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## **Cabinet**

### **Report of the meetings held on 24th April, 15th May and 12th June 2008**

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#### **Matter for Decision**

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#### **1. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK – THE CORE STRATEGY SUBMISSION DOCUMENT**

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Planning Services, reproduced as Appendix, the Cabinet has considered the content of the submission document for the Core Strategy. The Submission Core Strategy 2008 is enclosed separately with Members' agenda.

In considering the document, Executive Councillors took into account the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) expressed at its meeting on 10th June 2008. (Item No. 3 of their Report refers). The Panel accepted that the proposed policies fail to recognise fully the importance of agriculture to the local economy and local land use. In response, the Cabinet has requested that the spatial vision document be amended to reflect this. Having also authorised the Head of Planning Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, to approve any amendments to the documents prior to their publication and subject to a legal audit of the documents, the Cabinet

#### **RECOMMEND**

**that the Core Strategy and its supporting papers be approved for submission to the Secretary of State.**

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#### **Matters for Information**

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#### **2. APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS**

Executive responsibilities for the Municipal Year 2008/09 have been allocated by the Leader as follows:-

- ◆ Finance and Environment – Councillor T V Rogers
- ◆ Planning Strategy and Transport – Councillor P L E Bucknell
- ◆ Resources and Policy – Councillor A Hansard
- ◆ Housing and Public Health – Councillor Mrs D C Reynolds

- ◆ Customer Services and Information Technology – Councillor L M Simpson
- ◆ Leisure – Councillor D B Dew
- ◆ Operational and Countryside Services – Councillor C R Hyams
- ◆ Special Adviser to Cabinet – Councillor K J Churchill

Those Members appointed to hold executive responsibility for Resources and Policy, Planning Strategy and Transport and the Leader have been appointed ex-officio Members of the Licensing Committee/Licensing and Protection, Development Control and Employment Panels respectively.

### **3. MONITORING OF THE REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME**

Consideration has been given by the Cabinet to reports monitoring the revenue budget and capital expenditure in 2007/08. In so doing, Members have noted the variations to the approved programme and the associated capital and revenue implications.

### **4. REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY – PLANNING FOR GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION**

The Cabinet has been informed of the publication of a draft policy by the East of England Regional Assembly on the number of gypsy and traveller pitches to be accommodated by each local planning authority as part of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

In considering the proposals, the Cabinet has –

- ◆ supported the draft policy proposed by the Regional Assembly on the accommodation needs of gypsies and travellers on the basis that it is consistent with the local need for Huntingdonshire identified in the assessment of need and the evidence base;
- ◆ noted the requirement for all local authorities to provide at least some pitches, including areas where previously no or little provision has been made and agreed that the Council reserve its position should some local authorities seek to challenge this equality of provision by any alternative redistribution which would result in an unjustified increase in provision within Huntingdonshire; and
- ◆ requested the Regional Assembly to include within the policy an explanation as to why a 3% compound rate of increase is proposed and an indication that a future review will need to take into account the requirement for transit sites and the needs of travelling show people.

### **5. PROMOTING BETTER HEALTH IN OLDER PEOPLE THROUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

The Cabinet has noted the conclusion of a study by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) on promoting better health in older

people through physical activity. In so doing, Executive Councillors have been advised that the Council's Leisure Development Team has successfully obtained grant funding from "Wellbeing in the East" to employ an Older Persons' Physical Activity Officer on a fixed term contract and to provide the necessary marketing, training and equipment. A Medium Term Plan bid also has been approved by the Council to support this role until 2010.

**6. NATIONAL AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE CONSULTATION – PROPOSED CHANGES TO TERMINAL CONTROL NORTH AIRSPACE OVER CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

The Cabinet has been acquainted with the key elements of a proposal by the National Air Traffic Service (NATS) to change the use of terminal control north, an area of airspace extending from London to Huntingdon.

Luton and Stansted Airports currently share two holding areas in the vicinity of Royston and Sudbury. With the continued growth in air traffic, NATS' propose to relocate these holds to new air space and create a third hold resulting in two holds dedicated to Stansted and one to Luton. The Cabinet has been advised that the proposed new hold for Luton will lead to a number of aircraft stacking over the south of the District.

In reviewing the issues involved, Executive Councillors have questioned the need to change existing holds being of the opinion that retention of the present holds in their existing locations together with the creation of an additional new hold not over Huntingdonshire would be a better option. In addition, Members have expressed concern about the impact of noise from aircraft stacking, the threat to residents' tranquillity from noise and visual intrusion and the general detriment to the environment and wellbeing of the population in rural areas. Having also raised concerns over NATS' failure to take into account the population growth factor predicted for Cambridgeshire and the potential effects from the growth of air traffic, the Cabinet has authorised the Director of Environmental and Community Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Finance and Environment, to respond to the proposals on behalf of the Council on the basis of the views expressed.

**7. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT**

The Cabinet has approved the content of a new Local Area Agreement for Cambridgeshire. The Agreement reflects the Government's intention to streamline funding, encourage partnership working and direct investment towards local priorities.

**8. THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION, SCHEME OF DELEGATION AND MONITORING OFFICER: INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS**

Having been informed of the impending retirement of the Director of Central Services, the Cabinet has authorised the Chief Executive to undertake the executive and other powers delegated to this role by

virtue of the Scheme of Delegation. This is an interim measure pending a successor being in post and will take effect from 27th June 2008.

**9. DOCUMENT CENTRE – PURCHASE OF INSERTER**

In accordance with paragraph 11.4 of the Council's Code of Procurement, the Cabinet has approved the acceptance of a quotation from Mailing and Mechanisation for the supply of replacement equipment for use in the dispatch of mail in the Document Centre.

**10. FLEXIBLE WORKING:  
REMOTE ACCESS PROJECTS: AUTHENTICATION SYSTEM**

The Cabinet has been advised of the circumstances surrounding the acceptance of a quotation other than the lowest received for the supply of a two factor authentication system as part of the remote access project for employees working from home.

**11. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08**

The Cabinet has noted the respective levels of performance of Fund Managers for the year ending 31st March 2008 in the investment of the Council's capital receipts.

**12. BUDGET AND MTP PROCESS 2009 – 2014**

The Cabinet has approved arrangements for the stages and timing for the review and approval of the Financial Strategy, the 2009/10 Budget and 2009-2014 Medium Term Plan. Members have been informed that the Budget/Medium Term Plan process will need to be increasingly challenging due to the significant spending adjustments which need to be identified over the coming years. With this in mind, the Cabinet has reiterated the need to review all budgets and schemes to identify further opportunities for efficiency savings.

**13. THE EAST OF ENGLAND PLAN – REVISION OF THE REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND**

The Cabinet has been acquainted with the key elements of the "East of England Plan – the Revision to the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England" issued by the Secretary of State. The Plan outlines the strategic planning approach proposed for the East of England until 2012 and will form part of the statutory Development Plan for Huntingdonshire.

**14. PROSPEROUS PLACES: TAKING FORWARD THE SUB-NATIONAL REVIEW OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGENERATION CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

The Cabinet has approved the contents of a suggested response to a consultation paper issued by the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform entitled "Prosperous Places: Taking forward

the Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration". The document proposes a series of measures aimed at streamlining the regional tier, strengthening the local authority role in economic development and supporting collaboration by local authorities across economic areas. In considering the proposals outlined, the Cabinet has emphasised that a concerted approach should be made to ensure that the local input at district level is an integral element within the process. With this in mind, the Cabinet has requested that specific reference be made in the Council's response to the importance of ensuring that elected Councillors comprise a majority on Regional Development Agencies.

**15. ECO-TOWNS: LIVING A GREENER FUTURE –  
RESPONSE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES AND  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION**

The Cabinet has been advised of the inclusion of a greenfield site at Hanley Grange near Hinxton in South Cambridgeshire in the Government's short-list of 15 possible locations for new eco-towns as part of their initiative to develop additional housing growth in sustainable ways.

In considering the proposal, the Cabinet has recognised the implications for the District in terms of the adverse impact upon the Cambridgeshire Planning Strategy and Cambridge Sub-Region Growth Strategy. Having been advised that a joint response to the proposal was being prepared by Cambridgeshire authorities and Cambridgeshire Horizons, the Cabinet has authorised the Head of Planning Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport, to approve the contents of a response on its behalf prior to its submission to the Government.

**16. CONSERVATION AREAS: BOUNDARY REVIEWS AND  
CHARACTER ASSESSMENT STATEMENTS**

Having been acquainted with the responses received from consultation exercises on the character statements and boundary reviews for the Earith and the Hemingfords Conservation Areas, the Cabinet has agreed to adopt the documents for use as material considerations in planning decisions to ensure that the character and appearance of the areas are not diminished. The Cabinet has also authorised the Head of Planning Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy and Transport to make any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations as necessary.

**17. GROWING SUCCESS – PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

The Cabinet has noted a timetable for the review of the Council's Corporate Plan – "Growing Success" along with the performance data for 2007/08. The annual review of the Plan has been deferred pending the preparation of a new Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement for Cambridgeshire and will now be timetabled for submission to Council in September 2008.

**18. CORPORATE EQUALITY POLICY: ACTION PLAN PROGRESS**

The Cabinet has been updated on progress made to date on the delivery of actions and targets set out in the Corporate Equality Action Plan. In so doing the Cabinet has approved the content of the 2008/09 Action Plan along with a revised timetable for equality impact assessments. The plan sets out the Council's aim and objectives for equality along with corporate and directorate actions and targets.

**19. BENEFIT FRAUD PROSECUTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Cabinet has approved the contents of a Benefits Prosecution Policy for the prosecution of benefit claimants, landlords, employees and Members who may have committed benefit fraud. In so doing, the Cabinet has authorised the Fraud Manager to undertake court hearings and issue formal cautions and administrative penalties. Staff within the Fraud Team have been authorised to undertake investigations in fraud affecting all other District Council services and to report to the relevant Head of Service on the outcomes, findings and recommendations arising from these investigations. A number of efficiencies will be gained in pursuing this course of action, particularly given the number of cases being investigated which continues to rise year on year.

**20. REPRESENTATIONS ON ORGANISATIONS 2008/09**

The Cabinet has made appointments/nominations in relation to representation on a variety of organisations and authorised the Chief Executive, after consultation with Deputy Leader of the Council, to make any changes that may be required throughout the year and to appoint to the vacant posts of "Champion" for Oxmoor and for training.

I C Bates  
Chairman