services (CCS)
2. A Lot containing technical, asset and location based services (TAL)
3. Authority to explore the potential of a Managing Agent during the procurement(s), with a business case to be prepared by shortlisted bidders as part of their outline solution development

Collaboration in Contracting and Client Management

The participation of more than one client organisation in the procurement brings a number of permutations in respect of

- (a) the contract (including specification as well as commercial terms); and
- (b) the client management arrangements

Contracting:

The Councils may choose to procure:

- Varying commercial terms and service specifications;

- Identical terms but varying specifications;
- Varying terms but identical specifications; or
- Identical terms and specifications

All consultees agree that there is benefit in adopting a consistent set of requirements. This is supported by the senior leadership of the five councils. There may be some areas where local variance is required but overall the councils will aim to achieve a single operational solution and common terms and conditions.

Client Management:

Assuming there is some degree of consistency then it will be beneficial to combine the respective client functions in place currently to achieve:

- Greater strategic balance between client and supplier;
- Resilience;
- Common approach to change management;
- Greater opportunity to develop/retain access to specialist commissioning and contract management skills;
- Economies of scale.

It should be noted that combining client roles does not require a combined payment regime or joint liability – each client would be responsible for delivering its own obligations. Neither does it mean that all the power needs to be ceded to the authority in which the line management accountability of the client function sits. In fact a single clienting entity could be based across all the organisations with subject matter expertise and local knowledge backed up by the resilience and strategic capability of the joint approach.

The councils will develop their client-side approach throughout the procurement to include:

- A single suite of service requirements and standards
- A single set of procurement documentation
- A consistent (single or 5 x the same) suite of contract documents
- A joint client approach and project governance that will manage all 5 relationships

7. Governance Model

The proposed project governance structure contains:

A Project Board; This will include members and chief officers of each Council (or their representatives with appropriate delegated authority). The Project Board will:

- Define the procurement objectives
- Approve the progression through key stages of the project (e.g. advertise opportunity, prequalification/supplier downselection, final tender evaluation, business case, transition phase completion);
- Resolve conflicts (and highlight synergies) between the CSP project and other initiatives/projects involving the Councils individually or collectively (e.g. workforce development projects, Universal Credit etc.);

- Ultimate point of escalation for inter-Council project issues (e.g. consensus on requirements, standards etc.)
- Implement project assurance procedures as required;
- Take on Senior User/Senior Supplier roles as appropriate to ensure that the solution being procured and then implemented is fit for purpose
- Delegate appropriate authority to the Project Steering Group and Project Manager and retain the ability to replace/remove both

A Project Steering Group; This will include representatives drawn from strategic management tiers within the Councils. The group will have a tactical remit to:

- Approve project resourcing arrangements;
- Approve project documentation (OJEU advert/pre-qualification and tendering materials)
- First point of escalation for any inter-Council project consensus issues
- Develop client side management structure and develop/recruit appropriate staff;
- Prepare individual business cases, Council reports and secure necessary approvals;
- Develop a joint communications strategy;
- Allocate responsibility for managing risks and issues

A Project Manager and Core Team

The Project Manager will be accountable to the Project Board for delivering their procurement objectives. The Project Manager will prepare and maintain the project plan, the risk and issues register, manage the preparation of all relevant project materials and co-ordinate the work of the Core Team.

The Core Team will support the work of the project manager bringing subject matter expertise in the key disciplines required for the procurement (HR, Legal, Financial and Procurement). Service expertise on the delivery side, together with the customer view, will be provided by Service Head or equivalent representatives from the Councils. Access to a wider pool of specific expertise across individual services will be made available by the Project Steering Group. The team will prepare the relevant project materials under the supervision of the Project Manager, provide input into dialogue and engagement with bidders, evaluate bidder submissions and generally deliver the activities set out in the project plan.

Legal Advisors

South and Vale are in the process of procuring external legal support on behalf of the project. Their work will be managed by South and Vale Legal, who will commission them to provide advice and support the inputs of in-house resource as appropriate into the Project Team, Steering Group and Board.

The Project Steering Group will nominate a Senior Responsible Officer to provide a single point of instruction to the Project Manager from the Board and Steering Group. To date this role has been delivered by Steve Bishop of South and Vale.

This also provides a straightforward route in reverse for escalating issues. So a failure to reach consensus amongst the subject matter experts around a set of service requirements would be identified by the project manager, raised as an issue and resolved (in the first instance) by the Steering Group. If this is not possible then it is resolved by the Board.

Project Resourcing

The main area of direct expenditure relating to the project is in relation to the appointment of external legal and project management support. It is recommended that a small provision be made for incidental expenses (e.g. site visit activity, recruitment/training of new client function staff etc.)

Internal resource will be required to support:

- Completion of specifications
- Preparation of tender documentation
- Preparation of due diligence material (including performance measurement) and support due diligence processes undertaken by bidders (including on-site activity)
- Deliver staff consultation activity
- Evaluation of bid submissions

The councils will need to determine the bases on which these costs are shared.

The direct expenditure relating to this procurement should be split equally between the Councils.

Internal resources should be resourced with regard to the capacity available within each Council. It is acknowledged that these will differ. However all Councils will need to commit to support activity that is undertaken on-site – for example location based supplier due diligence – as required. Capacity issues will be resolved by the Project Steering Group

Ongoing Project Governance

Potential bidders will be looking for evidence that the Councils are bound into the collaboration. This is equally true of the procurement and post-contract signature phases. It is recognised that there may be valid reasons for a client side partner ultimately deciding that they wish to pursue a different strategy, but that this should not be done on a whim. It is also pertinent to consider how, in any such exit, the other parties (including the supplier) can be made 'whole'.

The following principles are suggested as a condition of participation:

(i) Councils are free to withdraw from the collaboration without penalty prior to the procurement commencing;

(ii) A condition of participation in the procurement is that Councils sign up to an agreement detailing this governance process and acknowledging the cost share basis set out above

(iii) That the agreement provides for the staged prepayment of cost share contributions either as a single lump sum or in line with key project milestones (e.g. OJEU advert, prequalification

of bidders, call for final tenders, business case/contract award) with any contributions forfeit in the event of withdrawal prior to contract signature;

(iv) That an inter authority agreement be prepared including a provision that, following contract signature, any Council withdrawing from the collaboration pays a compensation to the other Councils in respect of any unit cost increases suffered in respect of the ongoing services as a result of the withdrawal, thus putting the residual partners (and the supplier) in a no better no worse position than they would have been had the withdrawal not taken place.

These principles will be negotiated by the Project Steering Group and enshrined in an appropriate agreement to be drafted with support from the appointed legal advisors.

8. Risk Management (*tbc following procurement options assessment*)

This will cover:

- *A summary of key risks identified against the recommended option*
- *A list of all possible events which may cause the project to fail or hinder the success of outcomes, including the 'cons' identified by staff as part of the consultation on scope*
- *Mitigating actions that would be required*

This will be set out in a project risk register containing the description of the risk, impact, likelihood and mitigating action(s) under relevant categories e.g.

- *Management of Operational Risk*
- *Management of Financial Risk*
- *Management of Governance Risk (specifically between the partner councils)*
- *Management of Legislative and Environmental Risk (inc: e.g Social Value Act, new procurement regs, Universal Credit, Community Right to Challenge etc.)*

This section will also consider the necessary consultations and impact assessments for the procurement prior to commencement

8. Financial Appraisal (Finance Lead *tbc following confirmation of scope*)

This section will contain:

- *The baseline cost and affordability position*
- *Likely investment requirements*
- *Information on how the procurement will be funded, contributions from other participating Councils*
- *Information on revenue costs as a result of the project being completed*
- *Information on any identified revenue savings, in which year(s)*

9. Project Approach (to be completed following confirmation of preferred procurement route and project governance options)

- *Timescales*
- *A summary of the project plan including key dates and milestones*
- *Incorporate “management case” components of green book here*
- *Project Management during Procurement Phase*
- *Gateway Review Processes and Outcomes*
- *Transition Management*
- *Change Management*
- *Benefits Realisation*
- *Risk Management*
- *Contract Management*
- *Post Project Evaluation*
- *Medium Term Review*

10. Dependencies

This section will contain a list of any other projects that the success of this project relies upon, or vice versa e.g.

- *Staff development programmes*
- *Other internal transformation activity*

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Cabinet Report



Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

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To: CABINET

DATE: 4 December 2014

Review of mixed recycling bring sites

Recommendation

That Cabinet approves the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins from the district councils bring sites throughout the district.

Purpose of report

1. For Cabinet to consider the results of the recent consultation with regards to removing the mixed recycling bulk bins at bring sites and confirm what course of action they wish officers to take.

Corporate objectives

2. The proposal contributes to the corporate objectives of excellent delivery of key services and effective management of resources.

Background

3. Bring sites have a mixture of bulk bins for mixed recycling and single stream containers for such items as textiles and small electrical items. In the past they played an important role in capturing recycling from residents. Since the introduction of the new waste collection service in 2009, residents are now able to recycle at the kerbside without having to travel to these sites. Residents can put out additional recycling in clear bags or cardboard boxes next to their bin on their collection day.
4. In late summer 2012, following continued fly-tipping and regular illegal disposal of trade waste, the mixed recycling bulk bins were removed from The Orchard Centre in Didcot

at the request of Hammerson, the leaseholder. We subsequently removed the bulk bins from the car park in Watlington in May 2013 at the request of the parish council who own the land. Hammerson has expressed its appreciation at the removal of the bins and has confirmed that since their removal, there has been very little fly tipping that it has had to deal with.

5. The removal of these bins took place without incident. After a three week grace period (during which Biffa continued to clean the sites), the responsibility transferred to the landowners who have been maintaining the sites ever since.
6. Around a year ago, Vale Council agreed to the removal of its mixed recycling bulk bins following public consultation. The removal caused no adverse reaction, reduced fly-tipping, and saved money.
7. We had negative press coverage this summer about misuse taking place at the district council's bring site in Grey's Road Car Park, Henley-on-Thames. The site was (and still is) being used as a dumping ground by residents and businesses.
8. In August 2014, Cabinet considered a paper on the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins from bring sites across the district. Appendix one lists the location of sites. Cabinet agreed to consult on the proposal to remove them.
9. The consultation attracted 31 responses, of which 21 were in favour of removing the bins. Those in favour of removal gave various reasons for their support, the most quoted reason was that their removal would help to keep the bring site areas tidier and reduce fly-tipping. They also welcomed the cost saving to the council. There were individual claims that removal of the bins would reduce the risk of vandalism, noise nuisance and deter companies using the sites for the disposal of commercial waste.
10. Eight respondents opposed the proposal. Their objections largely drew attention to the fact that mixed recycling bins at several bring bank sites are well used and to take the facility away would only add to the problem of fly-tipping elsewhere in the district. We have not seen increased fly-tipping when we have removed these bins in the past. Several respondents said that this problem would be better addressed by increasing the number of times the bins are emptied or introducing CCTV to deter people from misusing the sites.
11. Two respondents provided don't know responses but made comment on the proposal.
12. On the basis of the largely positive response to the consultation (albeit a very limited one); the evidence from previous removals in both South and Vale that there is no increase in fly-tipping; and the cost saving, officers recommend Cabinet to authorise the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins from all current locations. Where single stream bins are provided, such as for small electrical items, they will stay in place.

Options

13. Continue with the service we currently provide - this would incur ongoing financial costs and the sites would continue to be abused.

Financial implications

14. If the decision is taken to remove the mixed recycling bulk bins, Biffa will no longer need to visit all the sites, and they will only continue to service those sites with single stream containers. This will make a saving of £22,000 per annum.

Legal Implications

15. There are no legal implications with the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins.

Risks

16. There is a risk that some residents may be unhappy with the removal of the mixed recycling bulk bins, and the consultation indicated a concern that more fly-tipping may occur in other areas. These concerns will be managed through educational and enforcement work carried out by the council's waste team, communications team, and the environmental protection team.

Other implications

17. If Cabinet decides to remove the mixed recycling bulk bins, temporary signage will be put up on site in advance of their removal that will inform residents of the following:

- the date the removal will take place
- alternatives available including the fact they can leave additional recycling out for kerbside collection
- location of the nearest household recycling centre
- contact telephone number in case they have a practical problem resulting from the removal of the bins.

18. Press releases will be issued to inform residents of the action being taken and reminding them that additional recycling can be left alongside their green bin.

19. Where the sites are located on private land, officers will write to the landowners of the sites informing them of the proposal and agree the period during which the council will collect any fly-tipped material.

Conclusion

20. Mixed recycling bulk bins have served their purpose and are no longer required. Anything that legitimately goes into these bins can now be recycled at the kerbside. They cost over £20,000 to empty and generate fly-tipping problems for which the council incurs additional expense. The public response to the consultation was very limited but raised no new issues that prompt officers to take a different view. Officers invite Cabinet to agree to their removal.

Background papers

- Consultation response document

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Appendix one

BRING SITES – SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Benson - village hall car park

Berrick Salome - Home Sweet Home pub

Chinnor - Mill Lane car park

Chinnor - sports and social centre, Station Road

Garsington - The Three Horseshoes

Henley - Greys Road car park

Henley - Kings Road car park

Horspath - village hall car park

Stadhampton - The Crazy Bear pub car park

Thame - Cattle Market

Towersey - playing field car park

Wallingford - Goldsmith Lane car park

Wallingford - council offices, Crowmarsh Gifford

Woodcote - village hall car park

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Cabinet report



Report of Head of HR, IT & Technical Services

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To: CABINET

DATE: 4 December 2014

Review of car park fees and charges 2015/16

Recommendation

That cabinet reviews the current car park fees and charges and considers the options put forward by officers, along with any other options it wishes to consider, and decides what, if any, changes it wishes to make to the current car park fees and charges.

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this initial report is to provide options for cabinet members to consider the appropriate car park fees and charges from 1 April 2015. Reviewing the car park fees and charges each year is in line with the council's car park pricing policy, which is attached to this report as appendix 1.

Corporate objectives

2. The provision of public car parks contributes to the achievement of our strategic objective "building the local economy" by giving access to shops, businesses and services within the towns and some villages. It also contributes towards our strategic objective of "effective management of resources" by providing car parking that is value for money and meets the needs of the users.
3. The car park pricing policy as shown in appendix 1, balances the requirement for users to meet the costs of the car parks, with the need for charges to be economically viable having regard to the impact they have on the local economy. The policy aims to:
 - encourage people to shop locally

- have car park charges that are competitive with car parks provided by other bodies in the district, and that are comparable with other neighbouring authorities
- offer season tickets at reduced rates to also support local shops and businesses that may have employees who park all day in one of our car parks, as well as offering one day permits at reduced prices for market traders.

Background

4. In March 2014, the cabinet agreed that no changes would be made to the current car park fees and charges, and the provision of free parking on Saturday afternoons and half-price season tickets for those working in South Oxfordshire would continue.
5. Appendix 3 shows the current car park fees and season ticket prices.

Car park account over five years

6. Table 1 below estimates how the net cost of car parks will change over the five-year period 2013/14 to 2017/18.
7. The table shows that if no changes are made to the level of fees and charges (and assuming levels of usage stay the same) then the car park account will have a net income of £83,408 in 2015/16 and over the five-year period the account will produce a cumulative estimated surplus of £164,828.

Table 1 Car park account over five years

	2013/14	2014/15	2014/15 Actual to 30 Sept 2014	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
	Actual	Base budget		Base budget	Base budget	Base budget
Total Income	973,381	943,818	519,830	947,300	947,300	947,300
Less						
Running costs	509,168	540,139	308,813	526,764	537,300	548,046
* RingGo				10,000	12,000	12,000
Depreciation and other capital charges for use of asset	426,208	163,315	81,658	163,315	163,315	163,315
Support costs and CDC recharge	157,452	160,601	80,301	163,813	167,089	170,431
Total Costs	1,092,828	864,055	470,771	863,892	879,704	893,792
Actual / Projected net income (deficit)	-119,447	79,763		83,408	67,596	53,508
Actual / Projected net income (deficit) cumulative	-119,447	-39,684		43,724	111,320	164,828

*estimate annual cost of RingGo based on 20 per cent of income paid by phone in 15/16 increasing to 25 percent in 16/17 and 17/18.

Options

8. The table in appendix 2 compares the council fees to those of other local authorities which shows that the cost of parking in South Oxfordshire remains very competitive.

The table includes the assumption that the council will continue to offer half price season tickets, free Saturday afternoons, free parking on half a day, each week in December leading up to Christmas.

9. The surpluses highlighted in table 1 are relatively small and do not provide the council with a lot of options to reduce any of the fees and charges that may benefit our customers. However, there are some changes that can be made which do not have large financial implications. An example would be to increase the period of free parking at Christmas. Other changes, such as to the charging period for example, would have more of an impact on the income. Those working in South Oxfordshire and those driving low emission vehicles already benefit from half price season tickets but the cabinet may wish to consider extending this offer further for ultra low emission vehicles (free annual season tickets for the first 500 electric or hybrid vehicles to register for example).
10. Any changes that would have a considerable impact on the account to the extent that the fees and charges no longer cover the costs, increasing the free parking period from one hour to two hours for example, would require a change in the car park policy.

Financial implications

11. In 2013/14, of the £973,000 total income, the council collected £712,000 from 'pay and display' income, £37,000 from season ticket sales and £125,000 from Excess Charge Notices (fines). The other £99,000 income is made up of rental sales, refunds from the Vale of White Horse District Council and income from other non council car parks.
12. Any financial implications of the decisions made as a result of this report will be included in the budget for 2015/16 and the medium term financial plan, which will be agreed by full council in February 2015.

Legal implications

13. Any changes to the Christmas parking offer, the charging period or the fees would not normally require any amendments to the car parking order and could be carried out by simple changes to the schedules. However, officers recommend that any major changes such as introducing further free parking would benefit from a full consultation process.

Equality Implications

14. Officers have given due regard to the public sector equality duties of the Equality Act 2010. The cabinet would need to consider if any changes they propose would directly or indirectly discriminate against users who share a protected characteristic and look to provide a service that would help to advance equal opportunities for all.

Conclusion

15. Officers have reviewed the current fees and charges in line with the council's car parking policy. The cabinet is therefore asked if it wishes to make any changes to the car park fees or charges from 1 April 2015.

Appendix 1 Car park pricing policy 2006

- a) Car park fees and charges shall be set so that over a five-year rolling period they at least meet the costs of car parks calculated in accordance with proper accounting practice. Costs will include charges for capital expenditure.
- b) Pricing may be used to regulate and influence usage to support town centre vitality and viability. Therefore, short term and long term parking to be differentially priced and located to encourage workers to park on the edge of towns to free up town centre parking for shoppers and visitors.
- c) Car park fees and charges to be benchmarked against
 - i. car parks provided in towns and villages in the district by other bodies
 - ii. on-street parking charges
 - iii. car parks in neighbouring authorities:
 - Cherwell DC
 - Aylesbury Vale DC
 - Wokingham DC
 - Wycombe DC
 - Vale of White Horse DC
- d) Parking is provided free of charge for disabled badge holders
- e) No fees and charges to apply on Sundays
- f) Parking fees and charges to be reviewed annually

1. Season tickets and permits

- g) Season tickets are available for purchase in advance by residents, tourists and businesses for all long stay car parks but do not guarantee a place. They are available for one year, a quarter or one week at a discounted rate.
- h) Permits are available for market traders which give discounted rates for all day parking in long stay car parks for one particular day of the week over a quarter or a year. They also do not guarantee a place.
- i) Discounts will be determined each year when fees and charges are reviewed.

Appendix 2

Comparison of pay and display car park charges, October 2014

Place	Average Charging periods	up to 1 hour	up to 2 hours	up to 3 hours	up to 4 hours	up to 5 hours	up to 6 hours	up to 8 hours	up to 10 hours	up to 12 hours	ECN
South Oxfordshire District Council	9am to 5pm 8am to 6pm (in Henley on Saturdays)	Free or 50p	80p	1.50		1.80 to 2.10		1.60 to 3.10			Max £70
Train Station, Henley (discounts apply if pay by 'phone)	All day			1.00	1.50		2.50	4.50			Max £80
Dry Leas (Henley rugby club)	9am-5pm Mon to Friday									3.00	unknown
Mill Meadows (Henley Town Council) Mon-Fri Sat and Sun and BHs		1.20 1.50	2.50 3.00		5.00 6.00					7.00 8.00	Max £70
Wycombe DC (High Wycomb) Easton Street	7am – 6pm Mon - Sat	1.00	1.50	2.00	2.50	3.00	3.50			5.00	Max £70
Wycombe DC (High Wycomb) Baker St	7am - 7pm Mon - Sat		1.50				3.00			3.00	Max £70
Wycombe DC (Marlow) Dean St	7am - 7pm Mon – Sat (£1.00 Sunday and Bank Holidays)	60p (40p for up to 30 mins)	1.20	1.50	2.00		3.00			5.50	Max £70
Woking Borough Council (Victoria Way, Brewery Road & Heathside Crescent)	6am - 7pm Mon – Sat (also charges Sunday at reduced rate)	1.30	2.60	3.90	5.20	6.00	6.00	9.00			Max £70
Wargrave, School Lane (short stay)	8am - 6pm Mon - Sat	40p	60p		2.00				4.00		Max £80
Wokingham town centre, Easthampstead Rd (long stay)	8am - 6pm Mon - Sat	70p	1.20	2.00	2.00		3.00		4.00		Max £80
West Berkshire Council (Newbury central library)	8am - 6pm Mon - Sat (*£1 after 6pm)	1.00	2.20	3.40	4.50		6.50	8.50		12.00	Max £80
Aylesbury Vale DC (Upper Hundreds Town centre – short stay)	8am - 6.30pm Mon - Sat	1.00		2.00	3.50	5.00				8.00 up to 24 hrs	Max £70
Aylesbury Vale DC (Hampden House – inner long stay)	8am - 6.30pm Mon - Sat					2.50				4.00 up to 24 hrs (£1 overnight)	Max £70
Aylesbury Vale DC (Friarscroft – outer long stay)	8am - 6.30pm Mon - Sat									3.00 up to 24 hrs (1.00 overnight)	Max £70

Banbury (Market Pl, ultra short stay)	8am - 6pm Mon –Sun	£1.20 (80p up to 30 mins)										Max £70
Bicester (Cattlemarket)	as above	60p	1.20	1.70	2.20			2.50				Max £70
* Vale of White Horse DC (Portway, Wantage)	8am - 6pm Mon - Sat		Up to 2 hrs no charge	1.30	3.30			4.30			5.30	Max £80
* Vale of White Horse DC (Gloucester St, Faringdon)	8am - 6pm Mon - Sat		Up to 2 hrs no charge	1.00	2.40			2.60			2.80	Max £80
* Vale of White Horse DC (Cattlemarket, Abingdon)	8am - 6pm Mon - Sat		Up to 2 hrs no charge	1.50	3.40			4.30			5.30	Max £80
West Oxfordshire DC (Marriotts Walk multi-storey, Witney)	8am - 6pm Mon -Sat	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Max £70
West Oxfordshire DC (Woodford Way)	8am - 6pm Mon -Sat	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Max £70
Cherwell DC (Claremont)	8am - 7pm Mon -Sun	60p	1.20 or Sunday £1 over 1hr	1.70								Max £80
Cherwell DC (Cattle Market)	8am - 7pm Mon -Sun	60p	1.20 or Sunday £1 over 1hr	1.70	2.20						2.50	Max £80
OCC (Redbridge Park & Ride)	5am - 6:30pm										2.00 or by RINGO 2.20	Max £100
OCC (Westgate)	8am -8pm Sun -Fri 8am -8pm Sat	2.50 2.50	4.10 4.10	6.10 6.10	7.70 7.80	11.70 14.70	17.70 22.10				22.30 28.00	Max £100
OCC (Worcester Street)	8am -8pm Sun -Fri 8am -8pm Sat	3.20 4.00	5.30 6.00	7.30 9.20	8.90 11.10	13.60 17.00	20.60 25.80				24.70 30.90	Max £100

Appendix 3 - South Oxfordshire District Council, car park fees 2014

SCHEDULE 1 - CAR PARKS SUBJECT TO PARKING CHARGES

1	2	3	4	5	6	7 SCHEDULE OF CHARGES		8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES (not subject to VAT)				
						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Edinburgh Drive, Didcot	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 - 5 hours £1.80 - 8 hours £3.30 b) No charge	Season tickets £13 per week £140 per quarter £482 per annum Market trader permit £23 per quarter £80 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

1	2	3	4	5	6	7 SCHEDULE OF CHARGES		8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES (not subject to VAT)				
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NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
High Street (formerly Industrial Estate), Didcot	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight Height restriction 2 metres	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 - 5 hours £1.80 - 8 hours £3.30 b) No charge	Season tickets £13 per week £140 per quarter £482 per annum Market trader permit £23 per quarter £80 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days
East Broadway, Didcot	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 - 5 hours £1.80 - 8 hours £3.30 b) No charge	Season tickets £13 per week £140 per quarter £482 per annum Market trader permit £23 per quarter £80 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

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NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
West Broadway, Didcot	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 - 5 hours £1.80 - 8 hours £3.30 b) No charge	Season tickets £13 per week £140 per quarter £482 per annum Market trader permit £23 per quarter £80 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days
Wheel Orchard, Goring	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 8am to 6pm c) 10 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 6pm to 8am d) 13 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 70p - 5 hours £1.80 - 10 hours £3.30 b) No charge	Season ticket £13 per week £140 per quarter £482 per annum Market trader permit £23 per quarter £80 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

1	2	3	4	5	6	7 SCHEDULE OF CHARGES		8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES (not subject to VAT)				
						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Greys Road, Henley	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Friday, 10am to 5pm c) 3 hours a) Saturdays , 8am to 6pm c) 3 hours b) Mondays to Thursday, 5pm to 10am d) 17 hours b) Friday 5pm to Saturdays 8am d) 15 hours b) Saturdays from 6pm and all hours Sundays	Two hours	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour 50p - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour 50p - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 b) No charge b) No charge b) No charge	Not applicable	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

1	2	3	4	5	6	7 SCHEDULE OF CHARGES		8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES (not subject to VAT)				
						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Kings Road, Henley	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Friday, 10am to 5pm c) 3 hours a) Saturdays , 8am to 6pm c) 3 hours b) Mondays to Thursday, 5pm to 10am d) 17 hours b) Friday 5pm to Saturdays 8am d) 15 hours b) Saturdays from 6pm and all hours Sundays	Two hours Two hours	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour 50p - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour 50p - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 b) No charge b) No charge b) No charge	Not applicable	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

1	2	3	4	5	6	7 SCHEDULE OF CHARGES		8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES (not subject to VAT)				
						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Southfields, Henley	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am-5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours b) All hours Sundays	One hour	a) £2.10 for up to 5 hours a) £3.10 for up to 8 hours b) No charge b) No charge	Season tickets £12 per week £132 per quarter £453 per annum Market trader permit £22 per quarter £75 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days
Cattle Market, Thame	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle	Days: Whole area Mondays Tuesdays Thursdays Saturdays Sundays Reduced area Wednesdays Fridays All hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 80p - 5 hours £1.80 - 8 hours £2.30 b) No charge	Season tickets £9 per week £98 per quarter £336 per annum Market trader permit £16 per quarter £56 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

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						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Southern Road, Thame	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am to 5pm c) 3 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 80p - 3 hours £1.50 b) No charge	Not applicable	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days
Cattle Market Wallingford	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 80p - 5 hours £1.80 - 8 hours £2.30 b) No charge	Season ticket £9 per week £98 per quarter £336 per annum Market trader permit £16 per quarter £56 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

1	2	3	4	5	6	7 SCHEDULE OF CHARGES		8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES (not subject to VAT)				
						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Castle Street, Wallingford	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays , 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: 8 hours - £1.60 b) No charge	Season ticket £6 per week £68 per quarter £234 per annum Market trader permit £11 per quarter £39 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days
Goldsmith Lane, Wallingford	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 2 hours no charge - 3 hours £1.50 - 8 hours £3.30 b) No charge	Season tickets £13 per week £140 per quarter £482 per annum Market trader permit £23 per quarter £80 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

1	2	3	4	5	6	7 SCHEDULE OF CHARGES		8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES (not subject to VAT)				
						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Riverside, Wallingford (1 Nov to 29 Feb)		All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours 1 Nov to 29 Feb	b) Mondays to Sundays, all hours d) 23 hours	One hour	b) No charge	No charge	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days
Riverside, Wallingford: low season (1 Mar to 30 Jun and 1 Sep to 31 Oct)		All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours 1 Mar to 30 June and 1 Sep to 31 Oct	a) Mondays to Saturdays, (low season: 1 Mar to 30 Jun and 1 Sep to 31 Oct), 9am to 6pm c) 9 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 6pm to 9am d) 14 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour 50p - 10 hours £1.00 (Swimmers' permit holders – no charge (maximum stay one and a half hours)) b) No charge	Season ticket £4 per week £42 per quarter £146 per annum Market trader permit £7 per quarter	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

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						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Riverside, Wallingford (high season: 1 Jul to 31 Aug)		All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 1 Jul to 31 Aug, 9am to 6pm c) 9 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 6pm to 9am d) 14 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour 50p - 3 hours £1.00 - 10 hours £2.30 (Swimmers' permit holders – no charge (maximum stay one and a half hours)) b) No charge	Season ticket £9 per week £98 per quarter £336 per annum Market trader permit £16 per quarter	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

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						7a	7b	8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	CHARGES FOR PARKING TICKETS a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS Footnote 3	PARKING PERMITS: SEASON TICKETS AND PERMITS ((EXCL. VAT) WITHIN CHARGING PERIOD Footnote 1 Footnote 2	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
St Georges, Wallingford	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays, 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 8 hours £1.60 b) No charge	Season ticket £6 per week £68 per quarter £234 per annum Market trader permit £11 per quarter £39 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days
Thames Street, Wallingford	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	a) Mondays to Saturdays 9am to 5pm c) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays 5pm to 9am d) 15 hours and all hours Sundays	One hour	a) Not exceeding: - 1 hour no charge - 2 hours 80p - 5 hours £1.80 - 8 hours £2.30 b) No charge	Season ticket £9 per week £98 per quarter £336 per annum Market trader permit £16 per quarter £56 per annum	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

Footnote 1: The Council will charge £12 when asked to issue replacement tickets or permits.

Footnote 2: The owner of a vehicle that has CO2 emissions up to and including 119g/km may apply to the Council for a permit at a cost that is half the amount shown as set out in Column 7(b)

Footnote 3: No charges apply to motorcycles or vehicles displaying a disabled person's badge at all car parks.

SCHEDULE 2 – CAR PARKS NOT SUBJECT TO PARKING CHARGES

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES				
							8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	SCHEDULE OF CHARGES a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Mill Stream, Benson	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	b) Mondays to Saturdays , 8am to 8pm d) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays, 8pm to 8am d) (11 hours) and all hours Sundays	One hour	b) No charge b) No charge	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES				
							8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	SCHEDULE OF CHARGES a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
High Street, Chinnor	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	b) Mondays to Saturdays 8am to 8pm d) 8 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays 8pm to 8am d) (11 hours) and all hours Sundays	One hour	b) No charge b) No charge	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days
Adj Culham Lock, Culham	N/A	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight Height restriction 2 metres	All days all hours	b) Mondays to Saturdays 8am to 8pm d) 12 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays 8pm to 8am d) (11 hours) and all hours Sundays	One hour	b) No charge b) No charge	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 – 12 EXCESS CHARGES AND CONCESSIONARY EXCESS CHARGES				
							8	9	10	11	12
NAME OF PARKING PLACE	POSITION IN WHICH VEHICLE MAY WAIT	PERMITTED CLASSES OF VEHICLE	HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACE	PERMITTED PERIOD: a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIOD AND MAXIMUM PERIOD FOR WHICH VEHICLES MAY WAIT WITHIN c) CHARGING PERIOD d) NON CHARGING PERIOD	NO RETURN PERIOD	SCHEDULE OF CHARGES a) CHARGING PERIOD b) NON-CHARGING PERIODS	NOT DISPLAYING A VALID PARKING TICKET OR PERMIT	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT WHOLLY IN A PARKING SPACE OR PARKING IN A DISABLED PARKING SPACE	LEAVING A VEHICLE NOT IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE IN EXCESS OF ONE HOUR LONGER THAN THE PERMITTED PERIOD	LEAVING A VEHICLE MORE THAN 24 HOURS AFTER AN EXCESS CHARGE IS INCURRED
Church Road, Wheatley	Wholly within a parking space, disabled persons parking space or motor cycle parking space as indicated by surface markings	All classes of vehicle not exceeding 3.5 tonnes (70cwts) unladen weight	All days all hours	b) Mondays to Saturdays 9am to 5pm d) 4 hours b) Mondays to Saturdays 5pm to 9am d) (15 hours) and all hours Sundays	One hour	b) No charge b) No charge	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £50 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £25 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days of the excess charge notice otherwise concessionary excess charge £35 if paid within 14 days	Excess charge £70 payable within 28 days

Footnote 1: The Council will charge £12 when asked to issue replacement tickets or permits.

Footnote 2: The owner of a vehicle that has CO2 emissions up to and including 119g/km may apply to the council for a permit at a cost that is half the amount shown as set out in Column 7(b)

Footnote 3: No charges apply to motorcycles or vehicles displaying a disabled person's badge at all car parks

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Cabinet report



Report of head of economy, leisure and property

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To: CABINET

DATE: 4 December 2014

Oxfordshire LEADER programme

Recommendation

Subject to achieving a successful bid for the Oxfordshire LEADER programme, that the cabinet agrees to the council taking on the role of accountable body for the Oxfordshire LEADER programme, including the hosting of staff associated with the programme, and delegates the day-to-day management of this role to the head of economy, leisure and property.

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform cabinet members of the Oxfordshire LEADER (the 'Liaisons Entre Actions de Developpement de L'Economie Rurale' or 'Links between actions for the development of the rural economy') programme and to seek agreement in respect of the financial and legal implications of the project on the council.

Strategic objectives

2. The LEADER programme support's the council's strategic objective of "building the local economy" and corporate priorities of "continuing to invest to improve the viability and attractiveness of our towns", "supporting business growth in appropriate locations across the district, whilst protecting the character of our towns and villages" and "increasing the value of the visitor economy in South Oxfordshire".

Background

3. Between 2008 and 2013, the council acted successfully as accountable body for the Southern Oxfordshire LEADER programme. The programme was led by a local action

group (LAG) and awarded £1.2 million in grants, brought in more than £2.5 million in private sector and other funding, and supported the growth of more than sixty businesses.

4. In November 2013, the Southern Oxfordshire LAG (Local Action Group) was awarded £36,713.24 transition funding to develop activities towards a new LEADER programme. This enabled the council to employ a casual member of staff to support transitional activities for the LAG.
5. During this transition period, Defra and the European Union invited bids for the next funding programme from 2015 to 2020.
6. In September 2014, the council, on behalf of the LAG, submitted a local development strategy bid to Defra for a new LEADER project covering parts of South Oxfordshire, the Vale of White Horse, West Oxfordshire and Cherwell districts. A copy of the bid is attached to this paper for information.
7. The reason for this new geographical coverage is due to Defra guidance that seeks to achieve a maximum of 150,000 population in relation to Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) boundaries. The bid attracted the support of both the Oxfordshire LEP (OxLEP) and the South East Midlands LEP (SEMLEP).
8. In June 2014, following submission of the proposed LEADER area, Defra advised that an indicative budget of between £1.454 million and £1.899 million would be available if the Oxfordshire LEADER bid was successful. The outcome of this bid is expected to be announced shortly and officers anticipate that the new programme will start in early 2015.

Proposed Oxfordshire LEADER programme

9. The proposed Oxfordshire LEADER programme will provide funding and support to promote innovative economic growth within a defined area of rural Oxfordshire from 1 January 2015 to 2020. The population of the proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area is 149,716, which is below Defra's 150,000 population threshold.
10. The area includes a large part of the River Thames and some of its tributaries, which provides opportunities for tourism businesses. It has a highly productive agricultural sector, but there are still many ways in which this sector's productivity could be improved. It is near to Oxford, Reading and Swindon, which provide good market opportunities for the area's businesses. There are also opportunities to develop innovative projects through collaboration with the area's world class universities and research organisations.
11. It should be noted that other potential LEADER programmes cover the majority of the remaining area of rural Oxfordshire. The proposed programmes are Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs.
12. The themes of the Oxfordshire strategy for 2015 to 2020 are:
 - reviving the River Thames – encouraging people to use the river rather than pass by it
 - get growing, get selling, get eating more local food – improving the processing and marketing of local food

- unlock the potential of woodland – actively managing woodland and developing the local distribution network for woodfuel, timber and wood products
 - vibrant villages – creating more economic activity in villages to stop them becoming dormitories with limited opportunities.
13. As part of the LEADER project's approach (encouraging rural communities to work together, to ensure 'bottom-up' development for the local area), the project's delivery will be overseen by the Oxfordshire LAG. The LAG is a multi-sector partnership led by local business and community representatives and local farmers from across the rural area, with support from the relevant district councils. A new LAG is currently in development with representation from a range of bodies, including ORCC, Earth Trust, NFU, Sustainable Wallingford, Canal and Rivers Trust, OxLEP, SEMLEP, Oxfordshire Business Enterprises, Diocese of Dorchester, Wallingford Local Food Producers Market, Pharmagenesis, and Silva Foundation. The LAG will be formally constituted in January 2015, subject to a successful outcome of the bid.
14. Defra has specified that 70 per cent of projects must directly support rural economic growth and the remaining 30 per cent of projects must also contribute to jobs and growth. Given the focus for LEADER activity on jobs and growth, and the need to join up with other activity locally, it is important that the local strategy for LEADER supports and complements the OxLEP strategy for economic growth across Oxfordshire.

Council's role as accountable body

15. Officers propose that the council will continue to carry out the role of the accountable body on behalf of the LAG. The programme management staff will be employed and based within the accountable body to ensure effective administration of the public funds. These staff will comprise two posts, one of LEADER programme manager and one of LEADER financial monitoring officer.
16. The council acted as the accountable body for the Southern Oxfordshire LEADER programme 2008-2013 and the evaluation report of this programme noted that a survey of LAG members provided a number of very positive comments about the performance of the accountable body: "the link with SODC as accountable body worked well, both in terms of work done and value, and this relationship delivered more than just its statutory function".
17. There are several benefits arising from the council acting as accountable body for the Oxfordshire LEADER programme 2015-2020. These include the benefits to the local community (residents and businesses) in terms of ability to access funding to support economic development projects in the rural parts of the district. It also brings synergy with other teams within the council, including grants, planning and economic development. Whilst it is possible that another body outside the district could undertake the role as accountable body, the council is well placed to continue this role and has officers with the experience and expertise in undertaking the role. The transition LAG has requested that the council remains as the accountable body.
18. The accountable body has a responsibility to ensure that all LEADER activity complies with Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) operating procedures. The accountable body will account for the income and expenditure of the LAG and ensure it has an appropriate accountable system. The accountable body will also take responsibility for maintaining and retaining records of each project to provide an audit

trail, regularly monitoring the progress of the projects and carrying out physical checks on project expenditure. In addition, the accountable body will ensure full compliance with all project monitoring and record retention requirements after the programme ends in 2020.

19. The council is ideally suited to performing the role of the accountable body as it offers a wider range of capabilities including project management skills, financial management skills and the ability to employ staff and procure. The council offers best practice from its experience with other community and project involvement. The council also has suitably robust financial and IT systems and processes in place to abide by requirements of the programme.

Financial implications

20. The cost to the council will be incidental, with all staff and resource implications being covered by the facilitation and administration budget element of the project.

21. There is a risk that the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) may reject part of a claim. However, this risk will be minimised by:

- various financial monitoring procedures and checks that will be established (as per the previous programme), in line with the programme's operating manual
- an annual internal audit of the project (undertaken by the council's audit team)
- regular and continual dialogue between the project manager and Defra staff, which will include a regular inspections and audits by Defra.

Legal implications

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

Conclusion

23. The Oxfordshire LEADER project will continue providing support to rural enterprise and innovation in South Oxfordshire. Officers recommend that the council should play a key part in the Oxfordshire LEADER programme's delivery by taking on the role of accountable body for the programme, including the hosting of staff associated with the project, and delegates the day-to-day management of this role to the head of economy, leisure and property.

Background papers

- Oxfordshire LEADER Programme 2015-2020 Local Development Strategy (5 September 2014)



Oxfordshire LEADER Programme 2015-2020

Local Development Strategy

DRIVING RURAL ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH INNOVATION

Foreword

A very successful LEADER rural funding programme operated across the southern part of rural Oxfordshire from 2008 to 2013. A Local Action Group awarded £1.2 million in grants, brought in more than £2.5 million in private sector and other funding and supported the growth of more than sixty businesses.

Defra and the European Union are now inviting bids for the next funding programme from 2015 to 2020 and this strategy sets out how LEADER funding could be used to continue the success of the previous programme and extend its benefits to a wider area of rural Oxfordshire. The themes of our strategy for 2015 to 2020 are:

- Revive the River Thames – encouraging more people to use the river rather than pass by it
- Get growing, get selling, get eating more local food – improving the processing and marketing of local food
- Unlock the potential of woodland – actively managing woodland and developing the local distribution network for woodfuel, timber and wood products
- Vibrant villages – creating more economic activity in villages to stop them becoming dormitories with limited opportunities.

Rural Oxfordshire has the potential to make a more significant contribution to the continued economic prosperity and competitiveness of the county. However it is important that increased rural business activity helps to maintain the vitality of our villages, encourages investment in our countryside and creates and safeguards local jobs. This strategy will encourage this kind of activity. However the strategy will not be successful if there is no funding to influence business activity.

We trust that Defra will fund our strategy so that we can successfully encourage the economic growth that is appropriate for our communities.

Handwritten signature of Elizabeth Gillespie in black ink.

Elizabeth Gillespie
Chair
Transition Local Action Group

Handwritten signature of Suzanne Malcolm in black ink.

Suzanne Malcolm
Economic Development Manager
South Oxfordshire District Council
(Proposed as the accountable body for the
Oxfordshire LEADER funding programme)

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Appendices (separately attached)

- 1 - List of the Census output areas that make up the proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area
- 2 - Outputs submission table
- 3 - Report of the sustainability appraisal panel meeting
- 4 - Local Action Group terms of reference
- 5 - Marketing and communications strategy
- 6 - List of stakeholder groups
- 7 - Draft job description for programme manager
- 8 - Letter of endorsement from Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

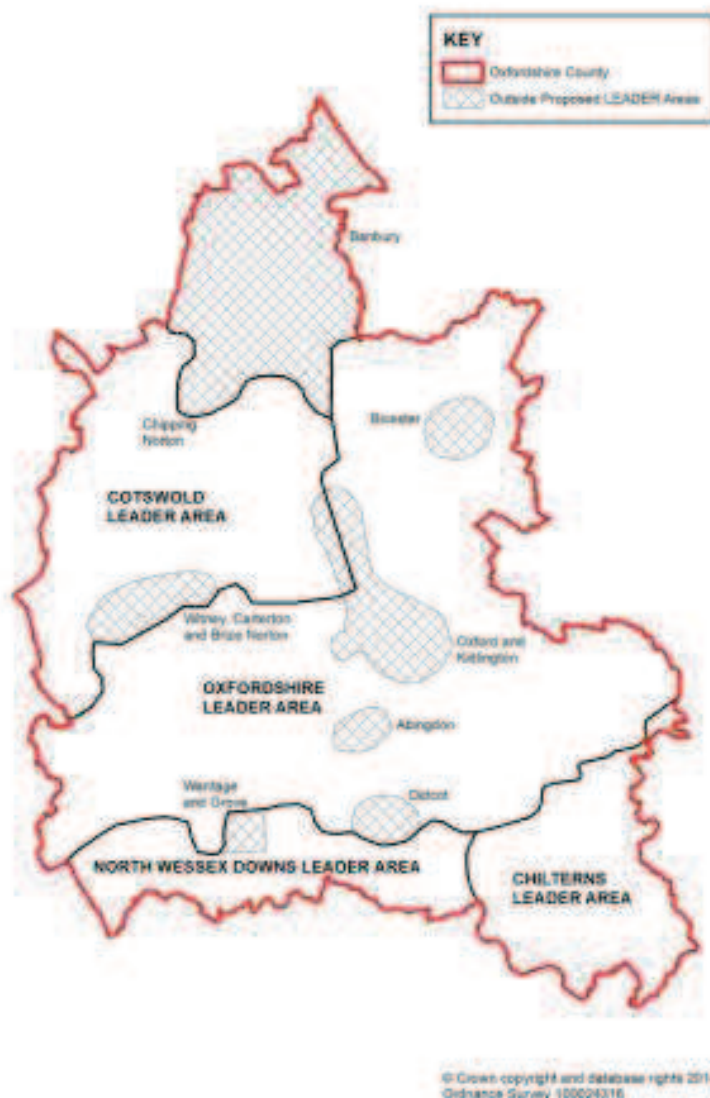
Introduction

The proposed Oxfordshire LEADER programme will provide funding and support to promote innovative economic growth within a defined area of rural Oxfordshire from 1 January 2015 to 2020. The population of a LEADER area cannot be more than 150,000 and the population of the proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area will be 149,716.

The area includes a large part of the River Thames and some of its tributaries which provides opportunities for tourism businesses. It has a highly productive agricultural sector but there are still many ways in which productivity could be improved. It is near to Oxford, Reading and Swindon which provide good market opportunities for the area's businesses. There are also opportunities to develop innovative projects through collaboration with the area's world class universities and research organisations.

It should be noted that other potential LEADER programmes cover the majority of the remaining area of rural Oxfordshire. The proposed programmes are Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs. A small part of Oxfordshire will not be within a LEADER area. However the whole of rural Oxfordshire is eligible for grant aid from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD). EAFRD is managed by the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP).

The map below gives an indication of possible LEADER coverage in Oxfordshire. Proposed areas are subject to approval by Defra (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)



The LEADER programme is funded by Defra and the European Union through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE).

Community-led local development is the key principle behind the use of LEADER funding. Local people form a local action group (LAG) to agree and deliver a local rural development strategy. The LAG is made up of public, community and private sector representatives.

The strategy is designed to build on the community's social, environmental and economic strengths or "assets" rather than simply compensate for its problems. The area covered by the strategy is relatively small as this ensures that the priorities in the strategy are relevant to everyone in the area.

Once the strategy had been agreed by Defra the LAG has delegated powers from Defra and the European Union to seek out, support, fund and monitor projects that are in line with the local strategy and RDPE objectives.

The RDPE sets out six national priorities for LEADER strategies:

- Support for increasing farm productivity
- Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification¹
- Support for rural tourism
- Support for rural services
- Support for cultural and heritage activity
- Support for increasing forestry productivity.

In addition Defra has specified that 70% of projects must directly support rural economic growth and the remaining 30% of projects must also contribute to jobs and growth.

Defra has advised that LEADER cannot be used to fund superfast broadband or skills development. OxLEP is proposing to use EAFRD to close superfast broadband gaps across rural Oxfordshire. It will use its allocation from the European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to support skills development.

Given the focus for LEADER activity on jobs and growth and the need to join up with other activity locally it is important that the local strategy for LEADER supports and complements the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership's (OxLEP) strategy for economic growth across Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire LEADER funding will be less than £2 million over six years. Therefore if the funding is going to make a real and long lasting difference it is important that it supports projects that demonstrate new ideas to increase rural economic activity and productivity – innovative projects that show the way for others.

The Local Action Group membership (LAG)

The LAG is a dynamic body which adapts itself to local needs. It is not a formally constituted group and its members are volunteers. As such it operates under a set of Terms of Reference (TOR) but as a body it has no legal responsibility or liability. The accountable body is South Oxfordshire District Council and is responsible for the delivery of the programme on behalf of the LAG.

LAG membership is open and flexible, ensuring representation of the key sectors including farming, forestry, rural businesses and rural communities. An emphasis is placed on the private/community sector rather than representation from public bodies, with no one sector making up more than 49% of the membership. This model puts the responsibility for local action with local people, acting in partnership with other organisations. It also helps to ensure that a balanced mix of local knowledge and other relevant expertise is brought together to deliver the programme's strategy.

¹ Small businesses employ less than 50, have a turnover of less than € 10 m and a balance sheet of less than € 10 m. Micro-businesses employ less than 10, have a turnover of less than € 2 m and a balance sheet of less than € 2 m.

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A maximum Local Action Group membership of 25 will ensure that the group can effectively represent the broad range of interests across the area, whilst allowing all members to fully participate in meetings. Non-members can be invited to observe meetings.

There is no fixed length of term for LAG members and members are encouraged to remain engaged for the lifetime of the programme. However, if members do step down, replacement representatives will be recruited from the appropriate sector. New members will also be welcomed to join the LAG throughout the programme's delivery, especially if they bring a particular skill, background, interest, or knowledge to the group that will support the programme's delivery.

The LAG will regularly reflect on the group's membership and meeting attendance to ensure that it actively represents the local area, its communities and their needs.

A Local Action Network will act as a forum to engage with other stakeholders from across the LEADER area. The Network provides an opportunity for new LAG members to come forward.

If interest warrants it, a formal membership election could be coordinated at a Local Action Network meeting to ensure that the LAG membership represents the wider local area. The need for such an election will be reviewed on an annual basis.

It is proposed that the initial membership of the LAG will be made up of:

Organisation or interest	Sector	Name
Faringdon Area Partnership	Community	Daphne Saunders
Faringdon Folly Trust	Community	Eddie Williams
Earth Trust	Community	Jayne Manley
South Oxfordshire Community Action Groups	Community	John Gordon
Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust	Community	Mark Phillips
Oxford Ditch Cruising Club	Community	Philip Sachse
Oxfordshire Rural Community Council	Community	Tom McCulloch
The Sylva Foundation	Community	Paul Orsi
NFU	Private	Annie Vernon
Farmer	Private	Jane Bowler
Tourism South East	Private	Jeanette Howse
CLA	Private	Andrew Ingram
Jennings	Private	Mike Jennings
Farmer	Private	Philip Chamberlain
Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership	Private/public	To be advised
South Oxfordshire district councillor	Public	Elizabeth Gillespie
West Oxfordshire District Council	Public	Dene Robson
Cherwell District Council	Public	Steven Newman
South Oxfordshire District Council/Vale of White Horse District Council	Public	Suzanne Malcolm

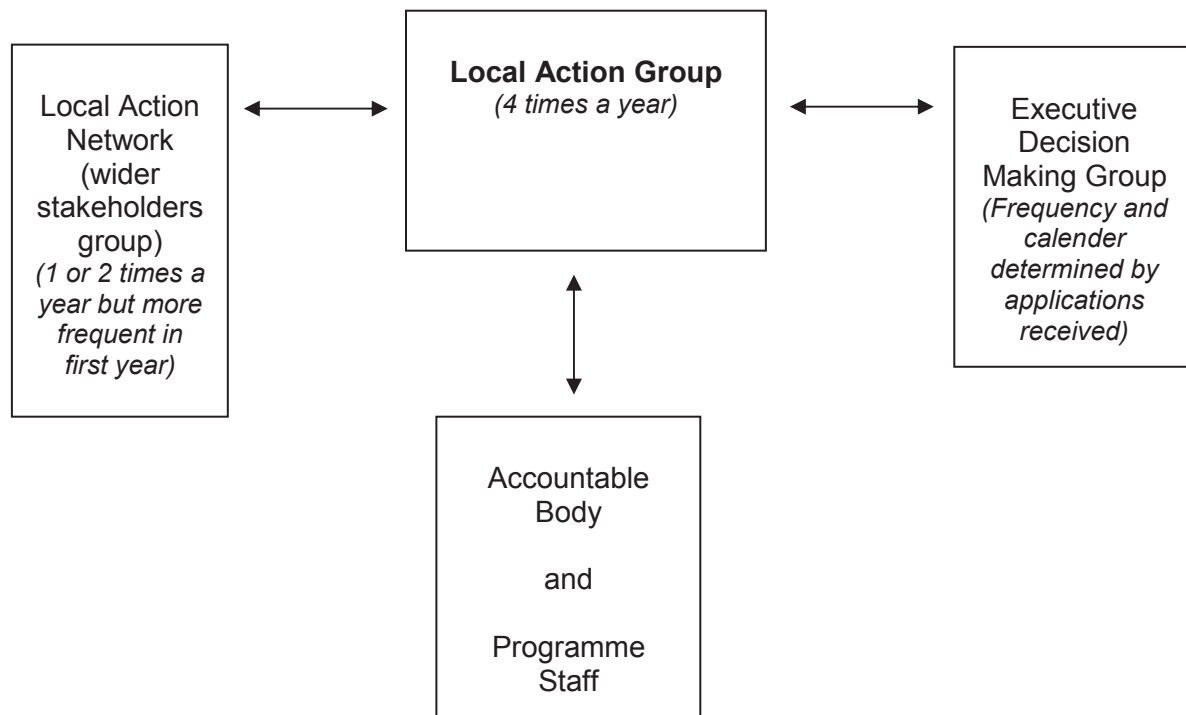
Regular meetings of a Local Action Network in different parts of the LEADER area, will provide the opportunity for others, particularly those who cannot afford the time required for LAG membership, to become involved in the development and delivery of the Oxfordshire LEADER programme.

Most of the Local Area Network meeting will be thematic and they will provide an opportunity to encourage under-represented groups to become involved in LEADER.

LAG structure and decision making process (see Appendix 4 for full terms of reference)

Structure

'The organisational structure of the LAG and the Decision Making Group (DMG) worked well, as did the mixture of volunteer skills provided by LAG members' (Southern Oxfordshire LEADER Programme 2008-2013 Evaluation, April 2013)



LAG role and responsibilities (see Appendix 4 for full LAG terms of reference)

- Encourage the community to come forward with innovative projects that will help to deliver the strategy
- Oversee the strategic direction, coherence, and effectiveness of the Oxfordshire LEADER programme
- Oversee delivery of the local development strategy and ensure activity is relevant to the strategy's priorities and objectives
- Ensure the programme takes full account of local needs and opportunities
- Help to develop and endorse the programme's annual business plan
- Oversee the programme's over-arching delivery including:
 - financial budget
 - outputs and outcomes delivered
 - monitoring and evaluation
- Oversee the programme communications strategy, within this:
 - Publicise and communicate the invitation for grant applications
 - Utilise own networks to raise awareness of the programme and to create community involvement
- Work with Defra to ensure compliance with LEADER and RDPE rules and regulations
- Work with the accountable body to maintain accurate and timely financial management.
- Support and guide the programme manager's work
- Support programme delivery by offering insight and expertise, for example;
 - Support projects within a member's own field or sector in order to develop strong applications
 - Offer technical advice or expertise during the appraisal stage of the application.

- Offer monitoring advice and ongoing support to successful projects
- Provide knowledge of key policy matters to the LAG
- Build strategic links with appropriate partners and encourage joint projects that build collaboration with similar and complementary interests.

Accountability of the LAG and members' conduct

- LAG members commit to attending LAG meetings
- LAG members will ensure that the sector that they represent has an effective voice at meetings. However LAG members commit to act in the interest of the programme, and not just their own organisations or personal interests.
- LAG members will listen and take into consideration views and concerns expressed by others when making decisions
- All LAG members will take joint responsibility for decisions made by the group
- The LAG must be able and willing to justify decisions to others if needs be
- LAG members will work effectively with the Accountable Body and Defra and follow the Defra Code of Conduct for working well together.

Executive Decision Making Group - A small Executive Decision Making Group makes funding decisions and reviews applications. This group consists of a maximum of six members of the LAG, including members representing farming, forestry or rural communities. Members are selected by the chair on an annual rotating basis, with agreement of the LAG.

- There is a minimum quorum of three for any decision making meeting
- All members have an equal vote
- The outcome of the vote will be taken on a majority, in the event of a tied vote every effort will be made to resolve issues and come to a consensus by discussion. As a last resort the chair will have the casting vote.

Executive Decision Making Group role and responsibilities:

- To consider project full application and appraisal reports, and related recommendations (Members need to have gained a technical understanding of the projects being discussed)
- To consider presentations by project applicants and ask the applicant and appraiser relevant questions about the project
- To approve or decline applications in line with established procedures (as set out in the Defra National Operating Manual)
- To feedback to the full LAG, to ensure all members are aware of decisions made.
- To undertake monitoring by carrying out project visits and inspections.

Role of Local Action Network (wider stakeholder network):

- To encourage the community to come forward with innovative projects that will help to deliver the strategy
- To provide networking opportunities for all partners / stakeholders within the LEADER area.
- To encourage knowledge exchange and learning, and the sharing of best practice.
- To act as a consultative body to ensure the scheme is taking full account of local needs and opportunities and delivering on behalf of the area's rural communities and businesses.
- To act as an awareness raising network, to increase understanding of the Oxfordshire LEADER programme and the role of the Local Action Group.
- To raise the area's community capacity, and provide opportunities for joint working.

Role and responsibilities of accountable body (South Oxfordshire District Council):

- Ensure compliance with RDPE operating procedures including; selection and approval of individual projects and processing grant payments against approved claims

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- Responsible for maintaining records of each project to provide an audit trail, and regularly monitoring the progress of the projects
- Responsible for evidencing decision making process e.g. minutes of meetings, attendance lists etc
- South Oxfordshire District Council will provide:
 - Project management skills
 - Financial management skills
 - Ability to employ staff
 - Ability to procure.

LEADER programme management staff

The programme will have the equivalent of two members of staff, the Programme Manager and the Finance Monitoring Officer. They will be employed and managed by the accountable body in accordance with the accountable body's terms and conditions.

They will be responsible for the day to day activities of the programme including all of the grant applications and claims administration, communicating with applicants and stakeholders and keeping the LAG, Accountable Body and Defra briefed on all programme activities.

Programme manager key responsibilities (see Appendix 7 for draft job description):

- Development, facilitation and co-ordination of the LAG
- Successful delivery of programme action plan
- Compliance with Defra guidance for delivery of programme
- Promote as widely as possible the programme to ensure wider awareness and understanding of the programme via press releases, social media, website etc
- Encourage all sectors of the community to participate
- Build capacity of local farmers, foresters and representatives in the local rural community to apply for funding
- Support applicants with the development of project applications and clarifying the project application process and feedback
- Ensure projects are delivered to agreed outcomes, budget and timescales
- Liaison with neighbouring LAG groups.

Finance monitoring officer key responsibilities:

- Produce offer letters for successful applicants and ensure all applicants are fully conversant with the requirements of the reporting and grant claims process
- Receive, calculate and process claims in accordance with the programme criteria and both internal/external audit requirements
- Ensure all post approval project monitoring and financial information is input into management information system.

Training requirements

In line with the recommendation of the Southern Oxfordshire LEADER Programme 2008-2013 Evaluation, there will be training for LAG members, project assessors and programme staff, before 1 January 2015 on project selection criteria. This initial training will help to ensure that there are no delays in approving projects as soon as the programme starts and therefore there will be significant grant expenditure in the first half of the programme.

Initial training will include:

- Introduction and background to the LEADER 2015 – 2021 programme
- The rules and regulations associated to the delivery of European funding
- Economic growth and employment needs and opportunities
- Project innovation and sustainability.

Training will be organised in collaboration with neighbouring LAGs to ensure that there is a consistency of approach for areas that share strong socio-economic links (e.g. a shared interest in reviving the

Thames). Joint training will also allow costs to be shared and will ensure the effective use of the time of the Defra and Rural Payments Agency staff that provide support for the training.

The Local Action Network will provide awareness training to stakeholders who are well placed to promote the benefits of the Oxfordshire LEADER programme.

LAG members and project assessors that join after the start of the programme will receive training from the programme staff.

Further training will take place if there are any significant changes to the selection criteria during the lifetime of the programme, or if the LAG identifies the need for training as part of its annual review of the strategy.

Equal opportunities statement (the public sector equality duty)

The Accountable Body, South Oxfordshire District Council is committed to equality. It has due regard to the general duty when exercising its functions in order to:

- Eliminate any potential for unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity in service delivery and employment between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Accountable Body will work with the LAG to ensure that as many sectors of the community as possible can participate in the delivery of the strategy through the development of project ideas and plans.

Involvement of the community in the preparation of this strategy (see Appendix 6 for list of stakeholder groups involved)

Activities and participation

- 6 June 2014 – LEADER project launch event; a video report of the event was released see <http://youtu.be/H0W5dA-YuVE> The event press release was picked up by the Oxford Mail, see [www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/11271334.Joint bid for funding to improve the rural economy/?ref=var_0](http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/11271334.Joint_bid_for_funding_to_improve_the_rural_economy/?ref=var_0)
- 12 June 2014 – Briefing for Oxfordshire branch of Country Landowners Association
- 20 June 2014 – Project launch featured in 'Vision' the economic development newsletter for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse. The newsletter is distributed to 528 people, mainly businesses.
- 23 June 2014 – Participation in Berks, Bucks & Oxon NFU CAP briefing meeting attended by approximately 80 farmers.
- 4 July 2014 – Public consultation workshop; 32 people from the private, public and community sectors took part in the workshop and discussed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) in the LEADER area, and how the SWOT affects the delivery of strategic priorities.
- 18 July 2014 – Meeting with Thames Valley Farmers' Market members at Abingdon Farmers' Market
- Public consultation on draft strategy from 1 to 22 August 2014, see www.southernoxfordshireleader.org.uk/news_detail.php?id=30 and www.southoxon.gov.uk/news/2014/2014-08/how-would-you-boost-rural-economy and [www.heraldseries.co.uk/news/11402186.Rural grant bid/](http://www.heraldseries.co.uk/news/11402186.Rural_grant_bid/) . Fourteen written responses were received. Respondents were generally supportive of the strategy and made a number of comments that have helped to strengthen the strategy.
- As a result of the consultation activity the transition programme management team has already received details of a number of innovative project ideas that have the potential to become early applications for funding.

Map of LEADER area

The proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area



The population within the proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area is 149,716. In accordance with Defra requirements the area is made up of census output areas rather than parishes or council wards. A list of Census output areas is attached in Appendix 1.

Census output areas are the lowest geographical level at which census estimates are provided. They are designed to be of a similar population size and household type. Urban/rural mixes are avoided where possible. The average population of a census output area in England and Wales is 309. Census output area boundaries fit with county and district boundaries but do not necessary fit with parish boundaries.

The area does not include the larger built up areas such as Oxford, Bicester, Abingdon, Didcot and Wantage and Grove, but smaller market towns like Faringdon, Thame and Wallingford have been included in the area to help in creating a coherent area rather than a piecemeal area. The population of these towns is principally classified as urban by the Office of National Statistics.

The population in the LEADER area classified as rural is 105,791 and the population classified as urban is 43,925.

The socio-economic links to Oxford and the River Thames and its tributaries (with a connection to the Oxford Canal) are specific features that help to create a coherent area.

The proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area joins up with the proposed Chilterns, Cotswolds and North Wessex Downs LEADER areas, all of which extend into Oxfordshire.

Economic profile of the LEADER area

LEADER funding is allocated to boost sustainable² rural economic growth and this section of the strategy reviews the LEADER area’s rural economy, in order to help in identifying opportunities for the effective use of the funding.

Wherever possible information solely about the LEADER area is presented in this section. However because the Oxfordshire LEADER area crosses district boundaries and covers parts of districts it is not possible to present all statistical information based solely on the LEADER area. In these instances information is presented for the closest geography to the LEADER area, on the basis that it provides a good indication of the situation within the LEADER area.

Employment

Employment by sector in the Oxfordshire LEADER area (All usual residents aged 16 to 74 in employment the week before the 2011 Census)³

Industry	All persons
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1,275
Mining and quarrying	84
Manufacturing	5,966
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	378
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	638
Construction	6,300
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	10,552
Transport and storage	2,436
Accommodation and food service activities	3,316
Information and communication	4,589
Financial and insurance activities	1,744
Real estate activities	1,089
Professional, scientific and technical activities	7,781
Administrative and support service activities	3,293
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	6,894
Education	9,522
Human health and social work activities	8,211
Other	4,017
Total	78,085

Home working has increased in Oxfordshire as whole since 2001: the number of residents usually working from home rose by 11,300 to 43,100. The increase in home working has been greater than the

² We define sustainable development as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

³ Nomis – official labour market statistics, datasets KS605EW to KS607EW

national rate. 12.9% of Oxfordshire residents usually worked from home in 2011, compared to 10.3% in 2001.⁴

Agriculture

Oxfordshire has a very effective agricultural sector. In 2012/13 the output per worker was £114,464 compared to £90,919 for South East England.⁵ It has an agricultural Gross Value Added (GVA) of £91 million p.a. Total value of output is £236 million, profitability is £72 million and farmers are directly spending £145 million in the supply chain. Oxfordshire has 192,754 hectares under farmland, out of total area of 260,500 hectares, equating to 74% being farmland. By farmed land, 56% is down to cereals, with the next biggest proportion being livestock grazing (roughly 30%). 63% of the farmed land is currently under agri-environment schemes.⁶

However food self-sufficiency is falling, as is farmers' share of the value of a basket of food items. The Food Production to Supply Ratio (commonly referred to as the "Self Sufficiency Ratio") in the UK is estimated to be 60% for all food in 2013 and 73% for indigenous type food. This compares with 62% and 77% respectively in 2012.⁷ Farmers' share of the value of a basket of food items has dropped from 47% in 1988 to 36% in 2013⁸:

Also the UK farming population is getting older. In 2000 only 5% of "agricultural holders" were under 35 years old, compared to 7% in 1990. Farmers are older than people in other self-employed occupations. 52% of farmers are 55 or older, compared to 27% of rural self-employed and 22% of urban self-employed.⁹ The age structure of the farming community is on average older than in the EU 28: in the UK only 4.1% of farmers are under 35 years old (7.5% in EU-28), while 28.4% are older than 64 (30% in EU-28).¹⁰

Tourism

The Oxfordshire LEADER area is an attractive visitor destination adjacent to the world heritage city of Oxford. There are opportunities to build the local visitor economy and attract a range of new visitors, bringing with them associated spend in the local economy. These opportunities lie around the development of rural tourism, building on the area's natural features, the Thames and its tributaries, walking and cycling routes and links with the neighbouring AONBs in the Cotswolds, North Wessex Downs and Chilterns. Theme-related tourism is identified as the key growth area in tourism by VisitBritain and in the Oxfordshire LEADER area offers strong potential around history, literature and film links. The challenge is to develop these visitor opportunities to encourage the conversion of day to staying visitors, which will bring in additional expenditure and support job creation.

Oxford benefits from the largest share of visitor trips (32%), overnight stays and expenditure but the tourism sector is also significant in the rural parts of Oxfordshire. In 2012 just over a fifth of all domestic overnight trips were spent in West Oxfordshire (22%). Cherwell accounted for 17%, South Oxfordshire 17% and the Vale of White Horse 12%.

⁴ Oxfordshire County Council 2011 Census Insight insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/2011-census-briefing-travel-work-and-homeworking-february-2013

⁵ Farm Business Survey www.farmbusinesssurvey.co.uk/DataBuilder/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=Results&rqREF=008148

⁶ Defra 2010: www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june

⁷ Defra 2013 www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315103/auk-2013-29may14.pdf

⁸ Defra 2013 www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315103/auk-2013-29may14.pdf

⁹ Defra 2004 www.archive.defra.gov.uk/evidence/economics/foodfarm/reports/documents/Entry.pdf

¹⁰ European Commission 2014 www.ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-in-your-country/pdf/uk_en.pdf

Cherwell accounted for 27% of visitor day trips (A significant volume of day trips to Cherwell were to the retail outlet Bicester Village), South Oxfordshire and the Vale received 17% of the day trips and West Oxfordshire 15%.

Of the total tourism spend of £1.76 billion generated in 2012, 38% of total spend was received by businesses in Oxford. Businesses in Cherwell received 21% of the total spend. Businesses in West Oxfordshire received 15% of spend. 14% of total spend was received by businesses in South Oxfordshire and the remaining 12% benefited businesses in the Vale.¹¹

Projects focusing on the many attractions of the River Thames have the potential to boost visitor spending across the county. Many projects will involve collaboration with river-related businesses in Oxford, as it is a key location on the river, where many trips start and finish.

Forestry

Oxfordshire has 23,397 hectares of woodland compared to 21,298 hectares in Buckinghamshire and 20,835 hectares in Berkshire. South Oxfordshire has 9,184 hectares, West Oxfordshire 6,413 hectares, Vale of White Horse 4,595 hectares and Cherwell 2,949 hectares.

The vast majority of Oxfordshire's woodland is privately owned. It is estimated that about 47% of woodland, mostly in private ownership, is not well-managed and Government has an aspiration for two thirds of England's woodland to be managed by 2018¹². Additional management input would bring economic, social and environmental benefits. In Oxfordshire the estimated yield of woodfuel in energy terms could be 113,887 megawatt hours per year; the equivalent of 11,388,747 litres of heating oil.¹³ The Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment Community Woodfuel Programme helps local communities to increase their supply and demand for woodfuel and in doing so, reduce their carbon footprints, improve their biodiversity, and reduce their 'fuel miles'.¹⁴

There is an opportunity for Oxfordshire to lead the way in encouraging innovative and sustainable ways of managing private woodland, including the re-establishment of ancient woodland.

Landscape and countryside

The proposed Oxfordshire LEADER area includes the Vale of White Horse, the Aylesbury Vale within Oxfordshire, the Midvale Ridge, the Upper Thames Vale (outside the Cotswolds Area of Natural Beauty) and part of the Cotswolds (outside the Cotswolds Area of Natural Beauty).¹⁵

The guidance document 'Biodiversity and Planning in Oxfordshire'¹⁶ points out that 'Oxfordshire's green spaces, rights of way, rivers, lakes, canals, commons and wildlife habitats are important assets. They have a wide range of benefits not just for wildlife but also for people, e.g. quality of life, recreation, access to nature, attracting businesses and visitors, maintaining land value, and climate change adaptation.'

A 2012 survey into satisfaction with access to Oxfordshire's countryside found that people regularly spend money whilst out and about in the countryside. The amount of spending at between £5 and £20 would indicate that spending is relatively small scale and regular – such as a couple of pints of beer and

¹¹ The economic impact of tourism on Oxfordshire 2012, Tourism South East

¹² www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/221023/pb13871-forestry-policy-statement.pdf

¹³ Forestry Commission

¹⁴ www.oxonwoodfuel.org.uk

¹⁵ Oxfordshire Wildlife & Landscape Study

www.owls.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wps/wcm/connect/occ/OWLS/Home/Oxfordshire+Biomap/

¹⁶ www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/environmentandplanning/countryside/naturalevironment/Wwholedocument.pdf

sandwiches/light meal whilst out on a walk or ride. Higher spending rates are noticeable for food at a pub – possibly linked to group walking.¹⁷

The extent of countryside of a similar character within the LEADER area, with its network of footpaths and bridleways (including the Thames Path national trail), creates opportunities for projects involving a number of businesses that promote the benefits of the countryside and attract visitors.

Deprivation

Following the 2011 Census, the Office of National Statistics has classified a number of households in the LEADER area as deprived in one or more dimensions of deprivation. A household is deprived in a dimension if they meet one or more of the following conditions:

- Employment: any member of a household not a full-time student is either unemployed or long-term sick,
- Education: no person in the household has at least level 2 education, and no person aged 16-18 is a fulltime student,
- Health and disability: any person in the household has general health 'bad or very bad' or has a long term health problem, and
- Housing: Household's accommodation is ether overcrowded, with an occupancy rating -1 or less, or is in a shared dwelling, or has no central heating.

A household is classified as being deprived in none, or one to four of these dimensions in any combination.¹⁸The following table shows the number of households with some measure of deprivation in the Oxfordshire LEADER area.

Total number of households in LEADER area	Household is not deprived in any dimension	Household is deprived in 1 of the 4 dimensions	Household is deprived in 2 of the 4 dimensions	Household is deprived in 3 of the 4 dimensions	Household is deprived in all 4 dimensions
59,237	32,549	17,746	7,605	1,231	106

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (IMD 2007) is the Government’s official measure of multiple deprivation at small area level. The table below shows the most deprived rural lower super output areas (LSOAs) in the Oxfordshire LEADER area. The IMD rank ranges from 1 (the most deprived area in England) to 32,000 (the least deprived). The IMD decile identifies whether each area is in the most deprived 10%, 10-20%, 20-30% and so on.¹⁹

LSOA Code	IMD Rank	IMD Decile
Berinsfield E01028604	12,809	30-40%
Berinsfield E01028605	15,864	40-50%
Launton E01028500	17,407	50-60%
Kirtlington E01028498	18,254	50-60%

Access to services is an issue for many residents of rural Oxfordshire. A higher proportion of people live more than 10km from a job centre in rural areas in Oxfordshire (43%) than across rural England as a whole (30%). There are 10,420 households in rural areas in Oxfordshire with no access to a car or van.

¹⁷ www.consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/countrysidesurvey2012/consultationHome

¹⁸ Nomis – official labour market statistics, dataset QS119EW

¹⁹ Deprived areas in rural Oxfordshire, Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion [OCSI] and Oxfordshire Rural Community Council [ORCC], 2011

In the most deprived rural areas in Oxfordshire, 21% of households have no access to a car or van. These people are likely to face particular challenges to accessing key services and amenities.²⁰

‘SWOT’ analysis of the LEADER area

The following ‘SWOT’ analysis was prepared at a public consultation workshop on 4 July 2014. The workshop involved 32 representatives of the private, public and community sectors.

Strengths	Weaknesses
River Thames and its tributaries Productive agricultural sector Rural area but close to Oxford and London People want to work and live here Many people highly qualified Science Vale hi-tech business cluster High percentage of volunteers Large number of community enterprises Lots of home based businesses	Hidden pockets of rural deprivation High house prices Cost of business premises Out commuting from villages Village pubs and shops closing Slow broadband speeds Poor mobile reception Lower salaries in tourism and land based sectors Thames boating businesses badly affected by flooding and poor summers Lack of access to finance for micro start ups Poor road infrastructure and traffic congestion High energy costs, particularly in areas away from gas network
Opportunities	Threats
Growing demand for local food Pub is a shop Community owned pubs, shops and other businesses Investment in rail network Collaboration with the Universities of Oxford, Oxford Brookes and Reading Promoting Thames in cooperation with Cotswold and Chilterns LEADER areas Geological and paleontological tourism linked to mineral extraction Tourism potential of churches Agatha Christie and Midsomer Murders tourism Making more of woodland Village based supply chains Growing population Better use of footpath and bridleway network Events on the Thames and elsewhere Using village halls to support home based businesses	Reductions in public transport subsidies Changes in public service delivery Aging population Economic uncertainties of farming Agricultural land being allocated for residential development Price of farmland discouraging new entrants Online shopping threatening village shop Farmers markets have to compete with big supermarkets Climate change Low unemployment creates skills shortages Impact of more frequent flooding on businesses

Alignment with Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP)

Oxfordshire has come together to create a vision for the future to realise our potential for ourselves and our country. The Oxfordshire LEADER strategy is being drawn up against the backdrop of the much broader Strategic Economic Plan for Oxfordshire that has been developed by OxLEP. LEADER funds are an important source of funding and support for rural Oxfordshire. A City Deal and Growth Deal have been agreed with Government and there will be soon be agreement on the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) deal for Oxfordshire.

²⁰ Access to services in rural Oxfordshire, Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion [OCSI] and Oxfordshire Rural Community Council [ORCC], 2011

The Oxfordshire LEADER strategy will directly support the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan's programme for growth, in particular the objective to support innovation led growth.

The strategy for LEADER will also complement the strategy for ESIF which will help to provide training, business advice and town centre revitalisation. ESIF will also add value to the Better Broadband Oxfordshire programme by helping to bring fast broadband to the most remote parts of Oxfordshire.

Within ESIF Oxfordshire's EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) funds are to be split between two of the four themes identified as potential priorities for the programme:

- Funding small scale renewable and broadband Investments in rural areas, focused on renewable schemes with long term viability and job creation potential (£700,000), and to close superfast broadband gaps (£1.4m).
- Support for tourism activities in rural areas (£700,000) again focused on viable and employment generating schemes. OxLEP is also planning to fund tourism marketing (with matched contributions from Oxfordshire's businesses) to attract new visits from high growth, high spend markets.

Whilst LEADER does not directly fund skills development and training the strategy recognises that skills and training are very important for the successful delivery of funded projects. The Oxfordshire Skills Strategy 2020 sets out a number of priorities for the creation of a local skills infrastructure. Project providers will be encouraged to assess training needs for the successful delivery of their project and work with training providers to upskill their workforce.

Oxfordshire's allocation from the European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) will help to deliver the 'Innovative People' objective of the Strategic Economic Plan "Delivering and attracting specialists and flexible skills at all levels, across all sectors, as required by our businesses, with full, inclusive employment and fulfilling jobs'.

The strategy for LEADER will also complement the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan which focuses on the priority localities of Science Vale Oxford in the south, through Oxford, to Bicester in the north of the county - the Oxfordshire Knowledge Spine. The plan acknowledges that 'Whilst our focus is to increase economic growth centred around the largely urban knowledge spine we are equally cognisant of the significant contribution our rural and visitor economy makes to our economic success and the unique quality of life on offer in Oxfordshire.'

The Strategic Economic Plan provides the context in which specific issues can be addressed in order to unlock Oxfordshire's full economic potential and thus, continue to support the UK economy as it moves back into sustained growth. Investment in Oxfordshire will further cement our ambition to be at the forefront of global economic competitiveness, bringing direct benefits to the country through increased economic activity, productivity and innovation.

OxLEP appreciates that Oxfordshire's rural areas are also home to a range of innovative institutions and businesses, all of which are candidates for support under the ESIF business support and skills programmes. FAI farms for example operates from the old University of Oxford farm, and combines innovation in research on agricultural techniques and methods alongside education and consultancy, with an increasingly global reach and reputation for demonstrating UK expertise in a sector with significant growth potential in the global food market.

Oxfordshire is also home to initiatives championing new approaches to green (environmental) and blue (water use) management, spurred by both the county's natural environment assets, and its pressures, such as propensity to flooding. The strength of innovation and potential businesses from emerging methods such as catchment area management, innovative renewables and sustainable exploitation of natural resources such as woodlands positions this sector well for both generic innovation support, as well as specific low carbon programmes.

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To support OxLEP's rural priorities LEADER will prioritise funding to innovative projects that increase economic activity and productivity and link with low carbon and renewable initiatives. Tourism projects should contribute to the aim of attracting new visits from high growth, high spend markets. Projects involving new build or conversion of existing buildings will be expected to include the installation of ducting for broadband fibre.

LAG membership will be available to an OxLEP representative and the LAG will welcome comment on and support for its activities from the new Oxfordshire Growth Board which is being set up to facilitate collaboration between local authorities on economic development, strategic planning and growth. A letter of support and endorsement from OxLEP is attached as Appendix 8.

Our strategy and local priorities

Our strategy will focus on rural Oxfordshire's strengths and opportunities in order to overcome weaknesses and threats.

We will make the most of one of our key assets - the River Thames and its tributaries - as it has the potential to act as a catalyst for the growth of the area's tourism sector and help farmers add value to their produce through local food marketing.

Our strategy will have four key strategic themes:

- **Revive the River Thames** – encouraging more people to use the river rather than pass by it. The upper reaches of the Thames, outside Oxford and well-known riverside towns, are an overlooked visitor attraction. As a result river related businesses have not generally prospered. However the Oxfordshire Local Action Group considers that the Thames has great potential. The river and its associated landscape and history can satisfy a wide range of visitor interests. The surrounding countryside is also ideal for walking and cycling. The Local Action Group wants to encourage innovative projects by new and existing businesses that will use the potential of the Thames to create sustainable economic growth.
- **Get growing, get selling, get eating more local food** – improving the processing and marketing of local food. Farmers are receiving a smaller share of the value of a basket of food. National distribution of food creates a very large carbon footprint and more and more people, even in rural areas, do not fully appreciate the contribution of farming to the local economy and environment. The Oxfordshire Local Action Group wants to reconnect local farmers and local people, shortening the food chain and retaining more of the added value from processing and marketing in the local economy.
- **Unlock the potential of woodland** – actively managing woodland and developing the local distribution network for woodfuel, timber and wood products. Additional management of Oxfordshire's many privately owned woodlands can create new economic, social and environmental benefits. The Oxfordshire Local Action Group wants to encourage private woodland owners to work with fencing businesses, community woodfuel groups and craft businesses to stimulate demand for local wood products.
- **Vibrant villages** – creating more economic activity in villages to stop them becoming dormitories with limited opportunities. Businesses based in villages not only create jobs but also bring the village to life during the working day. They also sustain local services such as shops and pubs. The Oxfordshire Local Action Group wants to encourage businesses to expand in villages. It will also encourage projects that help to attract and retain businesses in villages; from business support services in a village hall to community run pubs and shops.

We will support projects that are innovative and make a difference by creating new products and markets and using new technologies. We will favour projects that tap into the knowledge and creativity provided by the area's world class universities and research organisations.

The new OxLEP business support service (www.oxfordshirebusinesssupport.co.uk) will help project applicants to connect with the expertise that is needed to develop and deliver innovative projects.

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We will support projects that are sustainable and make a difference by creating local job and skills opportunities, encouraging fewer car journeys by residents and visitors and reduce the carbon footprint of new buildings and converted buildings.

We will favour projects that encourage the participation of all sectors of our community.

The following table sets out why we have chosen our strategic themes, what we want to achieve and how it can happen. Further detail is also available in Appendix 2 – Outputs Submission Table.

National priority and local themes	What we want to achieve with LEADER (objectives and outcomes)	Our local evidence for the change needed (challenges and opportunities)	How are we going to deliver the change? (the type of projects we want to support)
<p>National: Support for increasing farm productivity</p> <p>Local: Get growing, get selling, get eating more local food</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. encourage the production and marketing of good local food to support the local economy and reduce our carbon footprint 2. encourage an increase in the percentage of farm income derived from the marketplace 3. help to safeguard and create land based jobs <p>Target 5 new jobs</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. highly productive area 2. UK food self-sufficiency falling 3. farmers share of basket of food falling 4. aging workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - resource efficient farming - flood resilience - welfare management changes - on farm processing, storage and marketing
<p>National: Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification</p> <p>Local: Get growing, get selling, get eating more local food</p> <p>Vibrant villages</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. encourage reuse of redundant farm buildings to support farm diversification and micro-enterprises 2. encourage an increase the percentage of farm income derived from the marketplace 3. encourage innovative business activity in villages 4. encourage businesses and community enterprises that serve the local community 5. help to safeguard and create rurally based jobs <p>Target 45 new jobs</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. farmers share of basket of food falling 2. out-commuting from villages 3. loss of village shops and pubs 4. areas of deprivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - on farm processing, storage and marketing - conversion of redundant buildings to provide micro-business units - refurbishment of pubs and shops - community shops and pubs
<p>National: Support for rural tourism</p> <p>Local: Revive the River Thames</p> <p>Vibrant</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. encourage businesses that promote cycling, boating and walking 2. encourage businesses that promote good local food, support the local economy and reduce our carbon footprint 3. encourage businesses that 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. wide variety of existing visitor attractions and numbers 2. many potential visitor attractions (e.g. cycleways) 3. farmers share of basket of food falling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - accommodation upgrades - investment in green infrastructure (e.g. signage on cycleway) - support for events and festivals

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National priority and local themes	What we want to achieve with LEADER (objectives and outcomes)	Our local evidence for the change needed (challenges and opportunities)	How are we going to deliver the change? (the type of projects we want to support)
villages	work with others to promote local heritage 4. encourage projects that promote and enhance the Thames and its tributaries as a visitor destination 5. help to safeguard and create rurally based jobs Target 8 new jobs		
National: Provision of rural services Local: Vibrant villages	1. encourage facilities that serve businesses as well as residents 2. encourage projects that help residents with family commitments to take up employment 3. help to safeguard and create rurally based jobs Target 2 new jobs	1. increasing number of home workers 2. areas of deprivation	extension or alteration of village hall, pub or church to provide space for childcare, business or retail services
National: Support for cultural and heritage activity Local: Vibrant villages Revive the River Thames	1. encourage activity that creates or enhances a visitor destination 2. help to safeguard and create rurally based jobs Target 2 new jobs	1. wide variety of natural and built heritage attractions and places	- conservation and enhancement of existing attractions - enhancement of new attractions (e.g. church) - support for events and festivals
National: Support for increasing forestry productivity Local: Unlock the potential of woodland	1. encourage an increase in the supply and use of local wood and reduce our carbon footprint 2. encourage an increase in the demand for local wood 3. help to safeguard and create land based jobs Target 2 new jobs	1. extent and potential of woodland 2. existing community woodfuel programme providing advice	- woodland management plans - processing storage and marketing of wood products - wood fuel supply chains linked with the Oxfordshire Woodfuel Programme

Grant examples from the Southern Oxfordshire LEADER programme 2008 to 2013

The following are examples from the previous Southern Oxfordshire LEADER programme of the kind of projects that will help to deliver the strategy for the proposed new programme.

Support for increasing farm productivity

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Step Farm - grant for energy efficiency aspects of a new milking parlour and facilities for increased educational visits to the farm, see www.southernoxfordshireleader.org.uk/case_studies_detail.php?id=9

Cost: £38,050 , Grant: £17,220

Outcomes: five individuals benefiting, use of new technology

Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification

Shotover Brewery - grant for a new commercial microbrewery in a redundant agricultural building in Horspath, see www.southernoxfordshireleader.org.uk/images/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Shotover%20Brewery.pdf

Cost: £34,043, Grant: £20,425

Outcomes: two new jobs

Stainswick Farm Oil - grant for sign-written vehicle to deliver and advertise oil seed rape oil processed and bottled on farm, see www.stainswickfarm.co.uk/index.asp?m=1&t=Home

Cost: £10,685, Grant: £4,718

Outcomes: two jobs safeguarded

Support for rural tourism

Clays Organic Market Garden - grant for cafe and farmshop, see www.southernoxfordshireleader.org.uk/images/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Lilys%20farm%20shop%20and%20tea%20room.pdf

Cost: £53,526, Grant: £31,045

Outcomes: two new jobs

Support for rural services

Brightwell cum Sotwell Community Village Stores - grant for new community-run village shop. The project included extending the village hall, developing the community enterprise as an Industrial Provident Society and establishing a volunteer team to run the shop, see

www.southernoxfordshireleader.org.uk/images/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20Brightwell%20cum%20sotwell%20shop.pdf

Cost: £168,000, Grant: £30,000

Outcomes: two new jobs

Support for cultural and heritage activity

Immense Productions Ltd – grant for the film ‘Tortoise in Love’. A film produced by and starring residents of Kingston Bagpuize , see

www.southernoxfordshireleader.org.uk/case_studies_detail.php?id=10

Cost: £38,460, Grant: £10,000

Outcomes: village benefited from increased local spending during filming, increased visitors after film release and increased sense of local identity

Support for increasing forestry productivity

AH Cornish - grant for firewood processor to allow farm to manage own woodland and sell firewood locally.

Cost: £35,605, Grant: £17,803

Outcomes: two individuals benefiting

Programme of activity

As soon as Defra confirms funding for the Oxfordshire LEADER area the recruitment of programme management staff will commence.

At the same time the LAG will meet to formally agree its membership and terms of reference. The LAG will also meet with business support organisations to discuss and agree the kind of support that farmers

and micro-businesses will require in order to make eligible and successful applications for LEADER funding.

An early activity planned for December 2014 will be the launch of the strategic ‘Revive the Thames’ theme. A special Local Action Network meeting will bring together river-related businesses, river users, business support organisations and statutory agencies to discuss the challenges and opportunities that the river faces. The following table shows our programme of early stage activity and key milestones.

Further special Local Action Network meetings will take place early in 2015 to promote the other themes (Get growing, get selling, get eating more local food, vibrant villages and unlock the potential of woodland)

The following table shows our programme of early stage activity and key milestones:

November 2014	Defra award funding
November 2014	First meeting of new Oxfordshire LAG
November 2014	Meeting with business support organisations to agree support requirement
November 2014	Briefing for OxLEP, local government and statutory agencies
November 2014	Celebration event to create awareness of funding and encourage applications
November 2014	Website for programme launched
November 2014	Media activity to create awareness of funding and encourage applications
November 2014	Recruitment of Programme Manager and Finance Monitoring Officer
December 2014	Appointment of Programme Manager and Finance Monitoring Officer
December 2014	Training of LAG
December 2014	Training of programme staff
December 2014	Preparation of 2015 action plan
December 2014	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
December 2014	Revive the Thames Local Action Network meeting
December 2014	First applications submitted
January 2015	Get growing... Local Action Network meeting
January 2015	First meeting of Decision Making Group
January 2015	LAG meeting
January 2015	First applications approved
February 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
February 2015	Vibrant villages Local Action Network meeting
March 2015	Unlock the potential of woodland Local Action Network meeting
March 2015	Decision Making Group meeting
March 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
April 2015	LAG meeting with review of progress to date
April 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
May 2015	Decision Making Group meeting
May 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
June 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
July 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
July 2015	Decision Making Group meeting
July 2015	LAG meeting
August 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
September 2015	Meeting of Local Action Network with keynote speaker
September 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
September 2015	Decision Making Group meeting
October 2015	LAG meeting
October 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
November 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
November 2015	Decision Making Group meeting
December 2015	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants
December 2015	Defra annual inspection
January 2016	First annual LAG meeting

January 2016	Decision Making Group meeting
January 2016	Advice surgeries/1-2-1 support for grant applicants

Targets, results and outputs 2015 to 2020

The following output targets are based on the minimum funding allocation that the Oxfordshire LEADER area could be allocated if 70 LEADER groups across England are funded as part of the 2015 to 2021 programme (£1,352,180 after an 18% allowance is made for management and administration costs). Outputs targets will be amended if more or less funding is allocated.

Programme outputs will be monitored by the programme and reported to the LAG. If the outputs fall below target the programme team will investigate the reasons for the drop in performance and make recommendations on corrective action.

Projects and benefits	Project numbers	Businesses benefiting	Individuals benefiting
Support for increasing farm productivity	10	10	22
Support for micro & small enterprises & farm diversification	27	27	50
Support for rural tourism	12	18	34
Support for rural services	3	3	6
Support for cultural & heritage activity	3	6	12
Support for increasing forestry productivity	6	6	12
Total	61	70	136

Jobs	Created	Safeguarded
Support for increasing farm productivity	5	18
Support for micro & small enterprises & farm diversification	45	36
Support for rural tourism	8	18
Support for rural services	2	2
Support for cultural & heritage activity	2	2
Support for increasing forestry productivity	2	9
Total	64	85

Tourism	Activities supported	Additional overnight stays
Support for rural tourism	12	100

Investment	LEADER investment	Other investment
Support for increasing farm productivity	£270,436	£540,872
Support for micro & small enterprises & farm diversification	£540,872	£1,081,744
Support for rural tourism	£270,436	£540,872
Support for rural services	£67,609	£135,218
Support for cultural & heritage activity	£67,609	£135,218
Support for increasing forestry productivity	£135,218	£270,436
Total	£1,352,180	£2,704,360

Wider benefits	Villages benefiting	Population benefiting
Support for increasing farm productivity	6	20,000
Support for micro & small enterprises & farm diversification	12	40,000
Support for rural tourism	6	20,000

Support for rural services	3	5,000
Support for cultural & heritage activity	2	5,000
Support for increasing forestry productivity	3	10,000
Total	32	100,000

Sustainability appraisal

The sustainability appraisal of this strategy has been carried out by a panel of local government officers who have not been involved in the preparation of the strategy. See Appendix 3 for report of sustainability appraisal panel meeting.

The strategy has been assessed in terms of its impact on:

- Economic sustainability
- Environmental sustainability
- Social sustainability.

The panel considered that the proposed strategy was appropriate for the proposed LEADER area and would not have any negative sustainability impacts. However the panel pointed out that a positive impact is dependent on the successful delivery of a programme of projects that support the strategy.

The panel would like the LAG and programme management team to be pro-active in identifying appropriate projects and animating and coaching members of the rural community, so that they can successfully deliver projects that support the strategy. They welcomed the use of the Local Action Network to do this.

The panel stressed that the project assessment process must fully assess the environmental and social impact of projects, as well as the economic impact. The panel drew particular attention to the need to assess if project applicants had fully considered measures that will mitigate the risk that a project could encourage additional car usage. The assessment should also carefully check that a project will not have a disproportionate impact on any group.

Local Action Network meetings and programme guidance documentation should include information about how the economic, social and environmental sustainability of projects can be enhanced.

Proposed co-operation activity

Cooperation activities will support the implementation of the strategic priorities and joint working will be developed with adjacent LEADER areas - in particular the other LEADER areas that cover parts of Oxfordshire and the River Thames. Such cooperation would align closely to the identified strategic objectives and proposed actions in the strategy. One proposal could be the organisation of joint LAG meetings and/or events as well as encouraging and supporting project promoters to develop joint projects. Finally, cooperation beyond these areas in England, the UK and Europe will also be developed focusing on the delivery of strategic priorities.

Management and administration

Accountable body

South Oxfordshire District Council will undertake the role of accountable body on behalf of the LAG. The programme management staff will be employed and based with the accountable body to ensure effective administration of the public funds.

The council acted as the accountable body for the Southern Oxfordshire LEADER Programme 2008-2013 and the evaluation report of this programme noted that a survey of LAG members provided a number of very positive comments about the performance of the accountable body: 'The link with SODC as accountable body worked well, both in terms of work done and value, and this relationship delivered more than just its statutory function.'

The accountable body will ensure that all LEADER activity complies with RDPE operating procedures. The accountable body will account for the income and expenditure of the LAG and has an appropriate accounting system. The accountable body will also take responsibility for maintaining and retaining records of each project to provide an audit trail, regularly monitoring the progress of the projects and carrying out physical checks on project expenditure. The accountable body will ensure full compliance with all project monitoring and record retention requirement after the programme ends in 2020.

South Oxfordshire District Council is ideally suited to performing the role of the accountable body as it offers a wide range of capabilities including project management skills, financial management skills and the ability to employ staff and to procure. The council offers best practice from its experience with other community and project involvement. The council also has suitably robust financial and IT systems and processes in place to abide by requirements of the programme.

Project development and assessment procedures

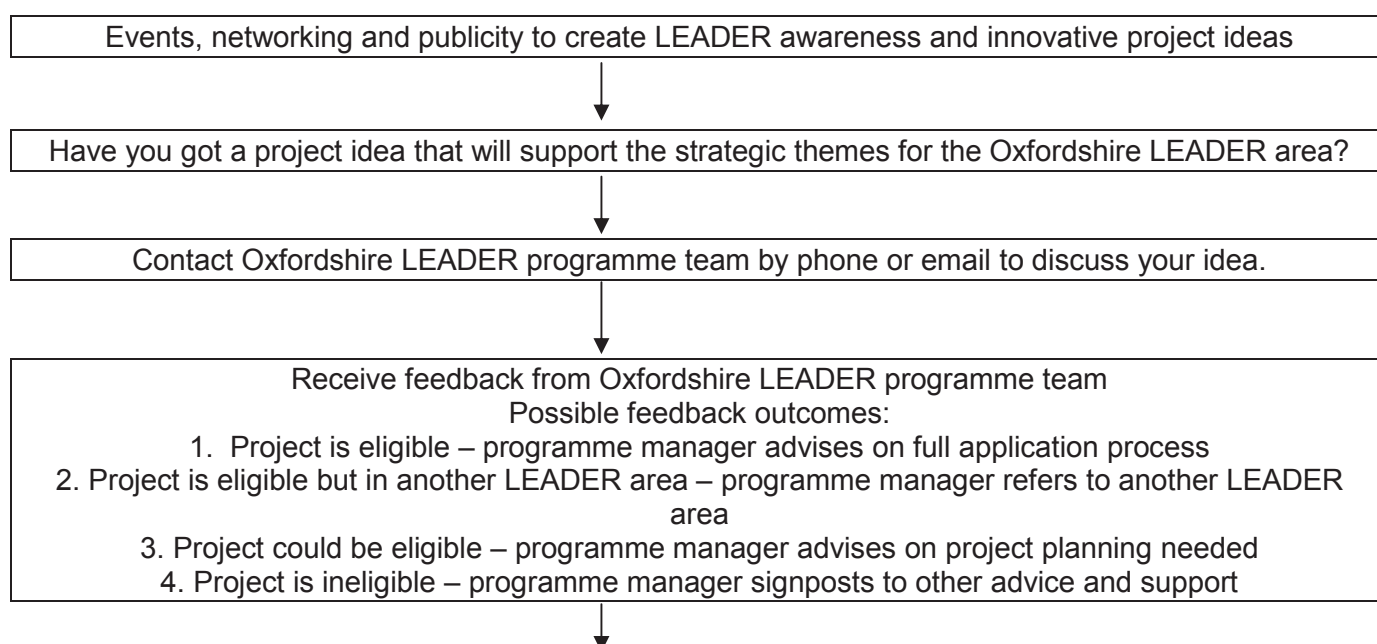
There will be openness and transparency in the design of project selection criteria, the analysis of project ideas and the selection of projects. Where a LAG member has a personal interest in a project they must withdraw from the decision making proceedings. A spreadsheet of potential conflicts of interest will be held by the programme manager.

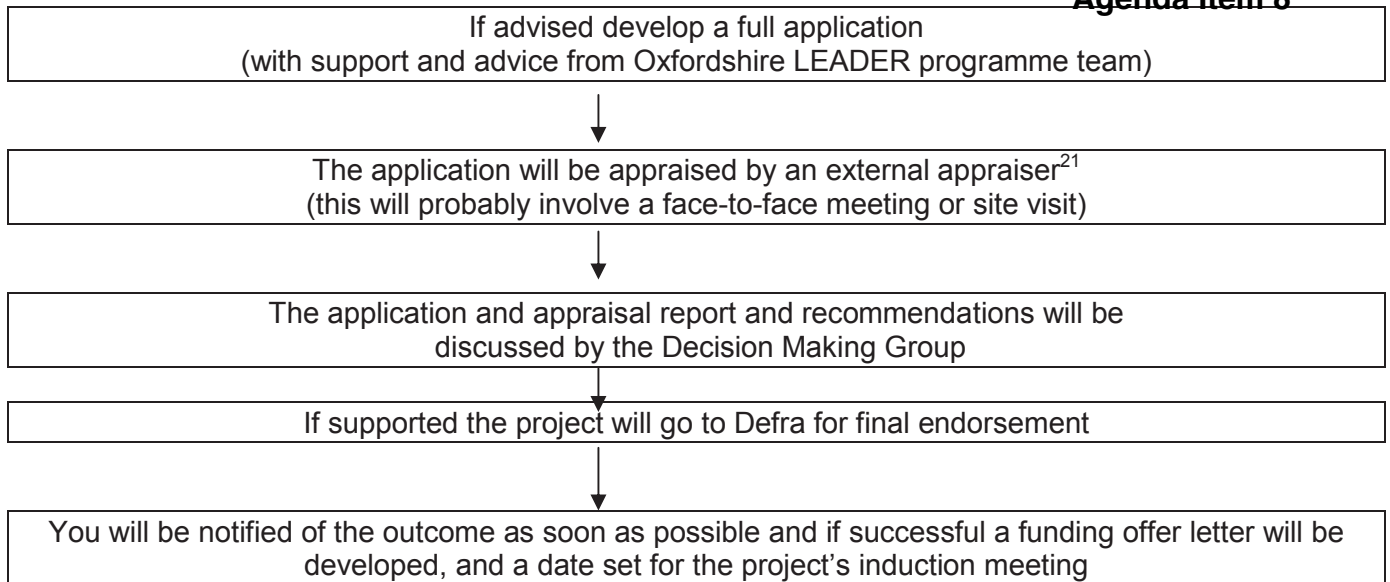
Checks will be carried out including:

- Eligibility of the proposed investment
- Conformity with selection criteria set out in the Rural Development Development Programme England (RDPE)
- Conformity with state aid and other obligatory standards
- Reasonableness of proposed activity
- Reliability of the applicant.

The accountable body will regularly check that the correct procedures are being carried out by all the parties involved in the programme, including examination of a representative sample of the projects themselves. These checks will include the appraisal and approval or refusal of projects, and the management of conflicts of interest within the accountable body and the Local Action Group. There will be a clear separation of duties for project appraisal, project approval, claim authorisation, post payment supervisory checks and project inspections.

It is proposed that the project development and assessment procedure will be as follows:





It is envisaged that the process from formal expression of interest to project application approval will take approximately 2 months.

Claims and payments

Following the issuing of the offer letter and the commencement of the project the Oxfordshire LEADER programme team will monitor the project to identify possible weaknesses or risks that could affect the success of the project. If issues are identified corrective measures will be discussed and undertaken to put the project back on track. Monitoring will include checking claims and progress reports and undertaking routine and targeted inspection visits.

No grant claims will be finalised until a progress report has been submitted. The programme team undertake the calculations and checks of grants due to be paid to projects

Any variations of project costs and claim amounts over a fixed value will not be agreed without obtaining the prior approval of Defra. The programme team will also notify to Defra all variations below the fixed value within a prescribed period.

Additionally, the programme team or accountable body will notify Defra without delay of:

- Any changes in the ownership of the business that applied for grant aid
- Any changes in the ownership of the grant aided items
- If any grant aided assets are sold during the period up to 5 years after the final grant payment
- If the business ceases trading.

Grant payment recommendations will entered onto the new Rural Payments Agency CAP-D IT system by the programme team ready for approval by Defra and direct payment to the project beneficiary.

The programme team will not submit a payment recommendation for any applicant or project deliverer where it is believed that a project is not being delivered in a satisfactory way, or where there are reasons to believe that the correct procedures have not been carried out. In these circumstances the programme team will report to the LAG and refer the issue to Defra.

Marketing and communications (see Appendix 5 for full marketing and communication strategy)

²¹ It is proposed that 10% of appraisals will be shared (reciprocally) with the neighbouring proposed Chilterns LEADER project manager

Agenda Item 8

There is a clear need to ensure that the community is aware of the Oxfordshire LEADER programme and that project applications are submitted from all parts of the area. Marketing and communication is a critical tool not only to raise awareness of the programme but to encourage suitable applications. The communications and publicity strategy is therefore a key element of the overall strategy and the quality of its delivery will help to determine the overall success of the programme.

Aims

The Oxfordshire LEADER programme's marketing and communications strategy has the following overall aims:

- Ensure that the programme is effectively and transparently publicised, so that residents and businesses in the LEADER area are aware of the programme and the benefits that it provides to the rural community
- Encourage the submission of high quality applications from across the area that deliver a range of sustainable community benefits in a cost-effective way.

Objectives

The Oxfordshire LEADER programme's marketing and communications strategy has the following objectives:

- Create general awareness of the benefits of the LEADER programme
- Provide advice and support to potential applicants and their advisers
- Encourage potential applicants with relevant projects to act and apply for funding.

LEADER audiences

The audience for marketing and communication activity in support of the Oxfordshire LEADER programme can be broadly divided into three groups:

- i) Potential applicants:
 - Farmers and growers (including advisers)
 - Rural micro-businesses not involved in tourism (including advisers)
 - Rural tourism businesses (including advisers)
 - Parish councils, rural voluntary, community groups (including advisers)
 - Foresters (including advisers).
- ii) Residents living in the LEADER area
 - Councillors and opinion formers (e.g. press, managers and officeholders of business and community groups)
 - Other residents
- iii) Other LAGs interested in co-operation.

Communication channels

Taking into account the resources that are available and the lessons learnt from the previous programme the following communication channels will be used:

Website (communication objectives: awareness, advice)

A website was developed for the previous programme (www.southernoxfordshireleader.org.uk) and is being used as a communications portal for the transition period. It is managed by programme staff.

The website will be refreshed to take account of the new programme and will be a key tool for distributing information about the programme.

It will have links to stakeholders' websites in order to encourage collaboration. It will also have links to other sources of funding and advice. Stakeholders will be encouraged to have reciprocal links from their own website.

The website will also have a secure element for LAG members to access. This will be the key portal for the programme's management information and meeting papers.

An annual budget will be required for design amendments, hosting and maintenance.

Twitter (communication objectives: awareness, advice)

A Twitter account will be opened and managed by programme staff. It will be a key tool for distributing information about the programme, including details on the LAG membership, the LAG's priorities and objectives, Local Area Network meetings, how to apply, project updates and case-studies.

The use of this channel will not result in significant budgetary implications.

Printed leaflet (communication objectives: awareness, advice)

A leaflet is a passive form of communication but is a valuable way of creating awareness amongst audience members who do not initially have the time or interest to engage in face to face communication. A leaflet also acts as an aide memoir for audience members who have engaged in face to face communication.

A budget will be required for design and printing.

Press releases (communication objectives: awareness)

Press releases will be distributed at regular intervals throughout the programme. Their timing will be coordinated with other events and occurrences such as the programme launch and the calendar of wider stakeholder networking events (the Local Action Network).

The press release circulation and related media contact will also encourage multi-media coverage including local radio, and television, through which LAG members will be encouraged to represent the project.

The use of this channel will not result in significant budgetary implications.

Local Action Network (communication objectives: awareness, advice and support, action)

Local Action Network (LAN) meetings will be held to encourage improved understanding, the sharing of project ideas and collaboration across the Oxfordshire LEADER area. The LAN will also act as a consultative body to make sure the LEADER programme is taking full account of local needs and opportunities.

Most of the LAN meetings will be thematic and the meetings will be one way of encouraging under-represented groups to become involved in LEADER.

These meetings will be a key element of the marketing and communication strategy to publicise the programme and its activities to the broader rural community, businesses, and landowners across the LEADER area. The meetings will take place at least once a year (starting with a meeting at the end of 2014 to launch the programme). In order to maximise attendance the meetings will normally have a keynote speaker with a high local or national reputation in relation to rural development.

A budget will be required for venue costs and refreshments.

Stakeholder meetings (communication objectives: awareness, advice and support, action)

LAG members and programme staff will attend meetings of stakeholder groups on a regular basis. A list of stakeholder groups is included as an appendix to this strategy.

The use of this channel will not result in significant budgetary implications.

Farmers' markets (communication objectives: awareness, advice and support, action)

LAG members and programme staff will attend local farmers', local producer and county markets on a regular basis.

The use of this channel will not result in significant budgetary implications

Local events (communication objectives: awareness, advice and support, action)

LAG members and programme staff will attend a number of local events throughout the lifetime of the programme, including:

Thame Market
Town and parish council forums
White Horse Show, Uffington (August Bank Holiday)
Thame Show (September)
Newbury Show (September)
CLA, NFU and business networking events

A budget will be required for exhibition stand costs.

Financial plan

Defra has received initial funding applications for 86 LEADER areas across England. The applications are for a share of the national LEADER budget of approximately £138 million from 2014 to 2020. The final selection of areas will be made by a national panel in the autumn of 2014.

In the interim Defra has indicated how much funding the Oxfordshire LEADER area could receive, based on one of the following three outcomes in the autumn:

1. All 86 proposed LEADER areas are selected and funded from the available budget of £138 million.

For Oxfordshire this could be £1,454,000.

2. A minimum allocation if only 70 areas (including Oxfordshire) are selected and funded from the available budget of £138 million.

For Oxfordshire this could be £1,649,000.

3. A maximum allocation if only 70 areas (including Oxfordshire) are selected and funded from the available budget of £138 million.

For Oxfordshire this could be £1,899,000.

The indicative allocations are based on a minimum budget for each area of £1 million with a top up based on the rural nature of the area including the distribution and density of the population.

Indicative allocations could also change slightly if the boundaries of the indicative Oxfordshire LEADER area change slightly. For example if Defra determines that one of the areas selected to be within the overall area is ineligible because it is 'too urban' or is part of a built up area, the majority of which is outside the LEADER area.

Oxfordshire LEADER expenditure has been profiled evenly across the programme period from 1 January 2015. It is assumed that the programme will get off to a good start as the transition programme management team has already received details of a number of innovative project ideas that have the potential to become early applications for funding.

At this stage it is assumed that the proportion of the budget spent on management and administration will be 18%, which is the maximum allowable.

The remaining budget will be apportioned between the national priorities as follows:

Support for increasing farm productivity (20%)

- Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification (40%)
- Support for rural tourism (20%)
- Support for rural services (5%)
- Support for cultural and heritage activity (5%)
- Support for increasing forestry productivity (10%).

It is understood that there are no restrictions or guidelines on the proportion of the budget that can be allocated to capital or revenue expenditure. However if the Oxfordshire LEADER programme is going to make a long last difference it will need to direct the majority of its funding to capital projects that create longer lasting assets.

Expenditure for each year by priority

1. All 86 proposed LEADER areas are selected and funded from the available budget of £138 million.

Policy Priority	Expenditure Forecast (£)							Total programme
	Financial Year							
	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	
Support for increasing farm productivity	23,846	47,691	47,691	47,691	35,768	23,846	11,923	238,456
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	47,691	95,382	95,382	95,382	71,537	47,691	23,846	476,912
Support for rural tourism	23,846	47,691	47,691	47,691	35,768	23,846	11,923	238,456
Provision of rural services	5,961	11,923	11,923	11,923	8,942	5,961	2,981	59,614
Support for cultural and heritage activity	5,961	11,923	11,923	11,923	8,942	5,961	2,981	59,614
Support for increasing forestry productivity	11,923	23,846	23,846	23,846	17,884	11,923	5,961	119,228
Running costs and animation	39,258	39,258	39,258	39,258	39,258	39,258	26,172	261,720
Grand Total	158,486	277,714	277,714	277,714	218,100	158,486	85,786	1,454,000

2. A minimum allocation if only 70 areas (including Oxfordshire) are selected and funded from the available budget of £138 million.

Policy Priority	Expenditure Forecast (£)							Total programme
	Financial Year							
	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	
Support for increasing farm productivity	27,044	54,087	54,087	54,087	40,565	27,044	13,522	270,436
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	54,087	108,174	108,174	108,174	81,131	54,087	27,044	540,872
Support for rural tourism	27,044	54,087	54,087	54,087	40,565	27,044	13,522	270,436
Provision of rural services	6,761	13,522	13,522	13,522	10,141	6,761	3,380	67,609
Support for cultural and heritage activity	6,761	13,522	13,522	13,522	10,141	6,761	3,380	67,609
Support for increasing forestry productivity	13,522	27,044	27,044	27,044	20,283	13,522	6,761	135,218

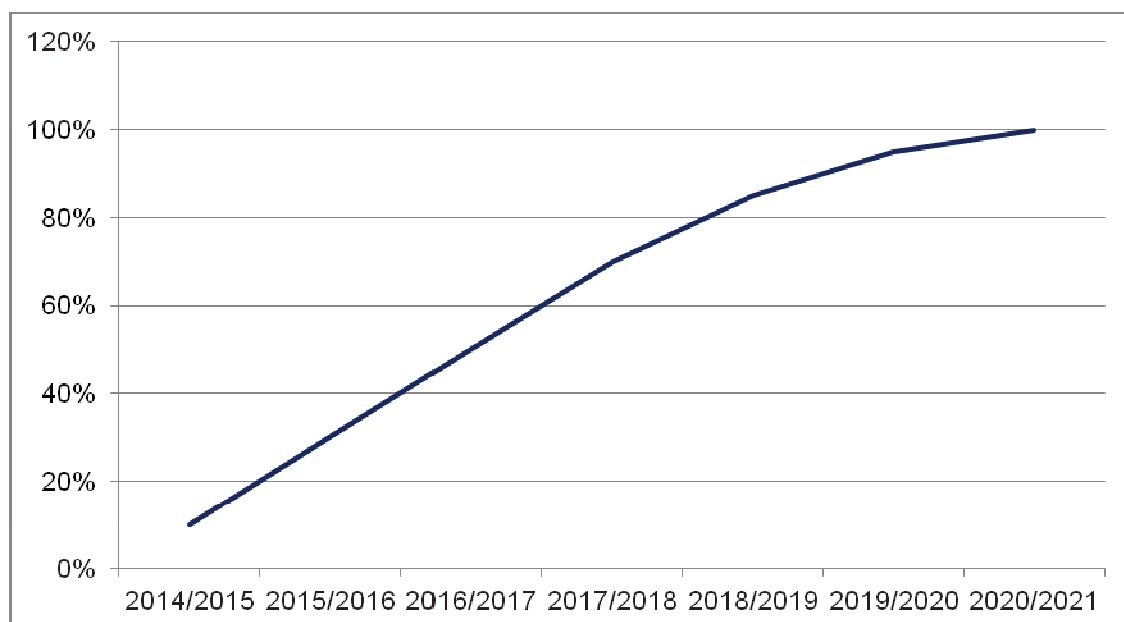
Running costs and animation	44,523	44,523	44,523	44,523	44,523	44,523	29,682	296,820
Grand Total	179,741	314,959	314,959	314,959	247,350	179,741	97,291	1,649,000

3. A maximum allocation if only 70 areas (including Oxfordshire) are selected and funded from the available budget of £138 million.

Policy Priority	Expenditure Forecast (£)							Total programme
	Financial Year							
	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	
Support for increasing farm productivity	31,144	62,287	62,287	62,287	46,715	31,144	15,572	311,436
Support for micro and small enterprises and farm diversification	62,287	124,574	124,574	124,574	93,431	62,287	31,144	622,872
Support for rural tourism	31,144	62,287	62,287	62,287	46,715	31,144	15,572	311,436
Provision of rural services	7,786	15,572	15,572	15,572	11,679	7,786	3,893	77,859
Support for cultural and heritage activity	7,786	15,572	15,572	15,572	11,679	7,786	3,893	77,859
Support for increasing forestry productivity	15,572	31,144	31,144	31,144	23,358	15,572	7,786	155,718
Running costs and animation	51,273	51,273	51,273	51,273	51,273	51,273	34,182	341,820
Grand Total	206,991	362,709	362,709	362,709	284,850	206,991	112,041	1,899,000

Overall funding profile

The following graph shows how funding to support projects will be spread relatively evenly across the lifetime of the programme



Use of grants, procurement or other types of financial support

It is assumed that the majority of funding that will be levered by the LEADER programme in the form of matched funding for grants, will be private sector funding provided by applicants. However in line with the need for innovation some applicants may be able to obtain match funding from universities,

research organisations or the Technology Strategy Board. Matched funding for rural service and cultural and heritage projects may come from local government, charitable trusts and lottery funding.

In line with the LEADER ethos that development is carried out by ‘local actors’ it is not envisaged that projects will be procured. Procurement rules can result in organisations based outside the area delivering projects.

Risk assessment

Assessment of Oxfordshire LEADER programme risks

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Mitigation
LAG cannot recruit members from all sectors of the community	Low	High	The Local Area Network will help in building links with all sectors of the community and create the awareness and interest needed to recruit LAG members
The LAG and/or programme management team do not have adequate skills in place	Low	High	Ongoing training will be provided to ensure that the required skills are available
Breakdown in partnership between LAG and accountable body	Low	High	The LAG will work closely with the Accountable Body to ensure that there is full communication. The terms of reference and strategy will ensure that both the LAG and Accountable Body know what is expected of them.
Insufficient project applications are submitted	Low	High	The marketing plan will be key to raising awareness and ensuring that sufficient projects of good quality are brought forward. There will be a range of support available to applicants to help them prepare applications.
Applicants have problems in obtaining adequate matched funding	Low	High	The programme team will provide guidance where necessary as to how additional funds could be raised.
Project outputs are below target	Medium	Medium	Estimated and actual project outputs will be carefully monitored so that underperformance can be quickly identified. Marketing and funding will be directed at project types that are achieving or exceeding estimated outputs, based on performance in other LEADER areas as well as performance in the Oxfordshire LEADER area.
Changes in the political, physical and economic environment	Medium	Medium	The strategy and delivery plan will be reviewed annually and will be able to take account of changes in the external environment

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Cabinet Report



Listening Learning Leading

Report of Head of Finance

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DATE: 4 December 2014

Business Rate Pooling and Business Rate distribution

Recommendations

(a) that the Head of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, be given delegated authority to make annual decisions whether or not to enter into a "business rate pool" with other local authorities if it appears to be financially advantageous to do so

(b) that the Head of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, be given delegated authority to make annual decisions whether or not to enter into a "business rate distribution group" with other local authorities if it appears to be financially advantageous to do so

Purpose of Report

1. To provide delegated authority to the head of finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance in respect of annual decisions about collaborating with other nearby local authorities on business rates arrangements.

Corporate Objectives

2. Deciding whether or not to enter into a business rate pool or business rate distribution group would help maximise the council's income and therefore contribute to the objective of excellent delivery of key services.

Background

3. In April 2013 the Government changed the way business rates income is distributed. A complex web of business rate baselines, funding baselines, top-ups, tariffs and levies was introduced aimed to incentivise councils to actively work to increase the business rates due in their area.
4. At the time the system changed the council ran a number of training sessions to help members' and officers' understanding of the new arrangements and a report was taken to Council in December 2012 explaining that business rates would be forming a much more important element of the council's overall Government funding. The report also touched on business rate pooling within Oxfordshire. In light of this, this report will not attempt to explain the complexities of the new system. Instead it will talk in terms of actions and outcomes.
5. Fifty percent of all business rates collected are paid over to the Government. Ten percent goes to Oxfordshire County Council and forty percent is retained by this council. From our forty percent we pay a tariff (approximately 87 per cent) to the Government. Tariffs are applied where the business rate share is more than an authority's "business rates baseline" (typically this applies to district councils). Where an authority's business rate share is less than its business rates baseline it is considered to be a "top-up" authority and receives an additional payment from Government to fill the gap (typically this applies to county councils).
6. Once the tariff has been applied we keep the remaining sum with the exception of the amount collected that is above our business rates "baseline funding level" – the amount set by the Government at the introduction of the scheme that reflected historical levels of funding We keep only 50 percent of the amount above the business rate baseline, the remaining 50 per cent being paid over to the Government as a "levy". The tables below attempt to show this in numbers.

Table 1

Business Rates due	Government Share (50%)	Oxfordshire County Council Share (10%)	SODC share (40%)
£44,000,000	£22,000,000	£4,400,000	£17,600,000

Table 2

SODC share	Less Tariff	Amount retained
£17,600,000	£14,600,000	£3,000,000

Table 3

Amount retained	Baseline Funding	Growth	Levy	Growth retained
£3,000,000	£2,300,000	£700,000	£350,000	£350,000

7. As part of the new business rates retention system councils can decide to group together and “pool” their business rates receipts (subject to approval from the Secretary of State). The advantage of pooling comes where tariff authorities pool with a top-up authority. Provided the sum of the authorities’ tariffs doesn’t exceed the amount of top-up the pool does not have to pay a levy on its share of income in excess of the baseline. This means the pool retains more of the growth than would have been the case if the pool wasn’t in place.

Oxfordshire pooling arrangements

8. For 2014/15 an Oxfordshire pool consisting of Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), Cherwell District Council (CDC) and West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) was formed. OCC has to be in any “Oxfordshire” pool as it is the only top-up authority in Oxfordshire. CDC and WODC were the only two councils in Oxfordshire predicting strong growth in 2014/15. South Oxfordshire District Council was projecting its retained income would be around the same level as its business rate baseline and as such it couldn’t be guaranteed that its membership of a pool would increase the pool’s retained business rates.
9. Also, unusually amongst pools, an Oxfordshire pool would have become a tariff pool should more than two district councils have joined. This would have the effect of drastically reducing the income retained by the pool. For Oxfordshire in 2014/15 it has been estimated that income would have dropped by at least £600,000 if a third district council had joined the pool.
10. Once a pool has been established it can only be dissolved by its members requesting such from the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The pool members will not be asking for the pool to be dissolved for 2015/16.

Business rate distribution group

11. The chief financial officers of the Oxfordshire councils have agreed that it would be sensible for the pool’s membership to be set to maximise its income. They have also agreed that councils who would benefit from being in a pool should not be excluded from sharing in the additional income generated by the pool just because in any year their membership of the pool would not generate the optimum retained income.
12. To this end the Oxfordshire councils are looking to devise a distribution formula that rewards or penalises councils based on their actual collection against their business rates baselines. Every year each council can decide if it wants to be in the distribution group of councils that will either receive or make a payment based on its performance. The decision to be part of the distribution group or not can only be made after the Government has announced its settlement (annual local authority funding) as it also issues each council’s baseline funding level at the same time. A quick decision is then needed to enable the calculation and agreement of the estimated distribution for each council to be fed into the council’s budget setting calculations.
13. For this reason this report recommends the Head of Finance be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to agree if this council should join the distribution group each year. In addition, this report recommends the Head of Finance be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to agree if this council should join the pool should the combination of members, including this council, prove to optimise the retained income.

Options

14. This report will not commit the council to either pooling with other councils, or joining a distribution group. However, the recommendations will give the council the flexibility of deciding quickly on an annual basis whether to join a pool or distribution group should it appear to be financially advantageous.
15. An alternative option would be not to provide delegated authority to the Head of Finance but this could mean that the council misses out on maximising its business rate income. For this reason no alternative option is recommended.

Financial Implications

16. The decision to pool or not, or to be a member of the distribution group or not, will be based on the probability of such a decision resulting in increased income to the council. If the risks are deemed too great, as assessed by the Head of Finance in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, we will choose not to pool and/or not to be a member of the distribution group. This will have no impact on the budget.

Legal Implications

17. Business rate pools are established under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (as amended by the Local Government Finance Act 2012). Whilst there are no specific statutory powers for councils to enter a business rates distribution group, section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives councils a general power of competence and section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables councils to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions. There would be an agreement between the councils involved in order to protect the councils' interests.

Risks

18. Although the decision to delegate authority to the Head of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, does not carry any risk, there will be a financial risk if a decision to pool or be part of a distribution group is taken and the council performs below its baseline. However, this will be mitigated through thorough evaluation of financial forecasts and the distribution methodology before the decisions to join or not is made.

Other implications

19. There are no other implications.

Conclusion

20. In the future the council may have the opportunity to form a 'business rates pool' with other Oxfordshire local authorities and/or to be a member of a group of authorities that shares the surpluses or losses made by the pool. Both decisions need to be made annually and at short notice as they will be in part dependent on Government information released as part of its settlement announcement in December each year. This reports requests that the Head of Finance be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance, to make the annual decisions

whether to enter into a “business rate pool” and/or whether to join the ‘business rate distribution group’.

Background Papers

- Report to Council on 13 December 2012 ‘Budget and council setting 2013/14’.

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Cabinet Report



Report of Head of Finance

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To: Cabinet on: 4 December 2014

To: Council on: 11 December 2014

Council tax base 2015/16

Recommendations

1. That the report of the head of finance for the calculation of the council's tax base and the calculation of the tax base for each parish area for 2015/16 be approved
2. That, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by South Oxfordshire District Council as its council tax base for the year 2015/16 be 54,233.6
3. That, in accordance with The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by South Oxfordshire District Council as the council tax base for the year 2015/16 for each parish be the amount shown against the name of that parish in Appendix 1 of the report of the head of finance to Cabinet on 4 December 2014

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to recommend the council tax base for 2015/16 to Council for approval.

Corporate Objectives

2. The calculation of the tax base is a legal requirement and an essential part of the tax setting process which helps to achieve the council's corporate objective of effectively managing its resources.

Background

3. Before the council tax can be set by the council, a calculation has to be made of the council tax base, which is an estimate of the taxable resources for the district as a whole and for each parish area.
4. The council tax base for the district has to be notified to Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner by 31 January 2015. Each parish and town council is also notified of the figure for its area.
5. The legislation requires that the council tax base is approved by full council or a non-executive body with delegated powers. No such delegation exists, so cabinet is therefore asked to recommend to council the schedule set out in **Appendix 1** as the council tax base for the district as a whole and for each parish area.

Calculation of the tax base

6. The starting point for the calculation is the total number of dwellings and their council tax band.
7. The council then allows for the following information, for each band:
 - (a) dwellings which will be entirely exempt so no tax is payable (e.g. those occupied entirely by students)
 - (b) dwellings which will attract a 25 per cent reduction (e.g. those with a single adult occupier)
 - (c) dwellings which will attract a 50 per cent reduction (e.g. those where all of the adult residents qualify for a reduction)
 - (d) dwellings which will be treated as being in a lower band because they have been adapted for a severely disabled person. The regulations provide methodology to take account of the reduction available to those in band A dwellings
 - (e) dwellings which will be on the valuation list but which attract discounts or disablement relief or are exempt, for only part of the year
 - (f) dwellings which will attract a reduction through the council tax reduction scheme
8. Each band is then converted into "band D equivalents" by applying the factor laid down by legislation. For example, a band A dwelling is multiplied by 2/3 to arrive at the band D equivalent figure, whilst a band H dwelling is multiplied by two. All these are then added together to give a total of band D equivalents.
9. A final adjustment is required to allow for non-collection. The council is required to decide what its collection rate is likely to be and apply this to its council tax base. For the 2014/15 tax the council assumed 98 per cent would eventually be collected and it is proposed to use 98 per cent again in 2015/16.

Taxbase for 2015/16

10. Based on the assumptions detailed above the council tax base for 2015/16 is 54,233.6.
11. Similar calculations are required for each parish in order to calculate the proportion of the district's tax base which relates to its area. A schedule of the tax base for each parish is set out in **Appendix 1**.
12. To calculate the council tax amounts payable per property band for the council, its council tax requirement (i.e. the amount of council tax to be raised) is divided by the Band D equivalent (taxbase). This will be finalised during January and February, culminating in the council tax being set by council on 19 February 2015 (this date is subject to the council being notified of the major precepting authorities' council tax requirements).

Financial Implications

13. These are set out in the body of the report.

Legal Implications

14. These are set out in the body of the report.

Background Papers

None

PARISH COUNCIL TAX BASES - 2015-16

PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS 2015-16	PARISH TAX BASE 2015-16	PARISH TAX BASE 2014-15	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS 2015-16	PARISH TAX BASE 2015-16	PARISH TAX BASE 2014-15
Adwell	13	12.7	12.8	Sandford on Thames	582	487.0	491.2
Aston Rowant	335	420.7	421.6	Shiplake	727	966.3	889.6
Aston Tirrold	148	172.8	170.3	Shirburn	55	58.2	58.9
Aston Upton	71	84.2	82.2	Sonning Common	1,601	1,575.3	1,549.3
Beckley & Stowood	250	273.5	272.3	South Moreton	129	124.9	137.8
Benson	1,744	1,692.5	1,691.3	South Stoke	213	223.5	219.5
Berinsfield	1,101	633.9	626.6	Stadhampton	322	320.1	322.4
Berrick Salome	121	161.4	158.3	Stanton St John	189	220.6	216.4
Binfield Heath	277	310.7	309.6	Stoke Row	265	309.8	297.7
Bix & Assendon	253	319.2	323.2	Stoke Talmage	22	28.3	27.3
Brightwell Baldwin	81	101.6	99.0	Swyncombe	117	133.6	133.2
Brightwell cum Sotwell	614	644.9	639.6	Sydenham	148	153.3	153.4
Britwell Salome	87	103.8	99.0	Tetsworth	285	290.9	284.4
Chalgrove	1,126	1,034.8	1,028.1	Thame	5,032	4,296.0	4,225.7
Checkendon	206	230.6	229.3	Tiddington with Albury	276	266.9	265.2
Chinnor	2,587	2,385.4	2,314.6	Toot Baldon	57	68.8	70.6
Cholsey	1,627	1,424.7	1,426.6	Towersey	176	177.0	176.0
Clifton Hampden	251	282.5	277.9	Wallingford	3,566	2,847.3	2,669.0
Crowell	47	59.6	58.2	Warborough	434	469.7	469.4
Crowmarsh	700	657.1	650.4	Waterperry with Thomley	72	79.8	76.5
Cuddesdon & Denton	199	161.5	161.1	Waterstock	38	43.5	42.9
Culham	170	168.4	170.8	Watlington	1,218	1,142.9	1,115.6
Cuxham with Easington	60	60.7	59.6	West Hagbourne	111	122.5	121.8
Didcot	11,166	8,379.0	7,757.4	Wheatfield	11	15.2	12.8
Dorchester	483	534.6	520.9	Wheatley	1,840	1,693.7	1,611.4
Drayton St Leonard	115	127.2	128.4	Whitchurch on Thames	335	393.6	393.0
East Hagbourne	493	496.2	738.2	Woodcote	1,035	1,027.9	1,011.0
Elsfield	48	55.7	53.9	Woodeaton	29	38.4	38.8
Ewelme	423	368.2	368.6				
Eye & Dunsden	148	180.9	176.2	TOTAL	58,229	54,233.6	53,217.1
Forest Hill with Shotover	366	326.5	325.6				
Garsington	749	670.9	668.0				
Goring	1,486	1,666.4	1,681.4				
Goring Heath	495	585.8	582.8				
Great Haseley	235	246.1	247.9				
Great Milton	336	312.7	307.5				
Harpsden	165	225.9	296.3				
Henley on Thames	5,752	5,610.0	5,536.7				
Highmoor	133	158.3	159.2				
Holton	157	172.5	229.4				
Horspath	612	597.7	592.5				
Ipsden	151	162.1	161.7				
Kidmore End	515	666.9	662.5				
Lewknor	287	303.4	295.8				
Little Milton	206	210.3	211.2				
Little Wittenham	28	34.3	34.3				
Long Wittenham	357	345.4	344.4				
Mapledurham	129	123.0	122.8				
Marsh Baldon	114	121.9	125.2				
Moulsford	213	251.3	249.6				
Nettlebed	338	358.9	348.2				
Newington	48	55.9	54.9				
North Moreton	155	190.9	175.4				
Nuffield	218	232.7	227.9				
Nuneham Courtenay	92	95.5	85.7				
Pishill with Stonor	142	186.5	187.5				
Pyrtton	91	107.9	108.6				
Rotherfield Greys	152	197.5	197.7				
Rotherfield Peppard	678	902.4	889.6				

Cabinet Report



Listening Learning Leading

Report of Head of Finance

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To: Council on: 11 December 2014

Council tax reduction scheme grant for town and parish councils

Recommendations

That Cabinet recommends to Council:

(a) that the total council tax reduction scheme grant to be passed down to town and parish councils for 2015/16 be **£179,352**

(b) that a review of the methodology for determining the total amount of grant for town and parish councils be undertaken during 2015/16 to assess the impact of the council tax reduction scheme on parish precepts

(c) that the individual grant amounts for towns and parishes are as set out in **Appendix 1** to this report

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to recommend to council the total amount of council tax reduction scheme grant that will be passed down to town and parish council for 2015/16.

Corporate Objectives

2. The council receives an annual grant from central government which can be passed down to town and parish councils to mitigate the impact of the council tax reduction scheme on their taxbases. Passing down the grant can help keep down the town and parish element of council tax bills. Determining the amount of grant with reference to

the council's Medium Term Financial Plan will help keep the council's council tax as low as possible. Distributing the grant will help meet the objective of effective management of resources.

Background

3. The council tax reduction scheme (CTRS) takes the form of a discount on the council tax bill and, like other discounts (e.g. the single person's 25 per cent discount), has the effect of reducing the council's council tax base. Reducing the tax base means that, if the council's budget requirement remained the same, the amount of council tax charged would increase, or if council tax was not increased the income generated would reduce. This applies to both billing authorities (South Oxfordshire) and major precepting authorities (Oxfordshire County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner), as well as local precepting authorities (town and parish councils).
4. To mitigate the impact of the reduced council tax base, each year the Government distributed, via revenue support grant and business rates retention, a non-ring-fenced grant to billing authorities and major precepting authorities. Because the Government does not have a method for passing down funding direct to town and parish councils the grant given to billing authorities includes an amount "*attributable to local precepting authorities*".

Amount of council tax reduction scheme grant for 2015/16

5. For 2013/14 the Government advised that out of the council's total funding for council tax support of £665,085, £245,946 was attributable to town and parish councils. These were separately identifiable amounts within the council's total formula grant and business rates retention funding from the Government.
6. However, for 2014/15, funding for council tax support was no longer identifiable; it had been rolled-up within revenue support grant and the council's baseline funding level for business rates retention. The Government advised:

*"The allocation for Council Tax Support funding in England is £3.3bn in both 2013-14 and 2014-15. From 2014-15, the level of council tax support funding will be combined with formula funding and together they will be scaled back for individual councils according to their combined spending trajectory, by service tier. It is, though, entirely for local authorities to decide how much they are prepared to spend on council tax support, which is why allocations for future years are not separately identifiable."*¹

7. In its 2013 Spending Review the Government indicated that funding for the council would reduce by 13.7 per cent in 2014/15. Therefore, it was assumed that all components of the overall Government funding – including the town and parish CTRS grant component – would reduce equally by the same 13.7 per cent. In view of this the 2013/14 town and parish grant figure of £245,946 became £212,252 for 2014/15.
8. The provisional local government settlement for 2014/15 which was announced on 18 December 2013 also gave illustrative figures for 2015/16. Based on this information it would appear that the council can expect a further reduction in Government funding of

¹ Source - Business rates retention and the local government finance settlement, a practitioners guide (<http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/1314/practitionersguides.pdf>)

15.5 per cent. If the pot available to town and parish councils is reduced by the same percentage the funding would reduce to £179,352.

9. The “*Revenue Budget 2014/15 and Capital Programme to 2018/19*” report to Cabinet, Scrutiny and Council in February 2014 advised (paragraph 30)² that the proposed Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) showed the council tax reduction scheme grant reducing in line with Government funding going forward.
10. Therefore, using the methodology adopted for 2014/15, and having consideration to the provisional local government settlement and the council’s MTFP, the funding to be passed down to town and parish councils for 2015/16 is £179,352. A review of this methodology will be undertaken by the council during 2015/16 to assess the impact of the council tax reduction scheme on parish precepts. The outcome of the review will influence the amount of funding to be made available in future years and allocations in years 2016/17 onwards are not guaranteed.

Method of distribution

11. The funding pot as determined above will be distributed to town and councils using the same formula as was used for 2013/14 and 2014/15. This formula looks at the effect the council tax reduction scheme has had on the town and parishes’ individual taxbases and calculates the notional “council tax forgone”. The town and parish councils then receive a fixed percentage of the council tax forgone. Based on this the proposed 2015/16 council tax reduction scheme grant allocations for town and councils are set out in **Appendix 1**.

Financial Implications

12. The council tax reduction scheme grant from the government is contained within the council’s revenue support grant and the council’s baseline funding level for business rates retention. Overall funding is likely to reduce by 15.5 per cent therefore, by reducing the grant to be distributed to town and parish councils by 15.5 per cent there is a neutral financial impact on the council.

Legal Implications

13. Whilst the council tax reduction scheme grant is not ring-fenced, there is an expectation that councils will use it to mitigate the effect on local precepting authorities of the reduced council tax base.

Risks

14. There is a risk that some town and parish councils may challenge the methodology if they believe that they have not received what they think is an appropriate share. However, the Government has not specified any methodology to follow and there is no legal requirement for any of the funding to be passed on.

Other implications

15. There are no other implications arising directly from this report.

² Source - Revenue Budget 2014/15 and Capital Programme to 2018/19
(<http://democratic.southoxon.gov.uk/documents/s3256/South%20budget.pdf>)

Conclusion

16. The council will receive funding during 2015/16 that is attributable to town and parish councils to mitigate the impact of the council tax reduction scheme on their taxbases. A decision is required on how that funding should be distributed.

Background Papers

- None

Town/parish	Unadjusted 2015/16 tax base	CTRS grant
Adwell	13.5	£0
Aston Rowant	429.1	£204
Aston Tirrold	182.4	£297
Aston Upton	87.1	£104
Beckley & Stowood	289.0	£1,134
Benson	1,767.0	£3,147
Berinsfield	804.7	£15,019
Berrick Salome	163.6	£50
Binfield Heath	327.7	£298
Bix & Assendon	329.2	£131
Brightwell Baldwin	101.9	£0
Brightwell cum Sotwell	676.9	£874
Britwell Salome	107.3	£10
Chalgrove	1,105.2	£3,632
Checkendon	243.6	£324
Chinnor	2,503.0	£7,934
Cholsey	1,535.8	£4,228
Clifton Hampden	291.9	£152
Crowell	60.2	£0
Crowmarsh	699.9	£1,476
Cuddesdon & Denton	175.6	£355
Culham	179.6	£585
Cuxham with Easington	67.4	£0
Didcot	9,203.7	£49,405
Dorchester	558.6	£1,063
Drayton St Leonard	131.5	£58
East Hagbourne	527.7	£915
Elsfield	56.8	£12
Ewelme	377.4	£256
Eye & Dunsden	184.8	£131
Forest Hill with Shotover	360.5	£723
Garsington	713.5	£776
Goring	1,725.2	£1,873
Goring Heath	607.6	£395
Great Haseley	260.3	£423
Great Milton	340.4	£749
Harpden	228.4	£25
Henley on Thames	6,023.5	£21,266
Highmoor	164.6	£120
Holton	177.2	£171
Horspath	621.4	£787
Ipsden	172.7	£173
Kidmore End	677.0	£333
Lewknor	322.8	£518
Little Milton	225.6	£442
Little Wittenham	34.3	£0
Long Wittenham	358.4	£363
Mapledurham	135.3	£282
Marsh Baldon	126.4	£88
Moulsoford	257.1	£169
Nettlebed	386.2	£499
Newington	58.0	£20
North Moreton	195.4	£80
Nuffield	244.4	£173
Nuneham Courtenay	103.2	£237
Pishill with Stonor	188.6	£33
Pyrton	113.7	£25
Rotherfield Greys	201.7	£101
Rotherfield Peppard	919.0	£254
Sandford on Thames	518.2	£935
Shiplake	995.7	£498
Shirburn	62.7	£28
Sonning Common	1,676.0	£2,484
South Moreton	135.8	£297
South Stoke	237.6	£455
Stadhampton	338.8	£394
Stanton St John	226.7	£163
Stoke Row	320.1	£201
Stoke Talmage	28.3	£0
Swyncombe	144.3	£227
Sydenham	158.3	£157
Tetsworth	309.9	£419
Thame	4,596.8	£20,794
Tiddington with Albury	283.6	£431
Toot Baldon	71.1	£42
Towersey	191.8	£519
Wallingford	3,146.7	£17,643
Warborough	487.7	£694
Waterperry with Thomley	82.3	£30
Waterstock	43.7	£0
Watlington	1,227.5	£3,748
West Hagbourne	125.7	£96
Wheatfield	16.2	£0
Wheatley	1,785.7	£3,544
Whitchurch on Thames	410.4	£617
Woodcote	1,090.7	£2,044
Woodeaton	38.4	£0
Total	57,875.2	£179,352

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