

Dear Councillor,

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) - TUESDAY,
1 MARCH 2011**

I am now able to enclose for consideration at the above meeting the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

**Agenda Item
No.**

5. NEW COUNCIL PLAN (Pages 1 - 4)

To consider a report from the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships proposing a new Council Plan.

20 Minutes.

**7. CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS WELL-BEING AND HEALTH
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (Pages 5 - 8)**

To receive an update from Councillor R J West on the outcome of recent meetings of the Cambridgeshire Adults Well-Being and Health Scrutiny Committee.

5 Minutes.

10. SCRUTINY (Pages 9 - 14)

To scrutinise decisions as set out in the Decision Digest and to raise any other matters for scrutiny that fall within the remit of the Panel.

5 Minutes.

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
SOCIAL WELL-BEING
ENVIRONMENTAL WELL-BEING
ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

1ST March 2011
8TH March 2011
10TH March 2011

NEW COUNCIL PLAN **(Report by the Head of People, Performance & Partnership)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Members a new Council Plan setting out the Council's vision and priorities for the next 3-4 years.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 "Growing Success", the current corporate plan, was first adopted in December 2006. Since the last revision was approved, the Government has announced changes to the national performance framework for local authorities, including the replacement of the National Indicator Set and the abolition of the Comprehensive Area Assessment and the Audit Commission. The Council is also facing a new set of challenges due to the need to make significant changes to the services it provides as a result of budget cuts.
- 2.2 As a result of these changes, Cabinet appointed a Working Group to develop a new Council Plan focussing on priorities for the next 3-4 years. The following Members were appointed to this group: Councillor Bates, Leader of the Council; Councillor Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance and Customer Services; Councillor Churchill, Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy; Councillor Ablewhite, Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being); and Councillor Criswell, Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being).

3. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW PLAN

- 3.1 The Working Group considered a wide range of possible priority areas based on the results of public consultation exercises and evidence of local need. A small number of priorities were selected and these have subsequently been reviewed and revised following discussions with Cabinet, Chief Officers' Management Team, Heads of Service and the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of the three Overview & Scrutiny Panels. All Members were asked for their comments on the priorities by email.
- 3.2 The final version of the Plan attached as Appendix A lists six priority objectives for the next 3-4 years with a small number of targets. Publishing these targets will increase transparency and accountability to Members and residents. Some targets are still under development and will be finalised by April.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Members of the Panel are invited to give their final comments and endorse the Plan prior to consideration by Cabinet.

Contact Officer: Howard Thackray, Policy & Research Manager
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COUNCIL PLAN – 2011 to 2015

Vision — That the Council will provide value for money services that help meet the needs of local people.

Community Priorities –

The Council provides an extensive range of important and valued services for the benefit of the people who live and work in Huntingdonshire. By listening to what local residents tell us, thinking about their needs and considering our resources, we have chosen six of our objectives as priorities for the next 3-4 years which we will publically report progress against.

Our priorities are to:	How we will know if we are successful (outcome to be achieved):
Keep the district clean, provide recycling services and collect rubbish	We will keep at least 94% of streets at an acceptable level of cleanliness We will encourage residents to create less than 550kg of waste per household for collection We will achieve a recycling rate of more than 45%
Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Working to keep public spaces free of litter, fly tipping and graffiti. Ensuring that rubbish is collected regularly from homes. Encouraging households to reduce the amount of waste which needs to be collected and maintaining a high recycling rate.</i>	
Prevent and deal with homelessness	We will prevent at least 250 households from becoming homeless in the year On average, less than 90 households will need to be housed in temporary accommodation
Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Providing advice to help to prevent people from becoming homeless and housing homeless people, where appropriate.</i>	
Help vulnerable and disadvantaged people to live independently	We will enable 240 vulnerable and disadvantaged people to remain independent in their own homes
Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Giving advice and (where appropriate) providing financial assistance to help improve housing conditions. Helping to adapt the homes of disabled or older people. Helping to minimise fear and isolation by addressing concerns of disturbance and anti-social behaviour. Reducing the risk of disabling injury by keeping older people active; reducing the risk of falls and encouraging mobility.</i>	
Support strong communities	To be agreed - we are still developing our approach to the Localism / Big Society agenda and the outcome(s) will depend on this
Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Supporting and encouraging community-led activity aimed at reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. Assisting individuals to take responsibility for their health and well-being. Encouraging community involvement, volunteering and service, particularly to support those who are less able.</i>	

Our priorities are to:	How we will know if we are successful (outcome to be achieved):
Encourage new jobs, homes and facilities to meet our needs	The total number of homes in the district will increase by at least 560 per year
	The total amount of employment floorspace in the district will increase by at least x,xxx square metres per year <i>(target amount to be confirmed)</i>
	We will seek to raise at least £xxx via developer contributions to be spent on infrastructure and facilities benefitting the area <i>(target amount to be confirmed)</i>
<p>Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Ensuring an appropriate supply and mix of new housing to meet future needs, including maintaining a 5 year supply of housing land through the local planning process. Enabling the provision of the social and strategic infrastructure to meet current and future needs, including promoting the early adoption of the Community Infrastructure Levy provisions to maximise community benefits. Promoting sustainable development opportunities and completing agreed planning led schemes for promoting sustainable growth in and around the market towns. Monitoring growth of office, retail and leisure use in town centres. Encouraging the provision of a wide range of jobs appropriate for existing and future residents, including reviewing Employment Land in the District and ensuring a sufficient supply of employment land through the local planning process.</i></p>	
Safeguard the environment and successfully manage the impacts of growth	At least xxx energy efficiency and renewable energy installations will be carried out as a result of HDC schemes and promotions <i>(target to be confirmed, was 170 in 2010/11)</i>
	At least xx% of local wildlife sites will be under positive conservation management <i>(target to be confirmed)</i>
	At least 29% of new homes will be built on land which has previously been developed
<p>Activities to help achieve this include: <i>Supporting initiatives to reduce carbon emissions and encouraging energy efficiency and renewable energy. Protecting, via the planning and conservation processes, the places, heritage assets and habitats that make Huntingdonshire special.</i></p>	

Agenda Item 7

Agenda Item No.5(b)(iii)

INTEGRATED PLAN 2011/12: REPORT OF THE ADULTS, WELLBEING AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To: County Council

Date: 15 February 2011

From: Adults Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Committee

Electoral Division(s) All

Forward Plan Ref: 2011/001 *Key Decision:* Yes

Purpose: To report the outcome of the Committee's scrutiny of the Cabinet's proposals for the Budget for Adult Social Care as set out in the Council's Integrated Plan 2011.

Recommendation: The Council is asked to consider the Committee's report in its deliberations on the Integrated Plan proposals.

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Committee met on Tuesday 1st February 2011 and questioned Councillor Fred Yeulett, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing on the Cabinet's proposals for the Adult Social Care (ASC) budget for 2011/12.

Rod Craig, Executive Director Community and Adult Services and Claire Bruin, Service Director, Strategy and Commissioning, Adult Social Care, provided officer input to the meeting.

- 1.2 Councillor Yeulett introduced the proposals, and briefed members on the financial context in which the proposals were being made, and the risks involved.
- 1.3 The Committee's comments need to be read in conjunction with the Council's Integrated Plan 2011, which provides the context and detail of the Budget proposals.

2. KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Committee acknowledges the major financial and demographic challenges faced by the County Council in 2011/12 and subsequent years, and the consequent pressures on the ASC budget

Members identified the following concerns in relation to the ASC budget proposals.

Impact on and risks to service users and carers

- 2.2 The Committee is very concerned at the potential negative impact that the proposed substantial ASC budget reductions may have on users of social care services and on carers, who are among the most vulnerable people in the community. We are particularly concerned by:
- The impact of the 25% reduction in the offer under the Resource Allocation System (RAS) to new users. Members are concerned that this could result in real hardship in some instances.
 - The risk that the reduction in funding to independent private and voluntary sector providers may result in some services ceasing to be viable, or providing a poorer quality of service.
- 2.3 Members are very concerned that the budget proposals are based on the assumption that major savings can be made across several areas, and there is no alternative plan if this proves not to be the case. Specific concerns include the ability of the reablement programme to deliver savings in the time available; and the viability of independent providers.
- 2.4 The risk that these savings may not be achieved is increased by the fact that changes to the way services are being provided are having to be made quickly

and in the context of considerable financial pressure on both the NHS and the County Council.

- 2.5 Members are concerned that if the savings are not achieved, the consequences for service users and carers could therefore be severe, as remedial action could involve staff cuts or raised eligibility criteria.
- 2.6 Members are also concerned that reductions in support for service users or carers may result in people reaching crisis point, leading to pressures on other parts of the system, particularly the NHS, for example rises in hospital admissions or in demand for mental health care.

Monitoring the impact

- 2.7 Members consider that it is essential that the impact of the proposals on service users and carers is carefully monitored, and action taken to identify and respond where there is a negative impact on service users both in general, particularly in relation to the reduction in the RAS, and in relation to particular individuals.
- 2.8 Members were informed that it is intended to monitor the impact through mechanisms such as complaints, requests for re-assessment, delayed discharge, and close working with the NHS to identify impacts on NHS services. While these steps are welcome, members are concerned that:
- There may not be sufficient capacity to re-assess all service users and carers promptly when they are due. Members note that the Care Quality Commission assessment of performance report for 2009/10 identified reviews of users of mental health services, and assessments and reviews of carers, as areas for improvement.
 - Service users and carers, including new users receiving a reduced offer under the RAS, may not be aware of what they should reasonably expect from the service. They may therefore be slow to complain, or to request a re-assessment, even if they are struggling financially or having difficulty coping with the level of service they are receiving. Generally, many service users may be unwilling to ask for help or for a review. Access to independent advice and advocacy is therefore essential.
 - It may in practice be difficult to attribute increased demand on health services or on other statutory services on the reduction in social care services.
- 2.9 Members are concerned that ASC has the capacity and effective arrangements to:
- identify and respond rapidly to individual cases of hardship, whether this relates to the level of service or to financial hardship
 - identify and respond where the reduction in the RAS or other changes are having a negative impact on service users overall, or on particular groupings of users.
- Members therefore **recommend** that:
- 2.10
- Steps are taken to ensure that all service users and carers are aware of and

have access to independent advice and advocacy, in addition to the information they receive from social care staff about how to complain or request a review.

- Effective arrangements for monitoring the impact of the budget proposals are drawn up and discussed with Cabinet and with Scrutiny.
- Cabinet and Scrutiny receive regular monitoring reports, and reports on what steps are being taken to address any negative impacts, in order that these are subject to member consideration and challenge.

Learning disability services

- 2.11 Members highlighted the importance of recognising that some people with severe learning disabilities would continue to need day centre provision, which was also essential as a respite service for carers. There therefore needs to be a wide range of day services for people with learning disabilities, including both building based and more community based services, to reflect the range of needs and choices of this grouping
- 2.12 The Councillors thanked Rod Craig, Claire Bruin and Councillor Yeulett for their attendance and responses to their questions on the budget proposals.

Source Documents	Location
Agenda and reports of the Adults Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Committee – 1 st February 2011 Integrated Plan 2011	Room 114, Shire Hall Cambridge

Decision Digest

Edition 112

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 1st to 25th February 2011.

SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

To provide guidelines for managing sickness absence and a clearer process for managers and employees to follow, the Employment Panel has adopted a revised policy for sickness absence which will replace the existing attendance policy and contain–

- ❖ a constructive framework within which sickness absence can be better managed;
- ❖ short term and long term sickness absence and relevant trigger points;
- ❖ guidelines and templates for managers to use at each stage of sickness absence;
- ❖ guidance for employees on the impact of the sickness policy.

Whilst the Panel has acknowledged that the number of sickness days within the Council per employee is lower than the national average, the aim of the revised policy is to reduce sickness absence still further by providing a more transparent process with improved monitoring mechanisms and a safeguard for both managers and employees.

The Panel has asked for an annual report on sickness absence to be submitted to a future meeting.

PAY AND ROLE PROFILE REVIEW OF ONE LEISURE CENTRE ASSISTANTS

As part of the process of identifying staffing efficiencies, the Employment Panel has endorsed a proposal to review the pay and role of One Leisure Centre Assistants for the purposes of consultation with staff affected.

Currently all employees classed as Centre Assistants are paid at the same hourly rate for undertaking a variety of roles. To reflect the varying levels of qualifications and responsibilities undertaken, it is proposed to introduce three new role profiles, each on a different hourly rate.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation and provided that no significant adverse comments are received, the Panel has authorised the General Manager, One Leisure to implement the proposals after consultation with the Chairman of the Panel, together with representatives of the Employees Side.

EMPLOYEES' CODE OF CONDUCT

Following a recent review, the Employment Panel has updated the Employees' Code of Conduct. The principal changes relate to–

- ❖ the declaration of criminal offences;
- ❖ development proposals submitted by officers; and

- ❖ use of the Council's internet, intranet and email facilities

The opportunity has also been taken to make amendments of a more minor nature to the document to reflect changes in job titles and to recognise other policies which are complementary to the code.

In advance of the implementation of the Bribery Act in April 2011, the Panel has also agreed an amendment to provide further clarification with regard to the acceptance of corporate hospitality.

VOLUNTARY RELEASE SCHEME: UPDATE

The Employment Panel has received an update on the rollout of the Voluntary Release Scheme across the Council. Having noted that the second stage had now concluded, the Panel was informed that a further 77 applications had been received. It is estimated that the second stage will generate savings in pay costs of around £1.7 million in a full year.

The Panel has also been advised of the mechanisms which will be used to communicate decisions to employees who have applied for voluntary release and to the remaining members of staff. The Panel has suggested that a media statement should be released drawing attention to the savings which have been achieved. It has also been suggested that a statement should be issued to staff thanking them for their continued efforts and contributions during a difficult time.

The Panel has also acknowledged the difficulties which could be encountered in the next stage of the savings process and noted that further work was now required on organisational change. Performance related pay will be considered as part of the review of pay,

pay structure and allowances later in the year.

BUDGET 2011/12 AND MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2012 TO 2016

The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) and the Cabinet have reviewed the Financial Strategy, Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2012 - 2016 and the Budget and level of Council Tax for 2011/12. The Economic Well-Being Panel also has been addressed by Mr D Morgan, Treasurer of Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations. Mr Morgan informed the Panel of the value of the activities of voluntary organisations in terms of the income they generate for the District. The Panel has discussed the voluntary organisations' spending, the measures they are taking to reduce their own and staffing costs.

The changes made to the Budget and MTP since the draft Strategy was endorsed at the last meeting have been noted. The Budget takes into account lower than expected Government grant, which should be off-set by the New Homes Grant. A decision on the latter is expected in time for the Council meeting.

The Panel and the Cabinet discussed those matters about which Members previously had requested further work. Operating costs for CCTV have been reduced and now amount to £300k per annum for a basic service. Discussions with users will take place in the coming year on how the service will be funded in future years. While Members support the work of the District's voluntary organisations, they were content with proposals by the Social Well-Being Panel to investigate alternative ways of sustaining them once their existing commissioning agreements have expired. The Executive Councillor for Finance and Customer Services informed the Cabinet that he would also

be party to investigations in this respect.

With regard to the risks associated with various elements in the financial plan, the Economic Well-Being Panel accepted the need to be cautious about the extent of New Homes Grant likely to be received and similarly taken a prudent approach to providing for the Council's future pension liability. Having been apprised of the risks associated with the Government's plans to change the local authority grant formula, the pensions review, the savings that are still required and the challenge of delivering the savings already identified, the Panel has accepted the formal opinion that the Budget 2011/12 is robust.

An update has been delivered to the Panel on previous suggestions by the Liberal Democrat group for savings. A number of them are being pursued, including several areas where the Council is entering into agreements with other local authorities to share services.

Members of the Economic Well-Being Panel have commended the fact that £650k additional savings have been identified since December. A suggestion that an increase in income might be made by charging non-residents of the District a higher rate to use the Council's leisure centres has been referred to the Leisure Finance Working Group for further consideration.

On the understanding that the MTP can be revised as work on it proceeds, the Economic Well-Being Panel has endorsed the report to Cabinet. Subsequently, the Cabinet has recommended to Council that the proposed Budget, Medium Term Plan and Financial Plan be approved and that Council Tax for 2011/12 is not increased.

CUSTOMER SERVICES

Before a decision is taken on the future of customer services, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has given consideration to the outcome of further investigations into the options that are available for the delivery of services through the Customer Service Centres. Analysis of service demand indicates that it will not be possible to reduce employee levels at Huntingdon Customer Service Centre. However, by transferring resources from St Neots during lower periods of demand, it will be possible to maintain a presence in Ramsey and Yaxley on two days per week. The Panel has recommended that this option is implemented and that a further review is carried out in a year's time.

2011/12 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

In accordance with its responsibility for scrutinising Treasury Management, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) has reviewed the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/12. Having noted that they will be provided with further training on this subject in the next Municipal Year, the Panel has endorsed the Strategy for submission to the Cabinet and Council.

Subsequently, the Cabinet has recommended the adoption of the Strategy to Council.

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Both the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) and Cabinet have received the annual report on the performance of the Council's assets against a range of criteria. As generally the Council's performance compares favourably with that of other authorities, the Cabinet has endorsed the content of the report.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

The Development Management Panel considered eight applications at its February meeting and of these, four were approved, two refused and one deferred for further information. The Head of Planning Services was authorised to determine an application for the formation of a new access and car parking area at 19 Nursery Road, Huntingdon as it was considered that the late receipt of amended plans had made the development acceptable.

SUMMARY OF ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY 2010

The Development Management Panel has received a report on the enforcement activity undertaken in 2010. In reviewing the achievements of the team against the priorities which had been set for 2010, the Panel noted that despite significant staff changes and an overall reduction of 20% in hours, the team had increased the number of cases closed in comparison with the previous year and visited 69% of cases where site visits were required within 10 working days.

The introduction of an Enforcement Forum, meeting fortnightly has played a major part in ensuring cases are dealt with in a proportionate, consistent and expedient way and contributed to the number of cases which have been able to be closed during the year.

Given pressures on resources and the possible impact of the Localism Bill, the Panel has endorsed two objectives for the team in 2011. These are to

- focus on quality outcomes where unacceptable breaches are identified; and
- maximise the use of resources to provide an effective and efficient enforcement service.

**DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
PROGRESS REPORT: 1ST OCTOBER
– 31ST DECEMBER 2010**

The Development Management Panel regularly reviews the performance of the development management division in terms of the applications determined within the target groups specified by government. Eighty five per cent of all applications have been determined within the time periods specified and income from planning fees is some £15,000 up on that anticipated in the budget.

ONE LEISURE PERFORMANCE

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has appointed Councillors B S Chapman and J J Dutton and Mr R Coxhead onto the One Leisure Working Group. The Working Group has been established jointly with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being).

VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) received a presentation from the Chief Executive of Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations on its work with the Voluntary Sector. Attention was drawn to the impact on third sector organisations of the Council's proposals in the future to reduce the level of community grants it awards. The Panel will be pursuing their full impact and alternative ways of supporting the voluntary sector at its March meeting.

**OPEN SPACE STRATEGY FOR
HUNTINGDONSHIRE 2011-16**

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) has considered the draft Open Space Strategy for Huntingdonshire which provides a vision of what the District's parks, open spaces and other public spaces might

look like over the next 10-15 years. Two main comments were made. The first concerned the suggestion that the Council will take responsibility for or assist with the maintenance or development of all the sites identified; and the second related to the need to analyse the implications of localism for the likely achievements of the Strategy's aims. The terminology used to classify the different types of open spaces that exist was also discussed and a suggestion was made about the need to differentiate between sites that the public can visit free of charge and those that require payment for use.

The Cabinet has subsequently endorsed the content of the Strategy.

MONITORING OF SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS (PLANNING OBLIGATIONS)

The receipt and expenditure by the Council of money negotiated under Section 106 Agreements has been noted by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). It was noted that the Section 106 Agreement Advisory Group had agreed the establishment of a database to assist with the monitoring process in response to the Panel's previous recommendations on the way monitoring is carried out. The database is likely to take a few months to set up before the system can go live on the Council's Intranet.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS, WELL-BEING AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

An update on matters currently considered by the Cambridgeshire Adults, Well-Being and Health Scrutiny Committee has been noted by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being). These include the Adult Support Services Action Plan and Integrated Plan for 2011, NHS

Cambridgeshire's Plans for 2011/12, consultations on Improving Older People's Mental Health Services in Huntingdonshire and Fenland, Cambridgeshire Community Services' proposals to become a Foundation Trust and membership of the Neonatal Intensive Care Joint Scrutiny Committee.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) – PROGRESS

Councillor S J Criswell has informed Members of the Panel that he will be attending a forthcoming meeting organised by the County Council for crime and disorder Scrutiny Chairmen to discuss opportunities for joint scrutiny working.

HUNTINGDON WEST AREA ACTION PLAN

Following the issue of the Planning Inspector's binding report regarding the soundness of the Huntingdon West Area Action Plan, the Cabinet has recommended to Council the approval of the Area Action Plan as part of the Development Plan for the District.

NEW LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) has supported the District Council's statement for inclusion in the County Council's third Local Transport Plan. However they have expressed concern over the need for investment in highway improvements to accommodate the anticipated growth in the District and to promote options in rural areas.

The Cabinet has subsequently approved the Huntingdonshire District Statement for inclusion within the Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan (LTP). Concern was expressed, however, on the impact of reduced

funding for the proposed LTP, the County's ability to deliver an improved transport infrastructure and the need to pursue all possible alternative funding sources to include the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. The Head of Planning Services has been requested by the Executive to convey these concerns to the County Council.

PLANNING CONSERVATION

The Cabinet has endorsed the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) following its study into the performance of the Council's Planning Conservation Team. The Working Group appointed by the Panel has identified that the current service is working well. It was, acknowledged, however that improvements could be made in respect of communication and pro-active support and the role of Members and Town and Parish Councils in mediation and in alerting the Council of local circumstances.