

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **CIVIC SUITE 0.1A, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

## **APOLOGIES**

  
**Contact  
(01480)**

**4. NEW COUNCIL PLAN** (Pages 1 - 4)

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

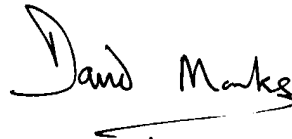
**D Buckridge  
388065**

**5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT** (Pages 5 - 8)

To consider a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships containing details of the Council's performance against its priority objectives.

**D Buckridge  
388065**

Dated this 11 day of March 2011



Chief Executive

## **Notes**

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*
  - (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, their family or any person with whom they had a close association;*
  - (b) *a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors;*
  - (c) *any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or*
  - (d) *the Councillor's registerable financial and other interests.*

2. *A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would reasonably regard the Member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.*

**Please contact Mrs H Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Tel No. 01480 388008/e-mail Helen.Taylor@huntsdc.gov.uk /e-mail: if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Cabinet.**

**Specific enquiries with regard to items on the Agenda should be directed towards the Contact Officer.**

**Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.**

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk) (under Councils and Democracy).

**If you would like a translation of Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a large text version or an audio version please contact the Democratic Services Manager and we will try to accommodate your needs.**

***Emergency Procedure***

*In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit.*

## NEW COUNCIL PLAN (Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social Well-Being, Economic Well-Being and Environmental Well-Being have considered a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships proposing a new Council Plan for 2011-2015.

### 2. COMMENTS

#### Social Well-Being

- 2.1 Having regard to the outcomes proposed for the “Keep the District clean, provide recycling services and collect rubbish” priority, the Panel has been informed that the target of 45% for the recycling outcome would be revised in advance of the Plan’s submission to the Council as it is regarded as being too low. The Panel also has discussed at length the proposed outcome for household waste and concern at the inferences that might be made from an outcome based on the level of waste generated by each household. In response, the Policy and Strategic Services Manager has informed the Panel that an attempt has been made to identify measures that are meaningful to local residents and that it is not the intention of the Council to measure the level of waste generated by each household. Other matters raised during the Panel’s deliberations on this priority that might merit further consideration include the means by which waste and recycling messages will be communicated to residents within the District, a suggestion that households should be given rewards for achieving recycling and waste targets and the extension of the current service to include recycling other grades of plastic.
- 2.2 Comment has been made on references to the words “providing advice”, “giving advice” and “supporting and encouraging community-led activity” under the activities sections for the priorities relating to “Prevent and deal with homelessness”, “Help vulnerable and disadvantaged people to live independently” and “Support strong communities”. It is felt that these references have implications for the recently approved Budget for 2011/12 and the Medium Term Plan.
- 2.3 In response to questions raised by a Member concerning the proposed measure for the priority relating to “help vulnerable and disadvantaged people to live independently” it has been confirmed that the figure of 240 relates to the number of individuals that will be assisted through the Disabled Facilities Grants scheme.
- 2.4 Having regard to the priority relating to “Encourage new jobs, homes and facilities to meet our needs” comment has been made by a Member on the need to ensure that new homes within the District are built to an acceptable standard. Members are however mindful that quality standards will be managed as part of the Development Management process. In addition, the

Panel has suggested that the means by which employment floor space is calculated should be clarified.

- 2.5 Finally, clarification has been received of the proposed measure relating to the number of homes to be built on land which has previously been developed on for the priority “Safeguard the environment and successfully manage the impacts of growth”. The figure of 29% relates to an existing performance measure for Planning Services.

### **Environmental Well-Being**

- 2.6 The Environmental Well-Being Panel expressed similar views to the Social Well-Being Panel in questioning the targets which had been set with respect to the achievable outcomes for the priority objective to keep the District clean, provide recycling services and collect rubbish. The Panel were of the opinion that residents should be encouraged to generate less than the 550kg of residual waste per household which had been proposed. Members also commented on the acceptable levels of cleanliness and how these would be measured. Strong feelings were expressed about the volume of litter that was deposited by the general public and the need for an emphasis on public education in this respect. In questioning the 45% recycling rate, the Panel was advised that although the Council was already achieving a rate of 50%, recycling rates were falling and the Council would be moving away from aspirational targets. Nevertheless the target was likely to be reviewed before the plan was finalised.
- 2.7 Having regard to the priority relating to supporting strong communities, the Panel suggested that there should be greater clarification of the terminology used to describe the ‘less able’ in need of support in the District.

### **Economic Well-Being**

- 2.8 The Economic Well-Being Panel is of the view that the Council Plan should not be adopted in its current form. Members have indicated that the Vision should be improved such that it recognises the position of the Council, in the terms of the Localism Bill, as a “competent authority”, it should be forward looking and should take account of the Council’s financial circumstances.
- 2.9 Following discussion on the outcomes specified in the Plan, the Panel has concluded that more work is required on them before they can be satisfied that they are appropriate. For example, Members have examined the priority to “Keep the district clean, provide recycling services and collect rubbish”. The Panel has established that currently the Council collects approximately 420kgs of waste on average from each household in the District. The Plan’s target is to encourage residents to create less than 550kgs of waste. Rather than being challenging or maintaining existing performance, this target represents a significant decrease on performance. The Panel has requested clarification of the rationale for the new target.
- 2.10 Further on the same priority, the Panel has commented on the recycling target. Members have recognised that recycling rates are declining but it is argued that if the Council is successful in encouraging residents to produce less waste, the amount of waste that is recycled as a proportion of the total waste produced should actually increase. Moreover, the introduction of glass recycling should have the effect of increasing recycling rates. Finally, on this

priority, the Panel has suggested that clarification is required of the current arrangements for street cleaning.

- 2.11 On the basis of this example and their consideration of the other outcomes, because further work needs to be carried out, the Panel has recommended that the Cabinet should not adopt the Plan. Members suggest that this work should take account of current performance levels, the rationale for the proposed targets, the degree of challenge that they represent, their budget implications (including the proportion of the budget they absorb and the recharges apportioned to them) and a comparison with the Council's other targets which do not appear in the list of priorities. Generally, it is suggested that the Plan should contain progressive targets for its intended four year life. Members have indicated that they are willing to assist with this work.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 The Cabinet is invited to consider the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels as part of its deliberations on the report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Minutes and Reports of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on 1st March 2011, Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) on 8th March 2011 and Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on 10th March 2011.

**Contact Officers: Miss H Ali, Democratic Services Officer  
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**Mrs A Jerrom, Member Development Officer  
(01480) 388009**

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## **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (Report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels for Social Well-Being, Economic Well-Being and Environmental Well-Being have considered a report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships on the Council's performance against its priority objectives. This report sets out the Panels' views on the performance levels achieved.

### **2. COMMENTS**

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panels have endorsed the comments of the Corporate Plan Working Group, which are reflected in the following paragraphs.

#### **Social Well-Being**

- 2.2 The Social Well-Being Panel's attention has been drawn to the "number of admissions/participants in activities provided or promoted by the Council". Given the Council's investments in its Leisure Centres, Members expect the figures should show an increase in attendances. Members have noted that this increase has been factored into the target and that the downward direction of travel can partially be attributed to the fact that, owing to poor weather during November and December, the Council has been forced to cancel some activities at the St Ives Outdoor Centre. It has not necessarily been the case that there has been a fall in uptake of One Leisure services. Members have been made aware that there have been instances when One Leisure has struggled to cope with demand; however, this matter is currently being addressed by One Leisure.

- 2.3 Members have noted the figures achieved for households living in temporary accommodation. Although the target has not been reached, a considerable improvement has been made compared with the figure for the last quarter, and performance is now rated as amber.

- 2.4 The Panel has been informed of the reasons why the target relating to affordable housing (commitments) on qualifying sites is rated as red. In so doing, Members have queried whether, given the patterns of building employed by developers when constructing sites, the target figure of 40% is too high. Members have also noted that owing to a change in the way information is collected, a combined figure has been reported for the targets for housing completions on qualifying sites that are affordable in market towns, key settlements and smaller settlements.

#### **Environmental Well-Being**

- 2.5 The Environmental Well-Being Panel has noted that all the targets relating to the Council's priorities in this section of the report have been achieved or exceeded and there had been no adverse directions of travel. Members have

been pleased to note that the target for energy efficiency and renewable energy measures carried out as a result of Council schemes and promotions has been exceeded by a considerable margin.

- 2.6 With regard to the focus on the low carbon agenda in Leisure Centres, the Panel has noted that there is some uncertainty over available funding for energy saving measures which will deliver only long term savings. However Environmental Management is working actively with the Leisure Division and a suite of proposals will be available in due course

### **Economic Well-Being**

- 2.7 The Economic Well-Being Panel has noted that the Council's performance against some of the targets that fall in its remit is amber. Members are of the view that this is to be expected as the financial constraints on the Council take effect. Moreover, from a theoretical perspective, it is not necessarily desirable continually to exceed targets by a significant margin as this may indicate that too much resource might have been dedicated to their achievement. Occasional amber performance suggests that resource allocation has been appropriate. Members will monitor performance for instances when targets are not being achieved by a significant margin for prolonged periods
- 2.8 The Panel has been acquainted with the fact that the Council's average sickness levels of 6.6 days in a rolling 12 month period compare favourably with the situation nationally in the public sector (9.6 days) and the private sector (6.7 days). In order fully to understand the underlying trends, Members have requested the figures at various percentiles. On a similar subject, they have commented that monitoring should be undertaken of the impact of the ongoing process to reduce employee numbers on those employees that remain.
- 2.9 The Panel has drawn attention to an inconsistency in the figures reported for the Leisure Centres income and expenditure compared with those recently reported at a meeting of the Leisure Centres Working Group. It has also been suggested that the Council should adopt a more rigorous approach to the identification and management of risks that might affect the Council's ability to achieve its priorities.
- 2.10 The Panel has also noted that a review of the Council's partnership working is currently being undertaken.
- 2.11 With regard to the figures for actual performance against the target for internal promotions as a percentage of all vacancies filled, the Panel has acknowledged that this may in part be a consequence of Officers' desire to secure their future employment during the period when voluntary release was available.
- 2.12 As a result of questions raised at a previous meeting in relation to the way in which the measure for the percentage of employees who are still in post after twelve months is recorded, the Panel has noted that it would not be appropriate to discount those on fixed term contracts that expire during the reporting period. The current approach enables trends to be monitored and it is anticipated that the Council's short-term practice of preferring fixed term contracts will shortly end.



- 2.13 The Panel has also agreed that the One Leisure Working Group should be asked to examine the impact on One Leisure of the County Council's decision to devolve budgets for swimming to schools.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 All three Overview and Scrutiny Panels have reviewed the performance levels that the Council has achieved in the period to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. The Cabinet is invited to consider the Panels' comments as part of its deliberations on the report by the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Corporate Plan Working Group Notes of the meeting held on 17th February 2011.

Minutes and Reports of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) on 1st March 2011, Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Environmental Well-Being) on 8th March 2011 and Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Economic Well-Being) on 10th March 2011.

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