

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2004** at **11:30 AM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-


Contact
(01480)

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2004.

Miss C Harris
388234

2. EAST OF ENGLAND MODERNISING RURAL DELIVERY PATHFINDER (Pages 7 - 14)

To receive a report by the Planning Policy Manager on recent Government announcements with regard to modernising rural delivery.

R Probyn
388430

3. BEST VALUE REVIEW - HOUSING TO MEET EXTERNAL & LOCAL NEED/DEMAND (Pages 15 - 16)

To consider a report by the Director of Operational Services on the Best Value Review for Housing to meet External and Local Need/Demand.

S Plant
388240

Document attached separately.

4. CAMBRIDGE SUB REGION HOUSING STRATEGY (Pages 17 - 60)

To receive a report by the Head of Housing Services on the development of the Cambridge Sub Region Housing Strategy.

J Barrett
388203

5. PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE (PFI) FOR WASTE (Pages 61 - 62)

To receive a report by the Head of Environment and Transport seeking the District Council's support for the County Council's revised application for PFI credits.

R Preston
388340

6. CAR PARKING STRATEGY - DELIVERY PROGRAMME (Pages 63 - 78)

To consider a report by the Head of Environment and Transport on the implementation of the car parking strategy.

R Preston
388340

7. RAMSEY AREA ACTION PLAN (Pages 79 - 84)

To receive a report by the Planning Policy Manager on the developments since the formation of the Ramsey Area Partnership and the preparations of a Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan.

**C Keck
388274**

Document attached separately.

8. MEDIUM TERM PLAN - REQUESTS FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS (Pages 85 - 88)

To consider a report by the Director of Commerce and Technology requesting the release of funding for an MTP scheme.

**C Hall
388116**

9. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED

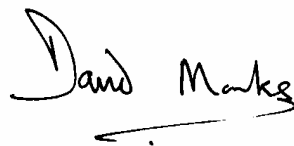
that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to terms proposed to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the supply of goods and services.

10. RAMSEY LEISURE CENTRE: EXTENSION: REQUESTS FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS AND AWARD OF CONTRACT (Pages 89 - 90)

To consider a report by the Leisure Centres Co-ordinator.

**S Bell
388049**

Dated this 6 day of October 2004



Chief Executive

Please contact Mrs H Lack, Democratic Services Officer, Tel No. 01480 388006 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 (*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 and to make their way to the base of the flagpole in the car park at the front of Pathfinder House.

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Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon on Thursday, 23 September 2004

PRESENT: Councillor D P Holley - Chairman
Councillors I C Bates, Mrs J Chandler,
N J Guyatt, Mrs P J Longford,
Mrs D C Reynolds, T V Rogers and
L M Simpson

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor R L Clarke.

50. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 2nd September 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

51. FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Further to Minute No. 04/35, further consideration was given to a report by the Director of Commerce and Technology (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) setting out a range of potential options available in terms of adopting a strategy for managing the Council's finances in the period to 2011/12. A report by the Head of Administration summarising the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) on the matter was also circulated.

Having noted the views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and given:-

- ◆ ongoing review work in relation to the Council's base budget, Medium Term Plan and fees and charges; and
- ◆ the availability imminently of information on the outcomes of the consultation with residents on options for spending on local services and Council Tax levels;

it was

RESOLVED

that full Council be recommended to endorse a financial strategy based around that described in paragraph 5.7 of the report now submitted with a minimum increase in Band D Council Tax for 2005/6 amounting to £12 per annum.

52. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2003/04 AND 2004/05

A report by the Head of Financial Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) detailing the outturn of capital expenditure during 2003/4, and the implications for 2004/5.

Having noted those projects which had been delayed in 2003/4 and information on those schemes which had incurred additional costs, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the capital outturn for 2003/4 be noted;
- (b) that the additional capital spending of £135,000 as outlined in paragraph 2.3 of the report now submitted be approved; and
- (c) that the position with regard to individual schemes as set out in Annex A to the report now submitted be noted.

53. FINANCIAL MONITORING - REVENUE BUDGET

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) detailing the projected outturn of the 2004/5 budget and the expected budget variations already identified in the current year. In so doing the Cabinet noted that the figure attributed in the tabulation in paragraph 1.2 of the report to "Additional recharges of staff to Capital" had incorrectly been stated as "+£50,000" instead of "-£50,000".

RESOLVED

that, subject to the aforementioned amendment to reflect a figure of -£50,000 in respect of additional recharges of staff to capital, the likely spending variations for the revenue budget 2004/5 be noted.

54. LICENSING ACT 2003: STATEMENT OF LICENSING POLICY

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet considered the Council's draft Statement of Licensing Policy prior to its distribution for consultation purposes.

Having regard to the consultation timetable and the comments made by the Licensing and Protection Panel concerning amendments to the draft policy in relation to the performance of regulated entertainment in the presence of an audience and advice to extend the consultation period from 6 to 8 weeks, it was

RESOLVED

that full Council be recommended to endorse the draft Statement of Licensing Policy as amended for

consultation purposes.

55. PRINCES STREET / GEORGE STREET URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK AND MASTERPLAN

Further to Minute No. 03/202, the Cabinet considered a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the consultation responses to the draft Urban Design Framework and Masterplan for the Princes Street/George Street area.

Having considered the proposed responses and amendments outlined in Annex 2 and 3 to the report, together with a schedule of suggested further amendments to facilitate a more flexible approach to development along Walden Road, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that, subject to the incorporation of the specified changes identified within the consultation responses and specific variations to reflect a degree of flexibility in terms of residential or office development along Walden Road, the revised Urban Design Framework and Masterplan be approved as Interim Planning Guidance; and
- (b) that the Head of Planning Services be authorised to approve any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations as a result of the changes referred to in (a) above after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy.

56. DEFRA CONSULTATION - CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS

By means of a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the content of a recent consultation paper issued by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs proposing a series of measures designed to supplement the powers of local authorities in addressing public nuisances and environmental issues.

Having considered the proposals outlined in the consultation paper, and the suggested responses, the Cabinet emphasised that the latter should address their apprehension with regard to the prospect of additional responsibilities being imposed on local authorities without the accompanying resources. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the proposed response to the consultation paper as outlined in the report now submitted be approved; and
- (b) that the views expressed by the Local Government Association on the matter be endorsed.

57. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ORDERS - DELEGATED AUTHORITY

With the assistance of a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and having regard to the need to reduce possible delays in dealing with cases of anti-social behaviour, it was

RESOLVED

that in accordance with the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2000, the Director of Operational Services be authorised to apply to the courts for Anti-Social Behaviour Orders after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Public Health and Community Safety.

58. MOBILE HOME SITE, ST NEOTS - FAILURE OF ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

(The Chairman announced that he proposed to admit the following item as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, in order to effect immediate repairs to the electricity supply at the mobile home site).

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were advised of the failure of the electricity supply to the St Neots mobile home site.

Having noted the steps taken to date to rectify the problem and been assured that the estimated cost of the works had been prepared following the receipt of competitive quotations, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that a supplementary capital estimate of £60,000 be approved in respect of the cost of renewing the electricity cables; and
- (b) that an allocation of £20,000 from the Revenue Contingency be approved to cover the additional cost of the works already carried out and the need to provide temporary power supplies and to identify the source of the fault.

59. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to employees of the District Council and terms for the acquisition of land and property.

60. HIGHWAYS AGENCY

(Councillor I C Bates declared a personal interest in the following item as a Member of Cambridgeshire County Council).

Further to Minute No. 04/20 and with the assistance of a report by the Head of Environment and Transport (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book), the Cabinet were updated with the details of negotiations with Cambridgeshire County Council in relation to the termination of the highways agency and the consequential impact on the District Council.

Having regard to the employment issues arising from the termination of the existing agreement, the potential for negotiating a new agreement and other organisational and service issues, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the termination of the existing Highways Agency Agreement on 31st March 2005 and the arrangements to be made to transfer 5 employees to Cambridgeshire County Council under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 be noted;
- (b) that the retention of a temporary employee currently assigned to the Highways Team be approved until June 2005;
- (c) that a full-time post to deal with land drainage/sewerage functions be established at an additional cost of £14,000 per annum with effect from 1st April 2005; and
- (d) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised after consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree heads of terms in respect of a new agreement with the County Council for the discharge of the functions outlined in Section 3 of the report now submitted .

61. PROPOSED FOOTWAY: HIGH STREET, CATWORTH

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Legal and Estates (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) setting out proposed terms for the acquisition of land to implement a new footway project at Catworth in partnership with the Parish Council.

RESOLVED

that the terms set out in paragraph 3 of the report now submitted be approved.

62. STAFFING REVIEW - ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT DIVISION

By means of a joint report by the Heads of Environment and

Transport and of Personnel Services (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book), the Cabinet considered a proposal to grant early retirement to the holder of post reference OPS.126 in the Environment and Transport Division.

Having been acquainted with the recommendations of the Employment Panel on this matter, it was

RESOLVED

that funding for a compensatory payment to the holder of post reference OPS.126 be approved as set out in paragraph 4.3 of the report now submitted.

Chairman

CABINET

14TH OCTOBER 2004

EAST OF ENGLAND MODERNISING RURAL DELIVERY PATHFINDER (Report by Planning Policy Manager)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report outlines the recent Government announcements with regards modernising rural delivery (MRD) and seeks to obtain Cabinet approval for involvement in the East of England MRD Pathfinder bid and subsequent implementation of the project.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This summer Defra published the Rural Strategy 2004. This followed a series of key pieces of work, namely:

- 2000 Rural White Paper Our Countryside: The Future – A fair deal for rural England
- Social & Economic Change and Diversity in Rural England Report
- Strategy for Sustainable Farming & Food
- Lord Haskins Rural Delivery Review

- 2.2 The Strategy retains the Government's agreed vision for rural areas, set out in the Rural White Paper, as:

- a **living** countryside, with thriving rural communities and access to high quality public services;
- a **working** countryside, with a diverse economy giving high and stable levels of employment;
- a **protected** countryside in which the environment is sustained and enhanced, and which all can enjoy; and
- a **vibrant** countryside, which can shape its own future and with its voice heard by Government at all levels.

- 2.3 Economic & Social Regeneration, Social Justice for All and Enhancing the Value of our Countryside are set as the three themes for new rural policy objectives.

- 2.4 The vital role of local authorities working in partnership is highlighted in the Strategy along with the potential to devolve delivery even closer to our rural communities, as had been recommended by Lord Haskins. With the exception of London, each region has therefore been asked to develop a framework for regional rural prioritisation and delivery and to propose a 'Pathfinder' whose purpose is to explore options for better local delivery in rural development.

3. EAST OF ENGLAND RURAL DELIVERY PATHFINDER PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The Pathfinder proposal will enable partners to work together to assess how rural delivery can be more effective at the local level and bring forward new solutions for success. During this financial year, Phase 1 will map rural funding streams and research both their efficiencies and barriers to success. This should ensure a greater understanding and co-ordination of a range of delivery programmes and how they link with other actions, such as those via the Local Strategic Partnership. Phase 2, during 2005/6 and possibly beyond, will test new options for local delivery mechanisms, linking where possible to the new Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) targets –

Huntingdonshire District Council is working with Cambridgeshire County Council, one of 20 local authorities taking part in this pilot of a new 'Invest to Save' performance contract between central and local government.

3.2 The geographical area to be covered by the pathfinder is the fens of Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. It is an area that transcends local authority boundaries and roughly follows the Defra Countryside Character area of the Fens.

3.3 The area faces a range of issues, particularly regarding poor accessibility, which is both a key rural development issue itself and a key determinant in relation to other issues, such as increased costs of service delivery. Following an outline analysis of the Community Strategies for the Fens Pathfinder area, it has been shown that there are a number of common themes, which the Pathfinder would focus on:

- Skills and Education
- Economic Development
- Accessibility to Services
- Health and Social Care
- Environment
- Community Cohesion.

3.4 As the closing date for receipt of bids to Defra was 3 September, the Head of Planning Services with the support of Cllr Guyatt, Planning Portfolio Holder, agreed to Huntingdonshire District Council's involvement to date in this joint bid. Endorsement of that action and future engagement is now sought. Details of the proposed bid, including membership of the core partnership, are shown at Annex A.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The East of England Rural Pathfinder will be jointly led by Cambridgeshire and Norfolk County Councils. Defra has acknowledged in the Rural Strategy 2004 that such work could bring new burdens to local authorities and has stated that these would be reflected in budgetary transfers in the normal way. The lead partners have already been asked to consider any future financial implications this work might bring.

4.2 Huntingdonshire District Council is recognised as being in a strong position to assist in this work as:

- it is seen as being an ideal partner to show the benefit of such working as the district is diverse in its socio-economic make-up and, as such, cannot have a blanket policy approach to address the needs of its rural communities but must consider locality differences;
- it has already recognised the importance of working with local rural communities through a range of actions including the creation of a post for rural renewal and the prioritisation of actions in the Ramsey area; and
- it is actively engaged in the work of the Cambridgeshire Rural Forum.

4.3 For the immediate future there should be no cost to the Council for this project other than involvement of staff in the project delivery. It is not known when Defra will respond to the bid submitted, although it is hoped this would be within 60 days. If the bid is not successful, the project is unlikely to proceed.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is therefore **RECOMMENDED**

(a) that the action taken to be involved in the partnership bid to Defra be endorsed;

(b) that, in the event of the application being successful, the Cabinet agrees to the involvement of Huntingdonshire District Council in the project

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Rural White Paper Our Countryside: The Future – A fair deal for rural England
Defra Rural Strategy 2004
Huntingdonshire Local Plan
Huntingdonshire Community Strategy 2004

Contact Officer: Claire Keck
 **01480 388274**

Annex 1

SUB-REGIONAL RURAL DELIVERY PATHFINDER PROPOSAL

Region: East of England

Sub-region: Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Peterborough Fens

Background: The Fens form a defined geographical area with social, economic and environmental characteristics that transcend local authority boundaries. The area is predominantly – though not exclusively – rural in character with mainly flat topography, rich, fertile soil and a dispersed settlement pattern including villages, isolated hamlets and market towns, largely reflecting its agricultural heritage. It is bounded on two sides by Cambridge and Peterborough, now brought together as part of the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth area, but does not share the benefits of the economic boom being experienced by its prosperous neighbours.

By 2001, the population of the East of England Fens area was estimated at 306,000, a 7% increase since 1991. Included within the area are medium-sized settlements such as King's Lynn, Wisbech, March and the eastern part of the Peterborough unitary authority area. There are also large numbers of small, remote communities that are often cut off by the extensive drainage network for the area. This gives rise to issues regarding poor accessibility, which is both a key rural development issue itself and in a key determinant in relation to other issues, such as increased costs of service delivery. The Pathfinder would focus on key issues within the broad areas of Skills and Education, Economic Development, Accessibility to Services, Health and Social Care, Environment and Community Cohesion.

In examining the potential for more effective delivery, the Pathfinder would look at ways of improving rural productivity and access to services for rural communities, delivery of the Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy and opportunities for capitalising on environmental assets to generate social and economic benefits.

Proposed partnership: The local authorities covered by the sub-region include the two County Councils of Cambridgeshire and Norfolk plus Peterborough Unitary Authority; Fenland District Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council (all in Cambridgeshire) and King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council in Norfolk. In addition, the three sub-regional economic partnerships - Shaping the Future (Norfolk), Greater Cambridge Partnership and Greater Peterborough Partnership - are included in the Pathfinder partnership, as are English Nature, the Countryside Agency, the Environment Agency, Defra RDS and Rural Action East (for the RCCs) and the Fenland Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder partnership.

The joint lead partners would be Cambridgeshire and Norfolk County Councils.

The proposed pathfinder would offer an opportunity for testing delivery and linked authority working across county and district boundaries, involve a unitary authority and examine relationships between a rural area and urban centred sub-regions. Additionally, there could be scope for looking at cross-regional linkage and delivery with Lincolnshire and South Holland District.

Economic and social issues: Two districts within the sub-region (Fenland and King's Lynn & West Norfolk) are indicator districts for the Defra PSA 4, with GVA/head in the lowest quartile nationally. Additionally, Peterborough is in the second tier of lagging indicator districts. Performance indicators generally across the sub-region indicate considerable variation in the quality of life. Parts of Huntingdonshire have experienced high levels of economic growth and low unemployment (generated largely by ease of commuter access to London, Cambridge and the Midlands). At the other end of the scale, however, there are pockets of social and economic

deprivation and affordability of housing is a real concern. Wisbech North ward in Fenland District is within the bottom 10% of national IMD rankings. A substantial traveller population suffers some of the most extreme conditions of rural deprivation of all rural communities.

A number of factors combine to create barriers to breaking the existing cycle of deprivation. In Fenland District, only 36% of children attain 5 or more GCSEs at A*- C compared to a national average of 53%. Average life expectancy is 80.3 years and 74.7 years for women and men respectively compared to national averages of 80.6 and 75.9. 38% of people aged 16-74 hold no formal qualifications, compared to a national average of 29%.

The economy of the area has traditionally been heavily dependent on agriculture and food production and the Fens is one of the most productive farming sub-regions in England, with Grade I and II soil types and some 2,831 agricultural holdings. Intensive local production focuses on arable and horticulture, particularly cereals, salad crops, sugar beet, potatoes and some soft and top fruit. Many of these holdings currently receive no benefits under the CAP, but are likely to become eligible to receive the new single payment under CAP reform arrangements. Farm businesses are generally large and highly commercial. Many are externally owned and a strong agri-food cluster has developed, with a number of food processing companies located close to the source of production. However, only a small proportion of the produce grown or processed in the area is marketed locally

There is a cluster of socio-economic issues around food production and processing in the Fens, all of which are being addressed through the regional delivery plan for the Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy. There are particular issues around health and the low consumption rates of fruit and vegetables in an area that is a major producer; issues around migrant worker and gangmaster activity associated with the harvesting, processing and packaging of fruit and vegetables; and increasing pressure on the local infrastructure, particularly the road network, as food processors and distributors strive to meet the demands of the global food market.

Environmental issues: The Fens are an area of former wetland reclaimed from the sea and maintained through drainage. The landscape is therefore of considerable historic interest but it is increasingly fragile and vulnerable. Much of the original fenlands were drained for farming in the 17th and 18th centuries, and countless plant and animal species have been lost. Following centuries of intensive agricultural production there are now problems with soil erosion and degradation. There is considerable scope to secure sustainable economic and social benefits from environmental assets, for example through tourism and renewable energy. There is work underway by the National Trust (at Wicken Fen, near Ely) and a partnership comprising English Nature, the Environment Agency, Huntingdonshire DC and the Wildlife Trusts (the Great Fen Project, near Ramsey) and others to protect and restore the fenlands, both for habitat and recreational purposes. Much of the area is below sea level and is at risk of flooding, both from rivers and from the sea. The low-lying topography of the fens makes them especially susceptible to the effects of climate change. At the same time, rainfall here is amongst the lowest in the country. These factors provide particular challenges for the economic development of the area.

Countryside Access: There are many examples of good work in relation to rights of way in the sub-region: the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough County Farm Estates have invested in public access schemes and recreational woodland trails; a number of District Councils have invested in public walks and helped ensure public rights of way. The Great Fen is a developing project that will help restore the original habitat and maximise visitor numbers. Farmers are encouraged to ensure permissible access rights under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. There is a growing interest in waterway access using the existing complex of rivers and drainage canals, with real potential for recreation and tourism in the area. The Environment Agency's Fens Waterway Link Project will open up 240km of waterway for recreation, tourism and the environment through the Fens. It has the potential to attract up to one million visitors, generating around £14 million worth of revenue every year.

Capacity, competence and willingness: The Pathfinder will be led by joint partners - Cambridgeshire and Norfolk County Councils. They are effective strategic partners and the Pathfinder will provide a platform for the development of stronger sub-regional partnerships. The county leads are well placed to engage with local authorities at the sub-county level, and relationships with districts and other partnerships are generally good. In the Local Authority Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) ratings, both Norfolk County Council and Cambridgeshire County Council received a “good” assessment. There is a clear enthusiasm for the Pathfinder and a willingness to engage with a range of partners across the counties in order to identify problems, explore priorities and develop innovative solutions.

Three sub-regional economic partnerships - Shaping the Future (Norfolk), Greater Cambridge Partnership and Greater Peterborough Partnership – work closely with their local authority partners, while Local Strategic Partnerships across the sub-region are at varying stages of development. Fenland LSP is keen to develop rural partnership working with surrounding districts, while Kings Lynn & West Norfolk LSP has identified a number of cross cutting priorities. Other LSPs have or are developing Community Strategies incorporating a range of rural priorities.

Local PSA negotiations: Both County Councils are pilots for the second round of LPSAs and negotiations with ODPM are at an advanced stage in both cases. Rural issues are a strong theme in both and the Pathfinder will therefore provide an opportunity to develop vehicles for delivering LPSA targets.

Funding: The Pathfinder will address issues of funding, both from the perspective of current and future need and in terms of existing funding sources. In the context of the Government’s sustainable development aspirations, the Fens hold enormous potential for generating economic and social value from rich environmental resources through tourism, agricultural diversification and the development of non-food crops and renewable energy. The Pathfinder will look at extension of existing funding streams, and the creation of new ones to support these and other new activities. Much of the present funding into the sub-region, such as that under European structural programmes, is time-limited. The range of current funding streams includes:

- £2.5 million Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder programme in Wisbech North and parts of the surrounding rural hinterland
- £1 million Objective 2 funding in Cambridgeshire
- £235k joint Cambridgeshire/Norfolk ERDF funding
- £15 million Objective 3 European Social Fund projects in Cambridgeshire
- £3 million Fens LEADER+ Improving the quality of life in rural areas
- EEDA rural renaissance, Investing in Communities and other community programme funding
- Defra funding under the England Rural Development Programme.

Voluntary and Community Sector engagement: Home Office and Defra VCS funding is being targeted at building the capacity of the sector in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. Cambridgeshire ACRE and Norfolk RCC are engaged in this work and their umbrella body, Rural Action East has been involved in discussions on the Pathfinder.

General summary and recommendation: The proposed area identified for the Pathfinder will give us ample opportunity for cross-boundary working, providing valuable insights in to rural

delivery issues which, by their nature, will naturally transcend existing administrative boundaries. The key issues represent an effective balance between the cross-cutting themes of economic development, community development and environmental activity.

The Fens would be a challenging area for a pathfinder and one that would provide a major opportunity for cross-boundary working and testing delivery mechanisms. In terms of its landscape and natural environment, the area is unique, yet it faces many of the issues typical of rural areas – low economic performance, pockets of extreme social exclusion and poor access to rural services. Its environmental assets provide a platform for growth and the Pathfinder should allow testing of different rural delivery mechanisms to address these issues and to develop linkages to existing mainstream activities.

The proposed partnership for managing the strategic direction of the Pathfinder will be broad enough to be fully inclusive and ensure effective and active involvement from all partners who hold and administer funding in rural areas, and that the views of all stakeholders, including the voluntary and community sector are taken into account. The East of England Development Agency and the East of England Regional Assembly fully support this proposal.

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CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2004

**BEST VALUE REVIEW – HOUSING TO MEET EXTERNAL & LOCAL
NEED/DEMAND (CROSS CUTTING)
(Report of the Director of Operational Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The BVR was conducted according to the Council's agreed framework involving Officers from the services under review, Officers representing the corporate interest and elected Council Members appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources).

2. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY AND RESOURCES)

- 2.1 The Panel considered the BVR report at its meeting held on 5 October 2004.
- 2.2 The Panel endorsed the BVR report and Improvement Plan but sought the inclusion in the Improvement Plan of:
- a feasibility study on the encouragement of the use of houses in multiple occupation to satisfy a potential need for those unable to access other forms of housing; and
 - an action to show how improvements link to service plans.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet considers the comments made by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources).
- 3.2 That Cabinet endorses the Service Improvement Plan contained in the report of the Best Value Review.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Best Value Review Implementation Guide
Guidance on the Scrutiny of Best Value Reviews

Contact Officers: Mrs E Wilson, Director of Operational Services
Mr S Plant, Head of Housing Services
☎ 01480 388301
☎ 01480 388240

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
(SERVICE DELIVERY AND RESOURCES)
CABINET
COUNCIL

5 OCTOBER 2004

14 OCTOBER 2004
8 DECEMBER 2004

CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION HOUSING STRATEGY (Report by the Head of Housing Services)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To note and seek endorsement of the Housing Strategy for the Cambridge sub-region.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Cambridge sub-region comprises the seven local authorities of: Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire, Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury, working together on housing issues. It is one of nine sub-regions within the East of England. Each sub-region has been asked to develop a Housing Strategy to inform the Regional Housing Strategy, which in turn, informs the Regional Housing Board's¹ investment decisions.

- 2.2 The Regional Housing Strategy must be supplied to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) in Spring 2005. The ODPM will use the Regional Housing Strategy to inform its bidding in the government spending review later that year, and its prioritisation of resources after the review. The document will therefore inform regional priorities, and ultimately influence not only the distribution of resources within the Eastern Region, but also the allocation made to the Eastern Region from central government.

- 2.3 The sub-regional Housing Strategy is therefore an important document. If developments in this sub-region are to receive adequate funding in future, the Council must make sure that the sub-regional strategy adequately presents the case for investment.

- 2.4 To develop the Strategy, the views of a wide range of stakeholders have been sought through events attended by council officers and housing association representatives (March 2004), and a wider event including members and developers. The draft Strategy has since been endorsed by the Infrastructure Partnership.

3. IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The themes that have been identified are those where the seven authorities can achieve more by working together than independently. Areas in which investment from the Regional Housing Board are required are:

Growth:

The Cambridge sub-region lies in a designated "growth area" and significant investment in both infrastructure and housing is needed to ensure affordable housing is available to people coming to live and work here, as well as to existing local populations including key workers.

¹ Regional Housing Board consists of the Housing Corporation, Government Office, East of England Development Agency, Regional Housing Forum, East of England Regional Assembly and English Partnerships.

Meeting housing need/ Homelessness:

A number of joint initiatives are helping to provide better services across the sub region. The strategy proposes further work on how people move around the sub region, and whether joint work on allocations would improve access to housing.

Decent Homes:

This concerns both the private and public sectors, and seeks to address targets for Council housing (only three out of seven authorities still have stock) as well as properties with vulnerable households in the private sector. The strategy makes recommendations for further joint working but does not seek regional investment for this area of work.

Supported Housing:

There is a real shortage of supported housing for some groups. The sub regional strategy seeks to influence future decisions on supported housing for schemes which have a revenue commitment from Supporting People.

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups including travellers:

There has been very little work on the housing needs of BME groups across the whole of the Eastern region and the current research project on the circumstances of travellers intends to inform this discussion. Nationally, housing of BME groups is a priority, and we are likely to lose investment if we cannot demonstrate effective working in this area.

- 3.2 The most critical proposal concerns the future distribution of capital resources. It is possible that the Regional Housing Board will give a capital allocation to the sub-region to invest according to its own priorities. The Strategy proposes that investment directed into the sub-region should be top-sliced to a maximum of 20% for supported housing projects that have a guaranteed revenue stream, with the remainder distributed to District Councils according to Structure Plan allocations.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The sub-regional Housing Strategy has been developed by the seven local authorities in consultation with other stakeholders. The document is important because it influences the government's investment in the Eastern Region and the Regional Housing Board's investment in the Cambridge sub-region.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 Council is asked to approve the Cambridge sub-region Housing Strategy 2004-8/9.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Draft Sub Regional Housing Strategy 2004-8/9

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Cambridge Sub-Region Housing Strategy

2004 to 2008/09

**Cambridge City Council
East Cambridgeshire District Council
Fenland District Council
Forest Heath District Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
St. Edmundsbury Borough Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council**



Foreword

by Nick Abbey, on behalf of Cambridge Sub-Region Affordable Housing Group

The Cambridge Sub-Region is a vital part of the East of England, sitting as it does in the middle of one of the Growth Areas identified by the Government in 2003. It is an area that is crucial to the UK economy, has a rising population, and exhibits all the issues that are central to Housing Policy in the early part of the 21st Century. In recent years:

- house prices have risen rapidly
- growing numbers of people, including key workers, are unable to afford to buy a home within reasonable reach of where they work
- the numbers of people asking for help from Councils and housing associations are rising
- older housing, both public and private sector, needs renewal
- rural areas within the sub-region are typically facing problems around having fewer local services for local people

The Cambridge sub-region is one of nine sub-regions in the East of England and the strategies being produced will inform the East of England's Regional Housing Strategy (due to be published in early 2005). This latter document will guide funding decisions to be made by the Regional Housing Board for the period from 2006/7 onwards.

This updated Sub-Regional Housing Strategy therefore comes at an important time and reflects the position in the late summer of 2004. The parties that have co-operated in drawing the strategy together have addressed issues set out above in the light of:

- recent developments in Government policy around planning and funding for affordable housing
- the policy framework of Regional Planning Guidance and the Cambridgeshire/Suffolk Structure plans
- the likely availability of funding to support affordable housing provision for both general needs and for supported housing
- the very recent establishment of a "Delivery Vehicle", the Cambridge Infrastructure partnership

Like all strategy documents, this has to be seen as work in progress, given the pace of change, where new policy announcements are made regularly. Proper review and monitoring arrangements mean that actions can, and will, be revised to take account of the latest intelligence. Nevertheless, it sets out clear actions for addressing current issues and, for the first time, gives a sub-regional view about spending priorities.

The group that has developed the strategy is the Cambridge Sub-Regional Affordable Housing Group. Mainly composed of housing and planning specialists from the seven District Councils, the group has benefited from the involvement of key partners: GO-East, Cambridgeshire County Council, Housing Corporation and National Housing Federation. The sub-regional consensus that has emerged is the product of joint working established over many years, and of detailed consultation with other stakeholders, especially developers and housing associations, at two events during 2004. Throughout this period, the group was mainly chaired by David Poole (lately Director of Community Services at Cambridge City Council) whose personal commitment to the needs of the sub-region was always evident.

As interim Chair, I am very grateful for the work of all those from the constituent authorities who have contributed to this strategy and whose continuing efforts will underpin its success in improving the prospects for affordable housing in the Cambridge Sub-Region.

Nick Abbey, Chief Executive Hereward Housing
Chair, NHF East of England
Interim Chair, Cambridge Sub-Region Affordable Housing Group.

On behalf of:

Cambridge City Council
East Cambridgeshire District Council
Fenland District Council
Forest Heath District Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council
St Edmundsbury Borough Council

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1. Challenges and Priorities

The local housing and planning authorities of the Cambridge sub-region are working together in partnership with Housing Associations and government agencies to address key housing issues across the area served by: Cambridge CC, South Cambridgeshire DC, East Cambridgeshire DC, Fenland DC, Huntingdonshire DC, Forest Heath DC and St Edmundsbury BC. This *Strategy* seeks to identify the key challenges facing the sub-region, and to suggest ways in which the partnership can address them.

Sub regional working developed early in the Cambridge sub-region, building on a history of co-operation between districts. We are now also identified as one of nine sub-regions in the East of England, working together through the Regional Housing Forum.

The primary purpose of the sub-regional partnership is to develop an analysis of housing needs, share good practice and develop joint approaches through the sub-regional housing *Strategy*. The partnership also seeks to inform and influence the Regional Housing Strategy and thereby the resource allocations of the Regional Housing Board.

This is the second *Strategy* - the first having been published in February 2003. For this *Strategy*, partners have identified six key issues where joint working is a high priority, addressed in sections 5 to 10 of the Strategy. In summary, they are:

- **Growth:** the implications of the growth in population, largely due to economic growth and in-migration. In particular, the inclusion of the sub-region in the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth corridor.
- **Increased supply of affordable housing:** the need to work together to deliver an increased level of affordable housing output in the sub-region, with a provisional target for this strategy of 1200 new homes a year. This will require emphasis on planning arrangements, and a joint approach to investment as well as developing new models of affordable housing, particularly those requiring limited or no public funding.
- **Homelessness:** working together to prevent homelessness and improve services for homeless people, bearing in mind the considerable synergies between the seven authorities' homelessness strategies and the operation of a housing market across the wider geographical area.
- Making best use of **existing housing:** improving public housing to meet the government's Decent Homes target, and working to improve private housing, to reduce empty homes and to achieve balance in the housing market.
- **Supported housing:** working together, and with the two Supporting People Commissioning Bodies of Cambridgeshire and Suffolk, to address the needs of vulnerable people who need support to live independently in the community. In particular, working to bring consensus on capital and revenue finance for new schemes.
- **BME communities:** working together to improve understanding of the housing needs of black and minority ethnic communities in the sub-region, and developing appropriate responses.

The *Strategy* has an ambitious Action Plan, with clear responsibilities and timescales. This Action Plan will be monitored, and it is proposed to bring stakeholders together at least once a year to review progress and revise the Action Plan in the light of developing trends, in particular examining the priorities of the Regional Housing Board.

2. Strategic context

Strategies for addressing the key housing issues facing the Cambridge sub-region cannot be pursued in isolation. It is critically important to ensure that the Housing Strategy is linked to national and regional strategies for housing, economic development and social inclusion. This section sets out these linkages.

National Housing Policy

In February 2003, the Government published *Sustainable Communities: building for the future*, which sets out the main national priorities and strategies for housing, linked to developing sustainable communities. The key national priorities are as follows:

- Increasing the supply of affordable housing in areas of shortage
- Ensuring that housing strategies contribute to sustainable communities, particularly at the neighbourhood level
- Targets for decent homes in the social housing sector; and for vulnerable households in the private sector
- Improved conditions and management in the private sector
- Tackling areas of low demand for housing
- Addressing the housing and support needs of vulnerable households
- Sustainable development and meeting housing needs in rural communities
- Ending the use of Bed and Breakfast for homeless families
- Reducing rough sleeping and sustaining the reduction

At the same time as the national programme of action, the Government published *Sustainable communities in the East of England*, with regional priorities for the East of England within the national framework. This sets out the key strategic challenges for the region as:

- Addressing problems of high and rapidly rising house prices and their impact on the recruitment and retention of staff, particularly close to London and around Cambridge but spreading deeper into the region
- Improving transport infrastructure - railways, roads, airports and ports to meet the needs of economic growth
- Ensuring that the benefits of economic growth are spread across the region
- Addressing the development consequences of scarce water resources throughout the region and a rising sea level for coastal and low lying areas

The document identifies key challenges for housing policy in the East of England:

- To provide for the region's growing population (an increase of 6% in the last decade, and a projected increase of over half a million from 1996 to 2021)
- To address the imbalance in the demand and supply for housing -- the increase in the number of dwellings is not keeping pace with the increase in household numbers, and housing completions are at historically low levels in most of the sub-region
- To find housing solutions for increasing numbers of those on modest incomes, including key public sector workers, who cannot afford to purchase their own home
- To close the gaps between the need for and provision of affordable housing in rural districts
- To achieve targets for all social housing to meet the decent homes standard by 2010.

The London – Stansted - Cambridge corridor is identified in *Sustainable Communities* as one of the key growth areas for the South East. This growth corridor, which has subsequently been extended to include Peterborough, includes the Cambridge sub-region. The implications of growth area status are examined in Section 5.

Regional Economic Strategy

The vision of the Regional Economic Strategy (prepared by the East of England Development Agency) is to *'make the East of England a world class economy, renowned for its knowledge base, the creativity and enterprise of its people and the quality of life for all who live there.'*

The key aims with regard to the cities, towns and villages within the region are as follows:

- Growth of sustainable communities in the region's growth areas that make a major economic and social contribution to regional success
- Enhance the region's qualities as an attractive place to live, work and visit
- Significantly reduce deprivation in disadvantaged communities and neighbourhoods

The Regional Economic Strategy is currently being revised and the final version is expected to be available in November 2004.

Regional Housing Strategy

In 2003, the Government established Regional Housing Boards in each of the regions, including a Regional Housing Board for the East of England. The role of these boards is to analyse the housing circumstances in different parts of the regions, and to develop a strategy and investment plan to address housing issues, consistent with the national plan. This approach recognizes that housing markets differ between and within regions, and that a coherent approach to improving housing circumstances is best pursued at a regional level.

The initial East of England Regional Housing Strategy for 2003-2006 was developed through the Regional Housing Forum, with representatives of local government, the National Housing Federation, Housing Corporation, Government Office, Chartered Institute of Housing, Countryside Agency, East of England Development Agency and the House Builders Federation. The Regional Housing Strategy 2003-06 identifies the major housing stresses for the East of England are identified as:

- High and rising house prices in many areas
- Inability of those in low paid employment to rent or buy a home
- Pockets of deprivation masked by overall affluence of a district
- Some pockets of low demand
- Commuting and congestion as people travel long distances to work
- Shortages of accommodation for key workers in some areas
- Non-sustainable communities

The Regional Housing Board has sought to address these issues through an investment plan based on themes of:

Growth	40%
Regeneration	30%
Rural	15%
Supported housing	10%
Black and minority ethnic	5%

Regional Housing Board investment has been targeted through the Housing Corporation to begin to address these themes, and to ensure:

- that growth is pursued in a balanced way, which protects the essential character of the region; and is supported by adequate infrastructure investment, including social infrastructure
- the consolidation of Supported Housing over the next two or three years
- Support for sustainable rural communities by investment in affordable housing
- that housing needs of black and minority ethnic communities are recognized

One dimension of the Regional Housing Strategy 2003-06 is the strong focus on sub-regions. Nine sub-regions, groupings of local authority areas, were developed to reflect the diversity of the East of England, and to identify housing market areas.

The next Regional Housing Strategy is currently in development and will be available for consultation November 2004 – February 2005. It is being developed from strategic information and priorities from nine sub-regional strategies and as such this is a key contribution to the regional agenda. The next Regional Housing Strategy should inform the next government spending review in 2005, as well as guiding regional housing investment decisions for 2006/07 and 2007/08.

Links with other strategies

Planning strategies

The growth strategies for the sub-region, and the delivery of affordable housing, are critically dependent on regional planning guidance, structure plans and local plans in the seven authorities. These links are set out in Sections 5 and 6.

Supporting People Strategies

The seven local authorities in the Cambridge sub-region are involved in two county-based planning processes for supported housing - for Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Full Supporting People strategies are to be developed by March 2005. The main themes of Supporting People for the sub- region are outlined in Chapter 9, and are considered as investment priorities.

Homelessness Strategies

Local authorities were required to publish Homelessness Strategies by July 2003. There are common themes and proposals in the Homelessness Strategies of the seven authorities in the Cambridge Sub-region, and joint work on homelessness is proposed in section 7.

Community Plans

Local authorities are required to produce Community Plans, in partnership with other local agencies, to promote a coherent approach to developing strategies and services. The links between housing objectives and community plans for the seven authorities in the sub-region are set out in the following table:

Cambridge	Affordable housing is one of four key priorities in the Community Strategy.
East Cambs	Affordable housing is one of five key priorities identified in the Community Strategy.
South Cambs	'Quality homes for all' is one of the six key themes in the Community Strategy.
Huntingdonshire	One of the key outcomes of the Community Strategy is to ensure an adequate supply of high quality housing to meet local needs.
Fenland	Fenland Strategic Partnership has seven themes including "vibrant town and village communities which are good to live in"; more affordable housing is identified as an output for this theme.
St Edmundsbury Forest Heath	The West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership (covering 4 districts in West Suffolk, including St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath) has developed a Community Strategy, which has as one of its key objectives to 'make an inclusive community.' Under this objective, one of the priorities is to ensure the provision of good quality affordable housing.

3. Partnership and stakeholder involvement

The local authorities in the Cambridge sub-region are keenly aware that the delivery of the objectives of this *Strategy* will not be achieved without commitment from a range of organisations. This partnership approach is evidenced throughout the *Strategy*. Some of the key elements are as follows:

- Working with the Regional Housing Board and the Housing Corporation to develop a comprehensive resourcing plan for the *Strategy*.
- Supporting the Infrastructure Partnership for the Cambridge Planning sub-region, to ensure that the growth targets for the region are met, and that there is careful phasing of infrastructure alongside housing growth.
- Partnership with housing associations and developers through the proposed Affordable Housing Liaison Group, to ensure a consistent approach to affordable housing delivery, and in particular to work on models of affordable housing which require limited or no public funding
- Joint working with the Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Commissioning Bodies for Supporting People, to agree priorities for new supported housing and to ensure that new communities include provision for vulnerable people.

- Working with other statutory agencies, voluntary agencies and housing associations to improve services for homeless people and examine joint work on reforming social housing lettings.
- Improving contact with Black and minority ethnic communities to assess their housing needs and deliver appropriate responses.

A range of partners have been involved in the development of this strategy, in particular through consultation events held on 5 March 2004, and 21 July 2004.

The first event – well attended by local government officers and Housing Association representatives – included a presentation on the Cambridge sub-regional housing need study by David Couttie, and workshops on key topic areas, based around pre-circulated discussion papers on:

- Growth Areas
- Affordable housing
- Homelessness
- Choice in social housing lettings
- Black and minority ethnic housing issues

The consultation event validated these issues as the focus of the sub-regional housing strategy, and contributed to the proposals for action in each of the areas.

At a wider consultation event in July, elected members, housing association (RSL) representatives, government agencies, developers and others commented on the draft Action Plan, and held small group discussions focussing on the investment themes. RSLs and developers were particularly keen to support more joint working at a sub regional level – replacing some district level negotiations. There was strong support for a sub-regional allocation of investment from the Single Regional Investment Pot, and for investment priorities focussed on Supported Housing and Growth, with the latter allocated spatially in support of Structure Plan dwellings targets.

Ideas and comments from the consultation day have been used to inform this draft of the strategy, and we have wide support for the investment themes now adopted.

4. Housing needs and housing market analysis

A Housing Strategy must be based on the clear identification of needs, and understanding of housing market trends. A range of research and information has been assembled to inform this housing strategy, including research specially commissioned by the sub-regional partnership during 2003. This forms the basis of the analysis of the key housing issues to be addressed over the four year period of this Strategy, as set out in the following sections.

During 2005, the authorities of the sub-region will continue to update information on housing needs, housing costs, and other relevant information, and will consider how best to utilise the new Housing Market Assessment Model.

Households and tenure

The resident population of the seven local authorities making up the Cambridge sub-region, according to the 2001 census, was:

Cambridge	108,863
East Cambs.	73,214
South Cambs.	130,108
Huntingdonshire	156,954
Fenland	83,519
Forest Heath	55,510
St. Edmundsbury	98,193

The **age structure** of this population was:

Resident population (percentage)

	Cambridge	East Cambs	South Cambs	Huntingdonshire	Fenland	Forest Heath	St. Edmundsbury	England & Wales
Under 16	14.7	19.9	20.2	21.7	19.6	20.8	19.3	20.2
16 to 19	7.2	4.4	4.8	4.5	4.2	4.5	4.3	4.9
20 to 29	25.5	10.8	10.5	10.9	10.3	15.1	11.8	12.6
30 to 59	35.8	43.5	45.0	45.2	41.4	40.3	42.8	41.5
60 to 74	10.0	14.0	12.6	11.8	15.7	12.0	13.9	13.3
75 and over	6.9	7.5	7.0	5.9	8.8	7.2	7.8	7.6
Average age	36.0	39.5	38.9	37.6	40.7	37.3	39.6	38.6

(Source: 2001 Census)

The districts have similar proportions of young people under 16, around a fifth of the population, with the exception of Cambridge at 14.7%.

Cambridge has more than double the national average of 20 to 29 year olds, largely due to its student population.

The more rural districts have a higher percentage of older people.

The **economic activity** of the population was:

Resident population aged 16 to 64 (percentage)

	Cambridge	East Cambs	South Cambs	Huntingdonshire	Fenland	Forest Heath	St. Edmundsbury	England & Wales
Employed	54.0	68.4	70.9	70.5	61.8	69.0	68.3	60.6
Un-employed	2.3	2.2	1.6	2.0	2.7	2.2	2.2	3.4
Economically active full time students	4.2	1.8	2.2	2.2	1.6	1.9	2.0	2.6
Retired	8.6	13.5	12.2	11.7	16.5	11.7	13.6	13.6
Economically inactive students	21.8	2.6	3.4	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.2	4.7
Looking after home/family	4.2	6.3	5.6	6.1	7.0	6.8	5.6	6.5
Permanently sick or disabled	2.8	3.2	2.3	2.9	5.3	3.0	3.4	5.5
Economically inactive (other)	2.3	2.1	1.8	2.1	2.9	2.9	2.6	3.1

(Source: 2001 Census)

All the districts except Cambridge had employment rates higher than the national average. However, the position in Cambridge is distorted by the high proportion of economically inactive students - if these are excluded, employment rates in Cambridge are equivalent to other districts in the sub-region. Excluding students, Fenland has the lowest employment rate in the sub-region; one reason behind the district's success in being selected as a neighbourhood management pathfinder for the North of the district.

Cambridge has over a quarter of its population as students.

The more rural districts have higher proportions of retired people.

The **tenure** of households in the 2001 census was:
(percentage)

	Cambridge	East Cambs	South Cambs	Huntingdonshire	Fenland	Forest Heath	St. Edmundsbury	England & Wales
Owner occupied	53.4	72.9	75.2	76.2	75.2	61.7	70.8	68.9
Social rented	23.7	14.4	14.5	13.0	13.8	14.8	17.2	19.2
Private rented or rent free	22.9	12.8	10.3	10.8	11.0	23.5	11.9	11.9

(Source: 2001 census, with 'rented from Council' and 'rented from housing association' combined as 'social rented'.)

Most of the districts, with the exception of Cambridge and Forest Heath, had higher rates of owner occupation than the national average.

These two districts had a much higher rate of private renting, at around double the national average. This is largely accounted for by the high levels of students in Cambridge and USA service personnel in Forest Heath.

The proportion of social housing ranged from nearly 23% in Cambridge to 13% in Huntingdonshire.

Household growth

The Cambridge sub-region is one of the fastest growing areas of the UK. This reflects a local economy that contains a range of businesses that are relatively highly focused on technology based activities and with a high value output. There is significant potential for the continued expansion of this local economy with consequent benefits for the East of England and the UK as a whole. There are, however, severe supply side constraints to the expansion that need to be overcome if the area's economy is to achieve its potential. Key priorities are to deal with the severe level of traffic congestion and to improve labour supply by bringing forward more housing which is affordable to all sections of the labour market.

Population and Household Change, 2003-2008

The following section looks at projected changes in population and household structure up to 2008 in the Cambridgeshire districts of the sub-region. The analysis is based on a special run of the County Council Research Group's population model and is therefore not available for Suffolk. However, the broad demographic trends – which are as much national as local – are applicable to the whole sub-region. The forecasts assume that house-building will continue around current annual rates except in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, where rates are assumed to rise towards Structure Plan targets

Over the five years from 2003, the population is forecast to change as in the table:

Resident Population (thousands)

		0-15	16-19	20-29	30-59	60-74	75+	Total
Cambridge	2003	16.1	7.9	28.3	39.5	10.6	7.3	109.8
Cambridge	2008	16.8	7.8	32.8	39.9	10.7	7.1	115.1
East Cambs	2003	14.8	3.3	7.4	32.4	10.1	5.7	73.7
East Cambs	2008	15.3	3.6	8.0	33.4	12.2	6.4	78.9
South Cambs	2003	26.7	6.5	13.2	60.1	17.2	9.6	133.3
South Cambs	2008	27.9	6.8	14.7	61.0	21.0	10.9	142.4
Huntingdons.	2003	33.8	7.5	16.5	72.1	19.6	9.6	159.1
Huntingdons.	2008	32.7	8.2	18.5	72.8	23.9	10.6	166.6
Fenland	2003	16.6	3.7	9.3	35.0	13.7	7.4	85.7
Fenland	2008	17.4	3.9	11.5	35.0	14.9	8.4	91.1
Cambs	2003	108.0	28.9	74.8	239.1	71.3	39.6	561.7
Cambs	2008	110.1	30.2	85.5	242.1	82.7	43.4	594.0

(Source: CCC Research Group – Totals may not add due to rounding)

Total population will increase by between 5% and 7% in all five districts. The age-groups showing the smallest increases (around 1% or 2%) will be those aged under 16 and 30-59; the age-groups with the largest percentage increases (around 14% to 16%) will be those aged 20-29 and 60-74. These are complex patterns, reflecting the recent decline in the birth rate, an expected increase in migration of young adults into the area and the general ageing of the population, particularly as members of the post-war baby boom enter their sixties.

These demographic changes will have a significant impact on household structure, as can be seen in the table below, which shows the numbers of households in 2003 and 2008 classified by the age of the household reference person (as defined by the census – roughly the equivalent of the superseded “head of household”).

Private households (thousands)

		16-29	30-44	45-64	65-74	75+	Total	Average Household Size
Cambridge	2003	6.5	13.4	12.8	4.8	4.9	42.4	2.18
Cambridge	2008	7.7	13.7	13.5	4.5	4.7	44.1	2.20
East Cambs	2003	2.5	9.3	11.2	4.5	3.7	31.2	2.34
East Cambs	2008	2.7	9.5	12.8	4.9	4.1	33.8	2.32
South Cambs	2003	3.8	16.5	20.7	7.1	6.0	54.0	2.44
South Cambs	2008	4.2	17.0	23.0	7.8	6.7	58.7	2.39
Huntingdon	2003	5.9	20.9	24.0	7.9	5.9	64.6	2.45
Huntingdon	2008	6.8	20.5	26.7	9.1	6.5	69.6	2.38
Fenland	2003	3.3	9.7	12.4	6.2	4.5	36.1	2.36
Fenland	2008	4.0	9.6	13.1	6.4	5.1	38.2	2.37
Cambridgeshire	2003	22.0	69.8	81.1	30.5	25.0	228.3	2.37
Cambridgeshire	2008	25.4	70.3	89.1	32.7	27.1	244.4	2.34

(Source: CCC Research Group – Totals may not add due to rounding)

Overall, the number of households in Cambridgeshire will increase by some 7%, a somewhat faster rise than that of the population as a whole (5%). This difference reflects the continued long-term decline in average household size (although this decline will be less evident in areas where household size is already low).

The increase in numbers of households will be spread across all age-groups, with the smallest rise amongst households formed by adults aged 30-44. The largest rise will be in households formed by adults aged 16-29, due to increased birth rate in the 1970s and the larger number of migrants expected in this age group.

Relatively large increases in numbers of older households should be noted, with increases of over 10% in Huntingdonshire, East and South Cambridgeshire. A very large proportion of older households consist of couples or single people (at the 2001 census, 43% of all households in Cambridgeshire containing pensioners were one-person households, rising to 68% amongst the over-75s).

House prices

Affordability is one of the primary reasons preventing households accessing the housing they need. House prices in the Cambridge sub-region have increased substantially in the last few years, leading to increasing numbers of households on moderate incomes being priced out of the market. Data from the Land Registry demonstrates this trend:

Average prices of detached properties (£000's)

	Cambridge	East Cambs	South Cambs	Huntingdonshire	Fenland	Forest Heath	St. Edmundsbury
Oct-Dec 2000	300	153	231	155	91	124	162
Oct-Dec 2001	285	172	238	174	105	134	178
Oct-Dec 2002	367	208	285	210	134	165	220
Oct-Dec 2003	396	236	289	231	156	185	228
% increase 2000 to 2003	32%	54%	25%	49%	71%	49%	41%

Average prices of semi-detached properties (£000's)

	Cambridge	East Cambs	South Cambs	Huntingdonshire	Fenland	Forest Heath	St. Edmundsbury
Oct-Dec 2000	158	93	120	89	59	76	92
Oct-Dec 2001	172	108	133	93	70	95	96
Oct-Dec 2002	198	126	170	121	85	116	133
Oct-Dec 2003	223	143	177	141	110	128	146
% increase 2000 to 2003	41%	54%	48%	58%	86%	68%	59%

Average prices of terraced properties (£000's)

	Cambridge	East Cambs	South Cambs	Huntingdonshire	Fenland	Forest Heath	St. Edmundsbury
Oct-Dec 2000	143	85	96	67	47	67	76
Oct-Dec 2001	175	98	114	80	54	82	88
Oct-Dec 2002	204	119	140	102	75	105	106
Oct-Dec 2003	233	128	154	113	86	106	124
% increase 2000 to 2003	63%	51%	60%	69%	83%	58%	63%

Average prices of flat/maisonette (£000's)

	Cambridge	East Cambs	South Cambs	Huntingdonshire	Fenland	Forest Heath	St. Edmundsbury
Oct-Dec 2000	100	60	71	52	32	113	51
Oct-Dec 2001	118	58	94	66	36	86	61
Oct-Dec 2002	160	88	106	83	47	107	79
Oct-Dec 2003	161	93	126	85	57	92	104
% increase 2000 to 2003	61%	55%	77%	63%	78%	-19%	103%

(Source: Land registry)

It is important to note that the use of average house prices tends to somewhat over-estimate house price levels, since they can be distorted by the inclusion of a small number of very expensive dwellings. Nonetheless, the trends in price increases shown above apply equally to mean and median prices. For all types of properties, the highest prices are found in Cambridge, followed by South Cambridgeshire. The lowest are in

Fenland, although areas furthest from Cambridge have been experiencing the sharpest increase in house prices in percentage terms. .

There have been substantial price increases in almost all categories and districts over the last three years. The highest percentage increases have tended to be in the (relatively) cheaper areas; and for terraced houses and flats/maisonettes.

Further analysis shows the availability of dwellings in different price bands

Properties in various price bands, October-December 2003

	<£40K	£40-60K	£60-80K	£80-100K	£100-120K	£120-150K	£150-200K	£200-300K	£300-400K	>£400k
Cambridge	0.2	1.0	1.4	1.7	4.6	16.4	31.9	24.8	10.7	7.4
East Cambs	0.0	0.7	5.6	7.0	16.6	19.2	22.2	21.3	4.4	3.1
South Cambs	0.5	0.1	0.8	2.1	6.3	22.4	27.8	26.8	7.9	5.2
Huntingdonshire	0.0	2.0	4.3	13.1	16.1	18.1	23.0	17.1	4.1	2.5
Fenland	0.9	6.5	10.5	19.7	18.3	21.2	14.7	7.1	1.0	0.1
Forest Heath	1.2	6.4	8.1	16.2	15.3	20.3	21.4	7.5	2.8	0.9
St. Edmundsbury	1.2	2.0	2.2	13.0	16.9	18.7	23.8	16.4	3.4	2.1

(percentage)

(Source: Land Registry)

Housing Needs

The authorities in the Cambridge sub-region commissioned David Couttie Associates to undertake a sub-regional housing needs survey, published in December 2003. As one of the first sub-regional housing needs surveys, it represents an innovative approach to assessing needs across the sub-region. Individual district level surveys, which collect more detailed local data, and are used to support planning policy developments, concur with the findings of the sub-regional survey.

The survey estimates the annual shortfall of affordable housing for the seven districts as 4427 dwellings, calculated as follows:

Backlog of existing need (eliminated over five years)	1084
Net new household formation	2533
Existing households falling into priority need	2375
Ex-institutional population moving into the community	11
In-migrant households unable to afford market housing	1931
Total annual need	7934
Total supply from relets (3074) New delivery (433)	3507
Overall annual shortfall	4427

The average house prices of the smallest units were assessed to enable threshold income levels to be calculated. These are based on a 95% mortgage and a 3x gross income-lending ratio. Threshold incomes were also calculated for the lower quartile of property prices.

Local Authority	Income thresholds (£)		Income required to access lower quartile dwellings
	Flat	Terraced	
Cambridge	46000	67600	45350
East Cambs	33600	36900	34850
South Cambs	30250	46800	42275
Huntingdonshire	23500	32600	29500
Fenland	15700	25000	23400
St. Edmundsbury	26000	34700	31650
Forest Heath	27400	31300	26900

Source : Land registry Residential Property Price report, 1st Quarter 2003; Lower Quartile House Prices, Land Registry 1st quarter 2003

The survey refers to a Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2003 publication, 'Can work - Can't buy', which calculates affordability ratios for 4/5 bedroom properties (4th Quarter 2002). Results for the authorities in the Cambridge sub-region and the East Anglia region were:

Area	Working Households		
	2002 prices £	Income	Ratio
Cambridge	159048	31608	5.03
East Cambs	116500	33677	3.46
South Cambs	142627	35232	4.05
Huntingdonshire	101887	34487	2.95
Fenland	83301	24302	3.43
St. Edmundsbury	108209	28643	3.78
Forest Heath	105109	23424	4.49

Key workers

There is a growing concern in the South East of England that essential public sector workers (so-called 'key workers') are being priced out of the housing market, and that public services are experiencing recruitment and retention problems as a result.

The authorities in the Cambridge sub-region commissioned Roger Tym and Partners to undertake key worker housing research, and the report was published in September 2003.

Overall, the study identifies problems in recruiting younger workers (aged under 30 years) and in retaining older workers, particularly those aged 30-34 years. It recommends an annual key-worker-housing programme of 432 homes per annum over three years beginning in 2004. Of this amount, 57% is attributable to the needs of Addenbrookes hospital in Cambridge, and 43% to the rest of the sub-region. The report recommends that the annual programme consist of 134 homes for sub-market rental and 298 low cost home ownership.

The vast majority of key workers aspire to be owner-occupiers, and families want houses as opposed to flats, and want to be near good schools. All key workers aspire to live near good transport connections. Single people do not articulate a desire for central town living, but want to live near work/family/friends, and near good shops and recreational facilities.

The development and allocation of homes for key workers in the sub-region is coordinated by the Key Worker Zone Agent, Bedfordshire Pilgrims HA. BPHA work closely with the Cambridgeshire Key Worker Employers Consortium, according to a protocol agreed by CKWEC and districts in 2003.

5. Housing Growth and Infrastructure

Background

The vision and objectives for growth in the Cambridge sub-region are expressed in the Sustainable Communities Plan, and Regional Planning Guidance; targets and locations for growth are then set out in county level structure plans for Cambridgeshire and Suffolk, and devolved to the districts and boroughs and captured within their Local Plans (Local Development Frameworks). Key links with the Sustainable Communities Plan and Regional Housing strategy are set out in Section 2.

Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 14) / Regional Spatial Strategy

A new regional spatial Strategy is being prepared by the East of England Regional assembly (EERA) and is expected to be available for consultation in November 2004, at the same time as the regional Housing Strategy. It builds on previous regional planning guidance issued as RPG6 and parts of RPG 9, 9a and 9b, and is due to be adopted in 2004. Draft RPG14 is and is expected to be available for consultation, in early 2005.

The vision of the RSS requires that, within the overall environmental constraints of the Region, growth is led by improvements in quality of life and prosperity. This requires pursuit of the following set of headline targets related to housing:

- The Region should meet the housing needs of all sections of the community. This means meeting the needs arising from the natural change in the existing resident population and ensuring that the Region provides sufficient additional housing to allow for a realistic level of in-migration from other Regions (mainly London) to deliver the wider needs of London, the East of England, and the South East based on continuing to meet the present levels of in-migration.
- Increasing the provision of affordable housing from the present level of approximately 10-12% of total housing supply, to at least 33% of total housing supply. 40% or more of the new housing in the sub-region needs to be 'affordable' housing. Employment development will also be expected to contribute towards affordable housing.

Structure Plans

Suffolk Structure Plan 2001

The current structure plan provides for 2,650 additional dwellings per annum between 1996 and 2016. Only Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury are included within the Cambridge sub-region and their details are as follows:

District	Dwellings (per annum)	Achievement
Forest Heath	260	160+
St Edmundsbury	440	500+

(Details provided by Suffolk County Planning Department)

The key reason for St Edmundsbury's good performance was that a number of schemes were already in the pipeline, which came to fruition during this period. This structure plan will need to be revisited in order to take account of the changes brought about by RPG 14.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

The Structure Plan was adopted in October 2003. Provision is made in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for 70,200 additional homes between 1999 and 2016 and are distributed as follows:

Area	Dwellings (total)	Average annual total
Cambridge City	12,500	735
East Cambridgeshire	7,300	429
Fenland	8,100	476
Huntingdonshire	9,500	559
South Cambridgeshire	20,000	1176
Peterborough	12,800	753
Total	70,200	4128

Monitoring of housing completions by Cambridgeshire County Council for the period 1999 to 2003 shows the following:

	1999-2001 (2 years)	2001/02	2002/03	Annual average
Cambridge	337	145	267	187
East Cambs	802	754	523	520
South Cambs	1423	526	656	652
Fenland	638	600	718	489
Huntingdonshire	1579	273	573	606

It is evident that in the first four years covered by the Structure Plan targets, East Cambs, Fenland and Huntingdonshire have met their dwelling completion targets, while there is a shortfall in Cambridge and South Cambs. A key issue is to work more closely with developers, through the Infrastructure Partnership, to increase the dwelling construction rate in these districts.

Local development documents

Local Development Documents will identify land for housing and related development for schools, services, and other facilities, in the following order of preference:

- Within the built up area of Cambridge, subject to capacity and environmental considerations;
- On the periphery of the built up area of Cambridge on land to be removed from the Green Belt by 2006;
- In the new settlement of Northstowe close to Cambridge;
- Within the built up area of market towns and rural centres where it would contribute to the specified social and economic needs of the community where good public transport to Cambridge exists or can be provided; and
- By extensions to market towns and rural centres where good public transport access to Cambridge exists or can be provided.

Within Huntingdonshire, employment generation associated with the reuse of Alconbury Airfield may require some modification of this sequence in nearby parts of the district, to secure a sustainable pattern of development.

The Infrastructure Partnership

An Infrastructure Partnership has been established for the Cambridge Planning sub-region, as a Delivery Vehicle for growth. The Partnership is a Limited Liability Partnership, with a formal board, including representatives of all authorities involved, as well as representation from Housing Associations, health and private sector interests. It will work closely with Government on removing blockages and restraints to growth and ensuring the delivery of the supporting infrastructure, including roads, utilities, community facilities, as well as affordable housing.

The authorities involved in the IP are Cambridgeshire County, Cambridge City, South Cambs, East Cambs, Fenland, Huntingdonshire (Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury are not included).

The key benefits the Partnership will deliver are:

- A clear and single focus on delivery to ensure maximum progress against targets
- Co-ordination of joint working to maximise efficiency and effectiveness
- Collective lobbying voice and greater ability to lever funding
- Specialist skills and resources e.g. housing, land assembly, funding
- Local accountability

A business plan has been put together with a number of key milestones to measure success; further work on this business plan will inform the resourcing plan for this strategy.

Major sites and schemes are expected to commence in the next few years, e.g.:

- Start development on site of the Cambridge Northern Fringe - Arbury Camp by 2004
- Start development on site of the Cambridge Northern Fringe - East site by 2005/06
- Complete the Rapid Transit Scheme by 2007
- Start development on site of the Cambridge East site by 2005/06
- Start development on site of Northstowe, the New Town by 2005/06

Key Action Points

The following key action points relating to the growth area status form part of the action Plan for the sub-regional strategy (see Section 9)

- Monitor the process of developing the final housing targets in RPG 14, particularly as they effect the Cambridge sub-region
- Facilitate the development of housing as required by the Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Structure Plans and Regional Planning Guidance
- Agree respective roles and accountabilities with the Infrastructure Partnership
- Participate in delivery of Infrastructure Partnership Business Plan (to be finalised October 2004)
- Monitor the achievement of housing targets, as set out in Structure Plans, and amended by RPG14 (annually)
- Participate in the emerging co-ordination structures for the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth corridor

6. Affordable Housing

Research and market monitoring points to the increasing difficulties for many households in the Cambridge Sub-region in accessing affordable housing. The groups involved include:

- The 'traditional' clients of social housing, including vulnerable groups, and those on statutory incomes or in low-paid work;
- Increasing numbers of households on moderate incomes priced out of the market as a result of rising house prices and rents. This includes essential public sector workers (key workers).

In developing new homes across the sub-region, attention must be given to ensuring a balanced housing market. House prices are high, and have increased considerably, as indicated in section 4. In the past three years, proportionately higher house price rises in areas further from Cambridge show the increasing area covered by the "Cambridge effect." This price rise has had a particularly detrimental effect on some rural communities, making existing housing unaffordable for local people. House price rises have not been matched by salary increases, with salary to house price ratios in the sub-region of 1:7.

Affordable housing targets

One of the key issues for the Cambridge sub-region is to establish challenging but achievable targets for increasing the supply of affordable housing, as the basis for a delivery plan. The housing needs survey identifies an annual shortfall of affordable housing in the sub-region of 4427 dwellings. This is a larger requirement than the total new housing requirement for the sub region, estimated at around 3000 a year.

The housing needs survey suggests a target for affordable housing of 40% of new housing supply; and this target is included in the Cambridgeshire structure plan, although it is expected that different targets may apply in different districts. To achieve this level of affordable housing would imply annual affordable housing output of 1200 dwellings.

The Cambridge sub-region authorities, working with partners, have identified sites where affordable housing is expected to be developed throughout the period of this strategy. The partners have compiled pipeline information on schemes coming forward, which indicates that over 6,000 new affordable homes might begin construction in the period (see Appendix 1).

Many of these sites will be developed primarily as market housing, with affordable housing secured through section 106 agreements, so it is difficult to predict exactly when development of the affordable component may commence. This depends on the state of the housing market locally, and the wider economy, influencing the rate at which house builders will wish to bring new sites onto the market, and is also influenced by the speed of negotiations of planning agreements and availability of resources to deliver the affordable housing.

The pipeline information contained in Appendix 1 is therefore indicative only. Some sites may commence development sooner than expected, others later, or possibly not within this plan period; similarly, there are likely to be "windfall" sites which will come forward for development within the plan period, and hence a degree of flexibility about moving investment between sites and projects will be required if opportunities are to be maximised.

A further key issue is to determine the balance of the affordable housing programme across different needs groups, and this will of necessity be determined on a site by site basis within a strategic framework, which itself is regularly reviewed to take account of the changing population as we undergo this period of growth. There is a range of factors to take into account:

- The need to increase the supply of housing to meet the needs of vulnerable groups, and meet targets for the rehousing of homeless people
- Developing options for people on modest incomes, currently priced out of the market
- Determining the level of priority to be ascribed to housing for key workers, particularly in the light of Government targets in this area.
- Ensuring that new communities, and especially larger new settlements, include a range of housing types and do not become “ghettoes” for any one type of household

Ensuring that such developments are able to cope with changing needs of population over time, e.g. as initial occupiers – and population as a whole

Each of the authorities will need to operate flexibly in determining the appropriate mix of types of affordable housing for particular sites, balancing types of affordable housing in line with local needs. As far as possible, different forms of affordable housing will be encouraged on larger sites, to support mixed communities.

The ability to deliver this balanced programme will depend on levels of funding from the Housing Corporation or other sources for different types of affordable housing, the development economics of particular sites, and the capacity of housing associations and the key worker housing zone agent (see below) to deliver in the sub region.

Cambridgeshire authorities are negotiating, through Cambs County Council, a Local Public Sector Agreement (LPSA) with government for the delivery of some of the required affordable housing without grant from the Regional Housing Board/ Housing Corporation. To deliver housing without grant, Housing Associations have agreed to flexible approaches to sites, and local authorities will work closely with them to identify other mechanisms for supporting affordable housing. Such innovative grant free housing will enable local authorities to be more involved in determining tenure and occupancy conditions.

Planning framework for affordable housing

Local authorities have powers to require affordable housing to be delivered as part of new residential developments where there is a demonstrated housing need. The effective use of this power is critical to the delivery of the proposed affordable housing programme in the Cambridge sub-region, given the demonstrated need across the sub-region, and the anticipated high level of residential development in the growth area.

The national planning framework for affordable housing is changing, with the consultation draft of a revised PPG3. If adopted, this will lower the normal threshold for affordable housing to be included on sites of 15 or more dwellings (0.5 hectares); and allow lower site thresholds to be justified in local development frameworks.

The Cambridgeshire structure plan includes Policy 9/2: "40% or more of the new housing in the Sub-Region will be affordable, which will include key worker housing. Most or all housing development will be expected to contribute with size thresholds being set in Local Plans according to local circumstances."

The Suffolk Structure Plan, adopted in 2001, has the following policy on affordable housing (CS9): "Where a local need for affordable housing is identified to the satisfaction of the local planning authority, the local authority will: (a) on local plan housing allocations and in determining development proposals, seek an appropriate proportion of affordable housing; (b) give favourable consideration to affordable housing on appropriate small sites adjoining villages.

The different authorities in the sub-region have different policies on the proportion of affordable housing sought and on site thresholds. One of the proposals of the Affordable Housing Delivery report (see below) is that the policies, and associated Supplementary Planning Guidance, should be aligned across the seven authorities.

Affordable housing delivery report

During 2003, the Cambridge sub-region commissioned a report on the delivery of affordable housing. The report, by Three Dragons with De Montfort University and Eiluned Morgan, was published in December 2003. The report examines the planning and delivery framework for affordable housing in the sub-region, and makes proposals for a more robust and systematic approach to increase the proportion of affordable housing delivered on development sites. The key proposals, which are to be taken forward through this Housing Strategy are:

- Establish, monitor and review annual affordable housing targets for each district
- Developing a consistent approach to affordable housing policies in the Local development Frameworks.
- Working with planners of the sub-region to agree and implement a standard Section 106 agreement with a Section 106 strategy.
- Establish a sub-regional Affordable Housing Provider Liaison Group (local authorities, housing associations, developers) to meet at least quarterly
- Ensure the inclusion of appropriate affordable housing skills and expertise within the Infrastructure Partnership - see below

Partnerships for delivery

As set out in section 5, the five Cambridgeshire authorities in the sub-region have agreed to establish an Infrastructure Partnership to co-ordinate their activities in securing and delivering the infrastructure needed to support the levels of growth in population and housing proposed in the *Sustainable Communities Plan*. The Infrastructure Partnership is considering the establishment of a sub-regional strategic housing function, to co-ordinate the overall housing development programme across the sub-region, and in particular the delivery of key worker and affordable housing. The specific housing functions and resourcing of these functions within the Infrastructure Partnership are still being developed, but it is envisaged that they could include:

- Assisting the local authorities to draw up their targets for different forms of affordable housing, taking into account the indicative proportions of different types of affordable housing set out in this strategy
- Monitoring the delivery of these targets
- Agreeing a forward funding programme for affordable and key worker housing in the sub-region with the Regional Housing Board and the Housing Corporation
- Co-ordinating the development of planning policies for affordable housing across the sub-region, including the development of common affordable housing policies in local plans, and a common affordable housing Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Providing technical support to local authorities in negotiating affordable housing agreements (Section 106 agreements), including the provision of development economic appraisal capacity.
- Organizing the proposed Affordable Housing Liaison Group

It is also proposed to explore the potential benefits of establishing a preferred partner group of housing associations to deliver affordable housing across the sub-region. This approach has been adopted elsewhere, and can have the benefit of encouraging a limited number of associations to engage strategically in delivery of the sub-regional programme, but the appropriateness of such arrangements, alongside Housing Corporation Pilot Partner arrangements, needs to be evaluated.

Resources for affordable housing

A key issue for the delivery of affordable housing is the extent to which public subsidy is to work alongside planning gain in delivering the targeted numbers of affordable housing dwellings. It is proposed to develop a sub-regional partnership approach within the framework of this sub-regional housing strategy between the seven local authorities, the Housing Corporation and key housing associations. The resources to be planned around include:

- Housing Corporation funding for social rental, shared ownership and supported housing
- Housing Corporation funding for key worker housing
- Local authority capital funding for affordable housing
- The application of commuted funds for affordable housing
- Housing association funding, including loans and the use of assets (including land)
- District- and County Council-owned land released for affordable housing
- National Health Service land, released for housing purposes
- Other employer-owned land, released to assist in the housing of key workers
- Other subsidies from employers, e.g. capital grant

If the LPSA negotiations (referred to earlier, page 22) are successful, additional pump-priming and reward monies linked to LPSA may become available for affordable housing. This is directly linked to achieving delivery of homes without grant.

The resource-planning framework will take the indicative programme for different types of affordable housing over the four year period of the strategy (see below) and allocate the various sources of funding across the sub-region to support the programme. Key issues are:

- The ability to achieve affordable housing through planning gain without public subsidy - particularly for shared ownership, key worker housing and intermediate housing
- The Housing Corporation's position on the use of public funds in conjunction with planning gain, particularly to achieve social rented housing as part of mixed tenure schemes
- The extent to which Regional Housing Board resources will be committed to the Cambridge sub-region to recognize its particular growth status within the eastern region
- Priorities for public funding of particular forms of affordable housing, in particular the emphasis on key worker housing, and how new key worker housing will be planned across the region and sub-region

- The potential to allocate funding as a shared pool across the sub-region, with priorities determined through the sub-regional partnership

The resource planning approach will take into account the Housing Corporation's 2004/05 and 2005/06 funding allocations in the sub-region, which were announced in April 2004. They are as follows:

Housing Corporation allocations 2004-2006

	Social Housing grant (£millions)	Homes
Cambridge City	£12.678	262
East Cambridgeshire	£6.568	234
Fenland	£1.998	55
Forest Heath	£2.744	338
Huntingdonshire	£6.015	165
South Cambridgeshire	£10.277	253
St Edmundsbury	£8.504	205

The types of affordable housing to be achieved by these allocations is:

Housing Corporation allocations 2004-2006 - types of affordable housing

	Homebuy	Social Rented	Shared Ownership	Inter-mediate rental	Key worker Homebuy	Key worker shared ownership	Key worker inter-mediate rental	Total
Cambridge	16	143	31		16	49	7	262
East Cambs	25	113	57		12	18	9	234
Fenland		47			8			55
Forest Heath		264	66		8			338
Huntingdonshire	26	107			12	9	11	165
South Cambs	38	164			16	31	4	253
St Edmundsbury		142	49	6	8			205
Total	105	980	203	6	80	107	31	1512

Sub-Regional Investment Priorities

For the period 2006 and beyond, for which regional investment priorities have not yet been decided, the Cambridge sub-region would wish to adopt locally agreed investment priorities which prioritise growth in the sub-region, and ensure that new housing can be delivered both in larger new settlements and sites to meet the priorities of the growth area, and within existing communities to meet locally arising housing need and prevent homelessness. Full details of our proposed investment priorities are set out at Section 11.

It is intended that a sub-regional resourcing plan be agreed during 2004/05, and be put forward to the Regional Housing Board to inform its recommendations for funding priorities for 2006/07 and 2007/08. This will be based on expected dwellings starts, as set out in Appendix 1, which predict that construction will commence on just over 2,000 affordable homes per annum, with the possibility of a considerable number of homes delayed from optimal starting dates in 2004/5/6 due to lack of available funding to allow commencement.

Key action points

The following key action points on affordable housing form part of the Action Plan for the sub-regional strategy (see Section 11)

- Establish annual targets for different forms of affordable housing in the seven local authorities in the sub-region
- Share best practice on models for funding different forms of affordable housing
- Deliver 290 homes without grant as set out in the local public service agreement for affordable housing without grant funding (or other target as agreed with ODPM)
- Establish a sub-regional Affordable Housing Liaison Group
- Determine whether it is practical to establish a group of preferred housing association partners

7. Homelessness and social housing lettings

Background.

This section of the report outlines some of the key issues across the sub-region relating to homelessness and lettings issues.

Each local authority has been required by the Homelessness Act 2002 to conduct a review of homelessness within their areas, and to develop a strategy setting out how homelessness issues are to be tackled in the future. Each local authority published a separate homelessness strategy in July 2003.

This sub-regional strategy pulls the common threads from these separate homelessness strategies together, and identifies common issues, and more importantly areas for joint working and jointly resolving sub-regional issues.

HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness data

The following table gives an indication of the levels of homelessness (not housing advice) activities across the seven districts in the sub-region.

Local authority	Applications	Acceptances
Cambridge	241*	176*
East Cambridgeshire	177	138
Forest Heath	125	43
Fenland	147	102
Huntingdonshire	367	251
South Cambridgeshire	203	148
St Edmundsbury	182	146

Based on 2002/3 P1e data ; * based on estimates

An analysis of the main causes of homelessness for each of the authorities reveals that the main causes are common across the sub-region:

- Parental eviction
- Eviction from other family and friends
- Termination of assured shorthold tenancy
- Violent relationship breakdown

Common issues

Across the sub-region there are number of common tasks required to tackle homelessness and improve services. Each authority has work programmed in over the life of the homelessness strategy document. Common issues identified in all homelessness reviews are set out below:

Rising house prices are putting more pressure on homelessness & housing advice services, as housing in the private sector becomes increasingly out of the reach of those on average or below average incomes. The impact of this is worsened by the decline of the number of social housing lettings

Making more use of the private rented sector – the need to engage effectively with landlords and agents, tap into what resources are available, developing more effective access schemes (rent deposit schemes etc), formalising relationships with the private sector generally.

Issues with counting homeless people and the problems associated with double counting and tracking individuals across agencies / boroughs. This is a particular issue for single homeless people, who tend to migrate into Cambridge City. Good quality data is required in order to assess the impact on provision / lack of provision

The need to set up formal and effective links and referral arrangements with some of the key agencies such as health, prison services, social services, locality mental health teams. Links with social services are of critical importance and there is a need for greater integration of services. There is a need to assess the housing needs of offenders prior to release from prison.

The need to “modernise” services to ensure prevention and early intervention are at the forefront of housing needs services.

The need to identify and tackle relatively high levels of repeat homelessness in some areas, and linking this to the need to be able to offer adequate support to vulnerable households. The development and expansion of tenancy support schemes is key, and therefore working with the Supporting People regime is central.

The need to tackle domestic violence and have creative ways of finding housing solutions for women presenting as homeless.

Initiatives planned to tackle homelessness issues

Each local authority homelessness strategy has an action plan setting out key actions. Most planned tasks are about improving service provision and meeting ODPM targets. However, the most important action in preventing and addressing homelessness in the sub-region is to increase the supply of affordable housing. The high costs of housing locally make it difficult for households to access housing, and can lead to homelessness. In such circumstances, a ready supply of affordable housing – of a range of tenures – would allow some households to access housing without becoming homeless, and for others would reduce the time spent in temporary accommodation.

For this reason, the investment priorities for the Cambridge sub-region do not include homelessness as a separate theme, but include housing for homeless and potentially homeless households as part of an overall need to increase supply.

Homelessness strategies identify a range of other actions to improve services to homeless people, and prevent homelessness. The box below gives examples of the type of work planned over the short to medium term.

Initiatives underway or planned
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using mediation services to reduce evictions by family and friends• Improving data monitoring and collection for both advice and homelessness• Increase supply of temporary accommodation• Looking at support services for homeless people living in temporary accommodation• Developing joint working arrangements with Social Services, and others• Improving housing advice and work on prevention• Working with housing associations to prevent homelessness and embrace early intervention and ultimately reduce evictions

Actions

These common issues raised in reviews form the backbone of the issues that need to be addressed over the next four years at a sub-regional level. This section sets out what the authorities plan to do on a sub-regional level.

Multi-agency monitoring system

There is a need to effectively count customers of housing advice and homelessness services, particularly young people. The system already in place in Cambridge City will be evaluated to establish whether it could be effective on a sub-regional level.

Sharing best practise on private sector housing

This is a crucial area of work if the targets on bed and breakfast usage and rough sleepers are to be achieved and maintained. The feasibility of a sub-regional landlords accreditation scheme will be researched.

LETTINGS

One of the issues identified for potential joint work through the sub-regional strategy is to examine lettings to ensure wide access to affordable housing across the sub region. This may include examination of options for joint needs registers, or joint work to examine options for achieving greater choice in social housing lettings. Some authorities are about to commence reviews of allocation processes, and where possible these reviews will be run together to ensure opportunities for joint working are fully explored.

The Government has been promoting the introduction of choice-based lettings (CBL) systems for Council and housing association lettings. A pilot programme to establish such systems was funded to March 2003. The national evaluation of the pilot programme was published in March 2004. The Housing Minister has signalled the intention to issue further guidance, encouraging local authorities and housing associations to introduce CBL in some form, following the evaluation.

In addition to choice, the issue of developing sustainable communities is one that is of concern and interest for the authorities in the sub-region. Joint work will be carried out to investigate how lettings can be made to stock in a way, which positively contributes to

creating sustainable communities, without disadvantaging homeless people. This is particularly relevant to lettings/ home ownership sales in new communities where establishing a stable community in the early phases of its existence is extremely important to future sustainability.

Key action points

The following actions on homelessness and choice in lettings will be pursued through the Action Plan (see Section 12)

- Evaluate the Cambridge pilot and consider implementing a multi-agency monitoring system
- Share best practise on making the best use of the private rented sector
- Explore the potential for joint work on policies and for social housing lettings especially in relation to strategic sites
- Investigate how current and future lettings impact on sustainability issues on strategic sites

8. Decent Homes

In an area of high housing stress and homelessness, it is particularly important to make the best use of existing housing stock. This can be done by ensuring that stock turnover is well managed, and lettings policies enable people in need to move within the housing market system. It is also important to make sure that stock condition does not prevent habitation, or cause poor health and social disadvantage, and that homes are not left empty for prolonged periods.

The government has set the clear target that all council homes should achieve its “Decent Homes” standard by 2010. Targets for other public sector dwellings, and for ensuring vulnerable households in the private sector have also been set.

Council owned properties

Three councils in the sub-region manage their own housing stock: Cambridge, South Cambridgeshire and Fenland. All three expect to meet the Decent Homes target of 2010, with both South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge expecting to achieve Decent Homes early, by 2006. As debt-free authorities, they are not dependent on borrowing to achieve this standard, but have based projections on current levels of government support through maintenance allowances and major repairs allowance. For Fenland, an allocation from the Single Regional Investment Pot (previously known as “HIP”) is essential to ensure that the Decent Homes programme can be delivered on time.

All three councils are currently pursuing stock options consultation and evaluation exercises with tenants, to consider the best way to deliver services to tenants in the future, and to ensure the continued maintenance and improvement of council homes, to standards agreed with tenants, which go beyond the Decent Homes standard to reflect tenants’ local concerns and aspirations. These consultations will be complete by Summer 2005.

Housing Associations

For other public sector stock – including the large numbers of homes transferred by the remaining four districts to Housing Associations, some of which includes older properties – there are no significant areas of poor repair, and the LVST authorities all expect to achieve Decent Homes throughout their stock by 2010 without investment from the

Regional Housing Board. All Housing Associations in the sub-region expect to achieve Decent Homes by 2010.

Private Sector Housing

The position for private sector stock varies considerably across the sub region, with some forms of disrepair scattered across the sub region, and no large areas of concentrated disrepair. Some concentrations of poorer housing – also associated with vulnerable households – may be found in areas where economic regeneration is also a priority, especially in parts of Fenland.

Recent stock condition surveys indicate that the finances required to improve private sector dwellings to an acceptable standard are very significant – £138M in South Cambs alone – but individual districts are developing their own private sector renewal strategies to respond to this, and using the powers of the Regulatory Reform Act 2003 to minimise the call on public money to fund the improvement of privately owned dwellings.

Huntingdonshire operates a very effective scheme to enable vulnerable homeowners to access council funds as a loan for property repairs; this may be adopted as good practice by other authorities in the sub region. Most authorities are already investing resources in private sector renewal, including discretionary grants to vulnerable households, non-statutory DFGs and specific schemes, e.g. to bring vacant properties into use. Cambridge City has an effective grant to landlords scheme, operating through King Street Housing Society, to bring unfit dwellings up to standard, or empty dwellings into use, so long as they are made available to homeless households.

Public funds are required to meet the statutory obligations of councils for Disabled Facilities Grants, which enable disabled people to continue to live in their own homes, and reduce the need for specialist or supported housing. Investment also enables authorities to contribute to the preventative agenda of health and social services (now operating in Cambridgeshire as integrated teams).

The demand for DFGs has increased in recent years, and demographic trends – the ageing of the population, and the increasing numbers of people living into a period extreme frailty – as well as a specific service commitment to move away from institutional models of care for the elderly, and instead to support independence at home (or in extra care housing), suggest that the demand for DFGs in this sub-region will continue to increase. In some areas, withdrawal of Housing Corporation funding previously allocated to Housing Associations for aids and adaptations has further increased the demand for DFGs. In the light of this, capping of DFG budgets is unhelpful and the sub-region identifies the need for separate ring fenced resources, sufficient to meet current and future demand.

Actions for Decent Homes:

All Council and Housing Association stock to meet DH Standard by 2010

Development of comprehensive private sector renewal strategies across the sub-region, including to meet targets on decent homes in the private sector

Make the case to the ODPM for more funding for disabled facilities grants

Share good practice in private sector renewal

9. Supported Housing

Although there is a large number of supported housing schemes already operating in the sub-region, enabling many people with diverse needs to live in the community, the needs of the population are increasing. The population growth and ageing (set out in chapter 4) indicate an increase in supported housing will be needed across many client groups, and provision needs to be made early in the development of new communities. There is currently a lack of both revenue and capital to support such schemes.

Supporting People

Since April 2003, most supported housing has received its revenue funding through the government programme "Supporting People" (SP). SP funding in the Cambridge sub-region is administered through two separate administering authorities, one for Suffolk and one for Cambridgeshire. Each administering authority has its own strategy for prioritisation of its resources, and to identify future investment needs and priorities.

Both authorities produced shadow SP strategies in 2003, and will be required to produce new SP strategies for government by Spring 2005. The Cambridgeshire strategy is expected to be agreed during Autumn 2004, and the Suffolk strategy to be signed off by February 2005.

The SP administering authorities are themselves partnerships between relevant districts, County, Primary Care Trusts and Probation, and close partnership working has been essential to establishing appropriate decision-making structures and developing joint strategies. There is little value in attempting to mirror these within a sub-regional context, and hence the sub-regional strategy draws from the county-based arrangements.

Investment needs

The authorities of the sub-region have identified new supported housing as a key priority for additional investment, both capital and revenue.

Several of the SP client groups are already facing a significant undersupply in appropriate supported accommodation, and this is expected to increase, due partly to changes in the existing population, and partly to growth pressures.

For example, there is expected to be an increase in the numbers of frail elderly people requiring extra-care (also known as very-sheltered housing), as the population ages, and as institutional models of care for very frail older people become unacceptable and undesirable.

In terms of growth, it is expected that increases in population of the size outlined in Section 4 will include significant numbers of people who require some support in order to live independently. This will include people from most if not all the SP client groups, and the Cambridge sub-region authorities do not wish to see new settlements developed without provision for those who need support, as this will create unbalanced communities, and difficulties in meeting needs in the future.

Some needs may be met through floating support, where support is not tied to a specific property but to an individual. These schemes have proved to be a cost-effective solution in meeting the needs of a number of groups. Floating support can be flexible in reaching people in rural settings and preventing homelessness. Additional capital investment would not be needed to progress such solutions, but significantly increased revenue

would be required. However, for some groups, including those with severe needs or high degrees of physical frailty, specialised buildings will continue to be the best option.

Revenue

Supporting People Administering Authorities are responsible for a locally held budget that is allocated by central government (known as the Supporting People Grant). A number of factors affect the management of the Grant including central government allocation, inflation, service delivery relating to value for money, local charging policies and new service development allocations.

In 2003/04 the Grant was affected by a nationally imposed cost reduction of 2.5%, plus no increase for an expected 2.9% inflationary element. In essence this meant that authorities were required to manage a 5.4% reduction from the expected budget.

Recent announcements (September 2004) of national resources suggest that there is unlikely to be a positive change with respect to SP revenue, and that the administering authorities will find it increasingly difficult to make revenue available for any capital linked projects.

Continuing budget reductions will have implications for service users, and would hamper the ability of the authorities to meet the needs of a growing population.

Proposed investment priority

As shown above (section 6) it is proposed that if a funding allocation were made available for the sub-region, it should be top-sliced for Supported Housing schemes, so long as those schemes are able to demonstrate revenue funding (from SP streams or health/social care). Given constraints on revenue, it is not expected that this top-slice would jeopardise a general housing programme, but to ensure this, the top-slice should be limited to a maximum of 20% of the overall programme.

Identified Priorities and Schemes

Cambridgeshire has identified the top three groups for priority investment as:

- Young people at risk
- Frail elderly
- Ex-offenders

The last SP strategy for Cambridgeshire (2003) identified priority lists of schemes requiring funding. Revenue was made available for all high priority schemes, but several still do not have the required capital funding to progress, and remain a priority for investment. Further investment priorities will be identified in the Cambridgeshire SP strategy, and the sub-regional housing group will use this as the basis for future investment planning in respect of supported housing in Cambridgeshire.

Suffolk plans service priorities through a 3 year rolling programme. Its Commissioning Body agreed revenue funding in September 2003 for service priorities up to 2006 provided that they had, where necessary, capital commitment. Bids identified in this strategy require new capital and/or revenue commitment and form part of the continued rolling programme of identified priorities.

Forest Heath DC and St Edmundsbury BC have identified a number of priority schemes across a wide range of client groups. Supporting People acknowledge that not all of these schemes will receive revenue funding in the next twelve months, but commit to ensuring that the SP grant will be allocated within the conditions and against the priorities that the Commissioning Body agree.

Service reviews and improvements

All supported housing services are subject to review within the first three years of their contracts.

In Cambridgeshire, a combined Best Value and SP review of sheltered and extra care housing took place in 2004, which has informed the local priorities, and the models of care planned for future services. Smaller scale reviews of other groups have taken place, and a larger review of mental health services is underway, jointly with social services commissioners of such services, due to complete March 2005.

In Suffolk, reviews are taking place according to a review plan, floating support and services to people with learning disabilities are to be reviewed in 2004, reviews for sheltered housing start in 2005.

Priority Schemes

Both administering authorities will publish proposed priorities as part of the Supporting People Strategies currently under development. As these lists are not yet agreed, they are not included here, but will be available separately from Cambridgeshire County Council and Suffolk County Council.

Sub-Regional Actions relating to Supported Housing

- Make bids for funding to be up to 20% of the total available to the sub-region programme.
- Co-ordinate investment planning between the two administering authorities in respect of capital for new supported housing.

10. Black and minority ethnic housing

One of the key issues which has been identified for joint work between the seven local authorities in the context of the Cambridge Sub-Regional Housing Strategy is to investigate and address the housing issues faced by the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) populations in the sub-region. In national terms, there is considerable research demonstrating the relative housing disadvantage of BME populations, although this picture is not universal. In the Cambridge sub-region, relatively little research has been undertaken, and the responses to the specific needs of BME groups are underdeveloped – although again, with some exceptions.

Regional research on the needs of refugees and asylum seekers is proposed for 2005. This will be coordinated by the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA).

Census data on ethnicity

The 2001 census provides information on the ethnicity of the population in the seven districts:

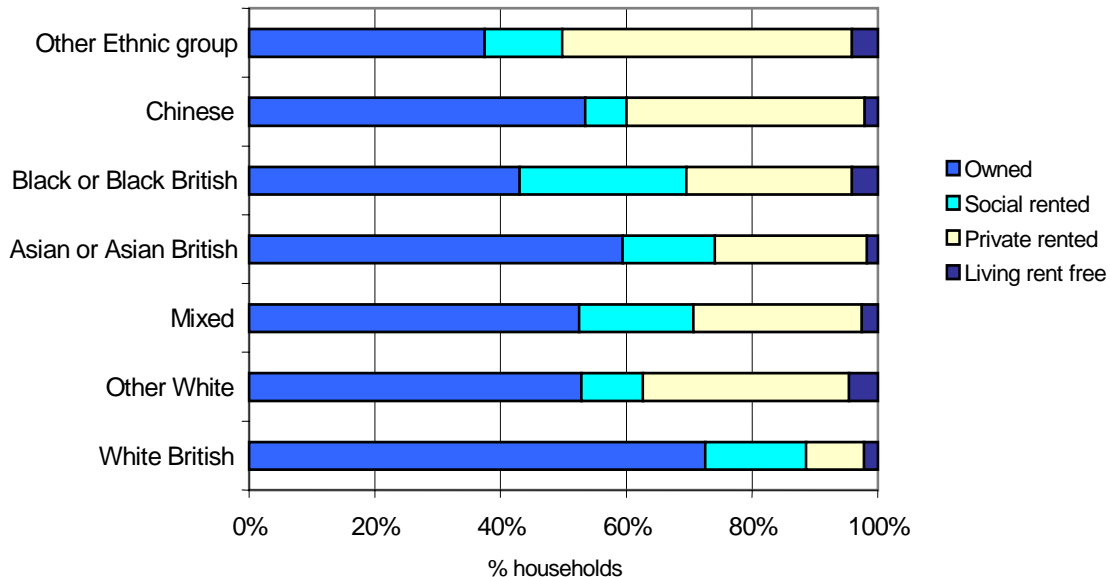
(resident population - percentage)

	White	Mixed	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Chinese or other ethnic group
Cambridge	89.4	2.0	3.8	1.3	3.5
East Cambs	97.9	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.6
Fenland	98.6	0.6	0.4	0.2	0.2
Huntingdonshire	97.2	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.5
South Cambs	97.1	0.9	0.9	0.4	0.8
Forest Heath	93.9	2.4	0.6	1.9	1.2
St Edmundsbury	98.0	0.7	0.5	0.3	0.4
England	90.9	1.3	4.6	2.1	0.9

Most of the districts have a BME population of under 3%, the exceptions being Cambridge and Forest Heath, with 10% and 6% respectively.

Additional census analysis has been undertaken concerning the housing circumstances of BME groups in Cambridgeshire.

Housing tenure by broad ethnic group (% of households) *Source: 2001 Census*



The highest proportion of owner-occupation was shown in households with a White British head, where just under three quarters of households were either owned outright or owned with a mortgage. Lowest levels of home ownership were found in Black or Black British and Other Ethnic Group headed households, both at around 40%. Conversely, the highest proportion of households living in social housing was in households with a Black or Black British head, at 27%. The proportion of people renting privately was lowest in households with a White British head, at 9%, and highest in those with a head from an Other Ethnic Group, at 46%.

It is interesting that, while the second highest level of owner-occupation was found in the Asian or Asian British groups, this masked considerable variation within the Asian group. Indian, Pakistani and Other Asian headed households showed home ownership of over 60%, whereas only 32% of Bangladeshi headed households were owned outright or with a mortgage. Even greater variation was found within the Asian groups for the proportion of households living in social housing. Between 8 and 15% of households with an Indian, Pakistani or Other Asian head were rented from the Council or another social landlord, whereas 53% of households with a Bangladeshi head fell into this group.

Travellers

Travellers are the largest ethnic population in the sub-region, with particularly large traveller populations in Fenland, South and East Cambridgeshire, together giving Cambridgeshire the largest traveller population in the country.

Information about traveller needs is particularly poor, as they are not identified separately by the 2001 census, making it difficult for authorities to plan appropriate responses in terms of housing, other accommodation solutions (e.g. traveller sites) and other services.

The authorities of the sub-region recognise a need to increase services for travellers, but need to establish more information before this can be planned and delivered. Therefore, the Cambridgeshire authorities, working with the Primary Care Trusts, have jointly commissioned a Traveller needs survey to be carried out through the later part of 2004, and early 2005. This will collect detailed demographic information on travellers to permit modelling of future needs. It will also investigate travellers' needs for a range of services, and their preferences, e.g. in terms of accommodation solutions. It is expected to report in Summer 2005. It is hoped that the methodology adopted may be of use in profiling traveller needs across the region.

Joint work in the sub-regional housing strategy

There is considerable scope for the seven authorities to work together and share experience in investigating and addressing the housing issues of BME groups in the sub region. The following areas of work will be pursued (see section 11):

- Evaluate outcomes of Huntingdonshire's BME research and consider future needs for research
- Joint work on the needs of travellers and gypsies for Cambridgeshire
- Working with housing association partners to develop BME housing schemes to respond to the specific needs identified through research
- Examining the potential for incorporating BME schemes in new settlements
- Sharing information on ensuring that housing services are accessible to BME groups
- Evaluate regional research on refugees (led by EERA) and consider implications for sub region

11. Investment Priorities for the Sub-region

For the period 2006 and beyond, for which regional investment priorities have not yet been decided, the Cambridge sub-region would wish to adopt locally agreed investment priorities. These reflect the two national PSA targets of achieving balanced housing markets and decent homes. The former provides the greater challenge for this sub region particularly in the context of delivering growth and the need to meet housing needs and tackle homelessness. Hence investment in new affordable housing is clearly the top priority for the sub-region.

Decent Homes in the public sector is being addressed by all stock owning local authorities through Options Appraisal, and the majority of authorities can achieve decent homes within the public sectors through the use of MRA and/or their own capital resources. RSLs, including four stock transfer RSLs, will deliver Decent Homes through their asset management and business planning processes.

There are needs for resources in the private sector, and these have not been prioritised in his strategy in view of the overriding need for affordable housing. Local authorities will continue to develop their private sector strategies using all possible resources, including utilising the powers of the Regulatory Reform Act 2003. However, in the event that public funds are available for renewal in the private sector, there is a strong case for investment in this sub-region to facilitate reaching the government target for decent homes/ vulnerable households.

In summary, the investment priorities are:

1. Maximising affordable housing investment is the prime objective of the sub region and would be allocated as follows:
 - a. All schemes receiving investment would have to meet Housing Corporation criteria, such as deliverability, and value for money, as well as meeting high standards of design and environmental sustainability.
 - b. Capital for Supported Housing schemes which have revenue in place, whether from Supporting People or health and social care funding streams, and which meet local priorities identified in Supporting People Strategies, should to be prioritised, with a top slice of up to a maximum of 20% of the overall programme.
 - c. The rest of the programme to be directed towards new investment in general needs affordable housing, with such investment distributed spatially according to the distribution of Structure Plan allocations. This would ensure that schemes are developed both in growth locations to meet the needs of in-migration and the economy (new settlements and urban fringe) and in sustainable rural locations/ market towns to meet local housing need and alleviate homelessness.

2. Funding for decent homes in the private sector to be allocated to enable the government target to be met, only if funding is available for private sector renewal at a national or regional level.

12. Delivery Plan: Cambridge sub-region Affordable Housing Group

This plan contains actions at a strategic level. Some of these strategic aspirations are addressed by more specific actions contained within the annual business plan of the Infrastructure Partnership, due to be agreed October 2004. It is the intention of the Cambridge sub-region affordable housing group to work closely with the IP to develop more detailed action plans for both the Group and the IP to deliver, with clear leads and timescales, and regular monitoring by the Group.

Action	Key actions	Policy Development	Monitoring	Key partners
Growth Area				
Facilitate the development of housing as required by the Cambridgeshire and Suffolk Structure Plans and Regional Planning Guidance.		Monitor the progress of developing the final housing targets in RPG 14 as they affect the Cambridge sub-region.	Monitor the achievement of housing targets, as set out in Structure Plans, and amended by RPG14. ANNUAL	Infrastructure Partnership
	Agree respective roles and accountabilities with the Infrastructure Partnership. Participate in delivery of Infrastructure Partnership Business Plan (to be finalised October 2004).	Participate in the emerging co-ordination structures for the London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth corridor.		District and County Councils GO-East Other sub-regional groups
Affordable Housing				
Ensure the delivery of sufficient affordable housing	Establish annual targets for different forms of affordable housing in the seven local authorities in the sub-region.	Share best practice on models for funding different forms of affordable housing.	Monitor the levels of affordable housing delivered. ANNUAL	
	Deliver 290 homes without grant as set out in the local public service agreement for affordable housing without grant funding.		Monitor the levels of housing developed in this way ANNUAL	
	Establish a sub-regional Affordable Housing Liaison Group.	Determine whether it is practical to establish a group of preferred housing association partners.		Housing associations Housing Corporation
Homelessness and social housing lettings				
Ensure that action is taken to		Evaluate the Cambridge pilot and		

Action	Key actions	Policy Development	Monitoring	Key partners
prevent and reduce homelessness.		consider implementing a multi-agency monitoring system.		
		Share best practise on making the best use of the private rented sector.		
Ensure that current stock of affordable housing is used in the most effective ways.		Explore the potential for joint work on policies and for social housing lettings especially in relation to strategic sites.		
		Investigate how current and future lettings impact on sustainability issues on strategic sites.		
Decent Homes				
Ensure that all housing meets the Decent Homes Standard.	All Council and Housing Association stock to meet DH Standard by 2010.		Report progress. ANNUAL	
Ensure that all housing is suitable for those in occupation		Making the case to the ODPM for more funding for disabled facilities grants.	Number of properties adapted by sector. ANNUAL	
		Share good practice in private sector renewal.		
		Development of comprehensive private sector renewal strategies (inc to meet targets on decent homes for vulnerable people in the private sector).		
Supported Housing				
Ensure that there is sufficient Supported Housing for the Sub-Region.	Make bids for funding to be up to 20% of the total available to the sub-region.		Ensure sufficient quality bids. ANNUAL Monitor allocations of funding.	

Action	Key actions	Policy Development	Monitoring	Key partners
			ANNUAL	
		Co-ordinate investment planning between the two administering authorities in respect of capital for new supported housing.		
Black and Minority Ethnic Housing				
	Working with housing association partners to develop BME housing schemes to respond to the specific needs identified through research.	Evaluate outcomes of Huntingdonshire's BME research and consider future needs for research.		
		Joint work on the needs of travellers and gypsies for Cambridgeshire.		
		Examining the potential for incorporating BME schemes in new settlements.		
		Sharing information on ensuring that housing services are accessible to BME groups.		
		Evaluate regional research on refugees (led by EERA) and consider implications for sub-region.		

Appendix 1: Future Pipeline of Schemes

FUTURE PIPELINE OF SCHEMES

This programme becomes less accurate in future years and is subject to change

SUMMARY

NUMBER OF NEW AFFORDABLE HOMES REQUIRING FUNDING PER YEAR

	Fenland	Forest Heath	City	Huntingdonshire	East Cambs	Sth Cambs	St Eds	TOTAL
2004/05	206	198	617	215	207	588	217	2248
2005/06	198	117	400	303	231	327	64	1640
2006/07	137	138	982	290	187	423	151	2308
2007/08	98	147	849	215	175	478	60	2022
2008/09	95	126	899	100	126	478	70	1894
	734	726	3747	1123	926	2294	562	10112

FUNDING REQUIREMENT PER YEAR

	Fenland	Forest Heath	City	Huntingdonshire	East Cambs	Sth Cambs	St Eds	TOTAL
2004/05	6,532,911	7,150,017	26,062,018	7,023,163	2,822,246	22,293,368	8,911,583	80,795,306
2005/06	4,952,300	3,440,520	21,011,753	11,970,739	3,977,000	11,710,701	2,234,500	59,297,513
2006/07	2,110,000	4,373,870	41,489,528	11,290,000	3,789,000	19,265,356	3,824,000	86,141,754
2007/08	2,040,000	4,676,048	37,200,000	7,575,000	4,196,617	24,895,000	1,700,000	82,282,665
2008/09	1,350,000	3,736,004	39,450,000	3,600,000	3,200,000	24,895,000	2,100,000	78,331,004
	16,985,211	23,376,459	165,213,299	41,458,902	17,984,863	103,059,425	18,770,083	386,848,242

Appendix 2: additional contextual information

Focused on the city of Cambridge, the Cambridge sub-region is the main driver for indigenous economic growth in the East of England. Economic growth is strongly orientated towards high-technology industries and is concentrated around the city and in areas with close access to the key M11 and A14 transport corridors.

In the context of economic growth, housing provision must be seen as a key element of the local infrastructure. The sub-region has experienced substantial household growth in recent years where in-migration has been fuelled by the combined effects of a buoyant local economy and fast rail commuting to London. The housing infrastructure, however, has not kept pace, and the sub-region has consequently experienced an overheated local housing market in terms of the current prices for property, construction and land. This has extended the housing market area away from the main areas of employment to settlements that lie at or beyond a comfortable commuting distance to Cambridgeshire and this impacts on the sustainability of local communities.

The rise in house prices and market rents has made it increasingly difficult for local people on low and modest incomes to gain access to suitable affordable accommodation. This has naturally led to both a real and projected increase in the demand for social housing, which is provided at subsidised costs. However, restrictions on the volume of subsidy, the general lack of land for development, and the loss of social housing through the Right to Buy and Right to Acquire have placed severe constraints on the ability of social housing providers to meet demand. This is projected to worsen in the coming years.

A more recently recognised problem is the growing number of households who are not eligible for subsidised housing and are also unable to access housing through the market. They are effectively falling into a growing gap. These include workers who are considered key both in providing public services and in supporting the commercial businesses on which economic growth depends. When this is combined with the existing supply problems facing low income households, it raises a question mark over the longer-term sustainability of existing housing settlements as balanced communities.

The following provides a brief overview of the main characteristics of each of the seven participating authorities:

Cambridge City

Cambridge City covers an area of 40.6 square kilometres with a population of 108,863. It is an urban area entirely surrounded by the rural area of South Cambridgeshire. The interface between the two administrative areas – mostly current green belt – is a key element to address jointly.

The city is a historic town, which brings its own difficulties – especially in terms of infrastructure and transport. But it also brings in benefits such as tourism. The city is of economic importance not only to the sub-region or county, but nationally as well, with particularly significant clusters of high-technology companies, especially in software, biotechnology, plant science, pharmaceuticals, and telecommunications. Local government needs to give a vision to the area, which supports rather than frustrates the realisation of future prosperity, whilst protecting the needs of local people.

East Cambridgeshire

East Cambridgeshire covers an area of 649.4 square kilometres with a population of 73,214 and is an LSVT housing authority. East Cambridgeshire lies approximately 96 kilometres to the north of London, on the western edge of East Anglia. Its southern and western boundaries lie close to the City of Cambridge, whilst in the south-east they almost entirely enclose the town of Newmarket. East Cambridgeshire adjoins the districts of Fenland, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, Forest Heath, St Edmundsbury, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. East Cambridgeshire is the third largest district in Cambridgeshire in terms of land area but has the smallest population density. The area has some of the richest farm land in Europe, with agriculture remaining important as a source of local employment and economic wealth.

The district's proximity to Cambridge, combined with good access to the national road and rail network has encouraged the rapid growth of both housing and employment in the area. The largest settlement within East Cambridgeshire is Ely with the other main settlements being Littleport, Soham and Burwell.

The planning sub-region includes all of East Cambridgeshire except Littleport and surrounding parishes. However, for the purposes of this strategy the whole of the district is included. Littleport has a direct rail link to Cambridge and is only five minutes drive from Ely. The whole of East Cambridgeshire's housing market is affected by the Cambridge phenomenon.

Fenland

Fenland covers an area of 545.5 square kilometres with a population of 83,519. It is mainly rural in character and contains the 4 expanding market towns of Chatteris, March, Whittlesey and Wisbech along with numerous Fen villages spread amongst 12 rural parishes. The two nearest cities are Cambridge to the south and Peterborough to the west.

Although Chatteris is the only area of Fenland classified within the Cambridge planning sub-region it is felt that the "Cambridge effect" impacts throughout the district. Along with Chatteris it is particularly prevalent in the market town of March with its direct train link to Cambridge along with the rural villages of Wimblington, Doddington and Manea

Forest Heath

Forest Heath covers an area of 376.3 square kilometres with a population of 55,510 forming the western part of Suffolk bordering on Norfolk and Cambridgeshire. Forest Heath has three main towns (Newmarket, Mildenhall and Brandon), 22 villages and 2 large American airbases at Mildenhall and Lakenheath.

Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire covers almost 909.5 square kilometres with a population of 156,954. It is an LSVT housing authority. It forms the western part of Cambridgeshire bordering East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, and South Cambridgeshire. There are 5 market towns and around 80 villages in the District. The main population centres are the market towns of Huntingdon, St Neots, St Ives, Ramsey and Godmanchester. The District is well served by national road links with the A1 running north-south and the A14 running east-west across the district. The east coast main railway line from London to Scotland also passes through the District.

St Edmundsbury

St Edmundsbury is an LSVT authority and covers an area of 663.6 square kilometres in West Suffolk and has a population of approximately 98,193. It has 2 main towns, Bury St Edmunds (estimated population 33,260) and Haverhill (estimated population 19,536) with the remaining population living in rural areas. Ethnic minorities make up around 1.3% of the population. It has a rural character with a low population density of 1.4 persons per hectare compared with the national average of 2.4%. Bury St Edmunds and surrounding villages are linked to Cambridge by the A14 and are within extremely easy commuting distance.

South Cambridgeshire

South Cambridgeshire covers an area of some 898.6 square kilometres with a population of 130,108. It is a predominantly rural area currently without any towns inside its boundaries, although it includes land directly on the edge of Cambridge City, and a new town is proposed to the north west of Cambridge. The district consists of 101 parishes, and its villages range in size from Childerley with only 50 inhabitants to Sawston with slightly less than 8,000. The city of Cambridge is located at the centre of the District and exerts an important urban influence upon it. The interface between the two administrative areas is a key element to address jointly.

The area has good road and rail links - the M11 runs through the south and west and connects with the A1 via the A14 to Huntingdon. The main Kings Lynn, Ely and Cambridge to London railway line runs north-south through the District with stations at Waterbeach, Shelford and Whittlesford. There is also a railway service to London via Royston with stations at Foxton, Shepreth and Meldreth.

CABINET

14 October 2004

PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE FOR WASTE (Report by Head of Environment & Transport)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 At their meeting on 13 November 2003 Cabinet authorised arrangements for approving, on behalf of the District Council, the application to DEFRA for Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits being made by the Cambridgeshire County Council.
- 1.2 Following the recent withdrawal of Peterborough City Council from the application for PFI credits the County Council are obliged to submit a revised application. The County Council are seeking the support of the District Council, as a waste collection authority, for the revised application.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The County Council faces substantially increased costs in providing alternative arrangements to land-filling household waste. Without the implementation of alternative arrangements the County Council will be obliged, from 2010, to purchase permits to allow the continued land-filling of any residual waste which exceeds the level prescribed by government regulation.
- 2.2 In order to reduce the cost of providing alternative waste treatment facilities the County Council are seeking PFI credits amounting to £40 millions; the maximum DEFRA are likely to award. To secure the PFI credits the County Council is required to submit to DEFRA an Outline Business Case (OBC) setting out their proposed treatment arrangements.
- 2.3 DEFRA require the County Council to demonstrate that their OBC is supported by the waste collection authorities which will deliver waste to the treatment facilities. The District Council signed the previous OBC. This included arrangements for dealing with the waste from Peterborough City Council.

3. PRIVATE FINANCE INITIATIVE UPDATE

- 3.1 The Cambridgeshire District Councils, with the exception of East Cambridgeshire, have confirmed that they will not be seeking the delivery of any of their collection services through the PFI contract. All waste collection authorities, however, accept that they will need to confirm their plans for delivering waste to the treatment plant before the County Council can finally enter into a contract for the provision of the plant. This matter was addressed in detail in the report to Cabinet on 2 September 2004, which also dealt with the related Statement of Understanding.
- 3.2 The revised OBC prepared by the County Council will be unchanged insofar as it relates to references to waste collection authorities. It is

being revised to exclude references to Peterborough City Council and to address new guidance issued by DEFRA since the initial OBC was prepared. In the circumstances the revised OBC has no direct implications, financial or otherwise, for the District Council. However, a failure of the County Council to secure the PFI credits and/or to meet the targets for substantially reduced land-filling in 2010 will have huge implications for the Council Tax payers of Cambridgeshire.

4. RECOMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Authorise the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree the information included in the Outline Business Case in respect of the District Council; and
- b) Authorise the Leader of the Council to sign the agreed Outline Business Case.

Background papers

The Strategy for dealing with Municipal Solid Waste 2002-2022 in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough - Environment and Transport 3rd Floor Pathfinder House

Revised Outline Business Case prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council – Environment and Transport 3rd Floor Pathfinder House

Contact Officer: Richard Preston, Head of Environment & Transport
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CABINET

14 OCTOBER 2004

CAR PARKING STRATEGY (Report by the Head of Environment & Transport)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Cabinet deferred approval of the car parking strategy at their meeting on 8 January 2004 pending further consultation on the proposed level of charges. The consultation on budgets and priorities has been completed and the results, insofar as they relate to car parking charges, are summarised in this report.
- 1.2 Cabinet are requested to approve the implementation of the car parking strategy, agree the level of car parking charges and release the required Medium Term Plan (MTP) funds.

2. CONSULTATION RESULTS

- 2.1 Recent consultation on the Council's spending proposals and council tax levels has indicated that current levels of car parking charges are supported. There is no suggestion from the consultation that charges should be increased and the research points to a high level of potential dissatisfaction if charges were reduced or completely removed as this might affect the level of other services.
- 2.2 The consultation demonstrated also that there is support for extending the concessionary fares scheme to reduce the cost of bus travel for young people, etc, provided that the additional costs can be met from reductions in other services and/or increased council tax. Maintaining current investment in the delivery of Market Town Transport Strategies (MTTS) was supported and increasing spending in such improvements and in community transport schemes were given a relatively high priority for additional spending – after other service improvements were achieved.

3. ISSUES ARISING FOLLOWING THE APPROVAL OF THE STRATEGY

- 3.1 The strategy generally is demand-led and contains proposals for meeting the forecast demand for parking in the district's town centres. It does, however, recognise the need to promote alternatives modes to the car and includes the following objectives:-
 - The Council will assist in securing measures to promote integrated, sustainable and accessible transport and will direct surplus income derived from car parking charges to the furtherance of these objectives.
 - The Council will support the development of car parking provision serving villages on transport corridors where these will facilitate use of public transport and support the economy of villages.

- 3.2 Guidance now has been issued by Government on the preparation, during 2005, of new Local Transport Plans (LTP). These new plans will be required to include accessibility audits and action plans produced in partnership between the County Council, District Councils, Primary Care Trusts and the Police. Specific guidance will be provided for each of the named agencies.
- 3.3 Local Strategic Partnerships will be a key vehicle for achieving the delivery of the accessibility action plans and the local multi-agency Transport and Access Thematic Group consider that it will provide a focus for their activity in delivering a number of the outcomes already identified in Huntingdonshire's Community Strategy.
- 3.4 The MTP funding identified for the delivery of the Car Parking Strategy already includes provision for the creation of a post of Rural Transport Officer to support initiatives associated with improving access in rural areas i.e those which achieved a high level of support in the public consultation.
- 3.5 In setting the level of charges for car parking the Council has the opportunity to raise further income and the strategy provides for this to be hypothecated to promote integrated, sustainable and accessible transport. The recently adopted Financial Strategy emphasised the need to achieve revenue savings. Cabinet may take the view, therefore, in setting the level of car parking charges that they seek to achieve a surplus of income over expenditure that makes a significant contribution to –
- (a) the Council's current commitments in respect of transportation projects; and/or
 - (b) accessibility and transportation developments in future years.
- 3.6 In terms of future expenditure on accessibility and transportation developments, bids already have been made for MTP funding for improvements to Huntingdon Bus Station and further support for community transport schemes. In the latter case this will be critical to their survival as central government funding is withdrawn. The Council currently is undertaking a study into an expansion of the concessionary fares scheme to encompass groups other than pensioners to improve accessibility to employment etc. Further potential funding requirements will flow from studies such as this and the accessibility audit.
- 3.7 In setting car parking charges the Council will need to have regard to the competitiveness of the market towns. There is a balance to be achieved between supporting the local economy and delivering improvements in transport and access.

4. IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY – ACTIONS 2004/05 and 2005/06

- 4.1 The table reproduced at Annex A confirms the initial designation of car parks proposed in the car parking strategy. Subject to Cabinet's decision on the implementation of parking orders (see para 5.4 below) the intention would be to –
- implement changes to the designation and charges in respect of off-street car parks at the earliest possible date (February 2005)

- implement changes to the charges in respect of existing areas of on-street parking at the earliest possible date (April 2005)
 - implement new areas of charged on-street parking in October 2005.
- 4.2 The car parking strategy proposed the removal of charges in the car park in Ramsey. This could be given immediate effect by withdrawing the routine enforcement of the existing order insofar as it relates to charges.
- 4.3 The changes at existing car parks will require signage to be replaced and pay machines to be re-programmed.
- 4.4 Informal discussions with the proprietor of the Dolphin Hotel, St Ives, have confirmed his willingness for the hotel car park to be signed for public use. He has declined to enter into a management agreement with the District Council for the car park to be operated as a public car park. Priority will be given to signing the car park from the southern approaches to St Ives concurrently with the introduction of the new charging arrangements in the off-street public car parks. The opportunity will be taken to review the advisory signage associated with all public car parks during 2005/06.
- 4.5 Huntingdon has the most pressing need for a significant increase in parking provision. A substantial part of the additional capacity will be provided by the construction of roof-top/multi-storey parking associated with the redevelopment of Chequers Court. Negotiations are ongoing with the developer in respect of the transfer of land in the District Council's ownership and contributions to the capital and operational costs of the car park. The developer currently is expecting to start construction in 2006.
- 4.6 It is possible that the development referred to above and the development of County Council land at Princes Street will result in the closure of the Trinity Place and Library car parks respectively during 2005/06. To accommodate the displaced parking consideration will be given to creating additional parking and the Riverside Park, Huntingdon, has been identified as the most likely location for this.
- 4.7 Other commitments include environmental improvements to car parks at Mews Close, Ramsey, (2004/05) and at Somersham (2005/06).
- 4.8 Proposals to provide car park attendants with hand-held equipment for the recording and issue of fixed penalty notices have been deferred and the funding provided in the MTP will be deleted from the MTP in this year's review. However, the latest generation of this equipment now integrates with debt recovery and legal process systems and offer significant operational and administrative savings. A self-financing scheme will be advanced in 2005/06.
- 4.9 The demands associated with the new LTP and access audit/action plan and preparing a response to Council's own study into expanding the coverage of concessionary fares and other rural transport issues makes the appointment of the Rural Transport Officer an imperative. Funding for this post is included in the overall MTP provision for the delivery of the car parking strategy and the intention is to start the recruitment immediately if supported by Cabinet.

- 4.10 The strategy has an objective to seek to reduce town-centre private non-residential parking to conform to current parking standards. Adoption of travel plans by major employers will contribute to reducing the demand for such parking and the strategy sets a target for the District Council to adopt its own travel plan in 2004/05.

5. CAR PARKING ORDERS

- 5.1 Changes to car parking charges and any variations to the arrangements relating to the operation of car parks require new orders to be adopted. The process for this is prescribed by statute and requires draft orders to be advertised and any objections to be considered by the relevant Council.
- 5.2 The District Council is competent to deal with off-street orders but cannot make on-street orders. The latter are prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council and are subject to the ultimate approval of the Huntingdonshire Environment and Transport Area Joint Committee (AJC). The proposed extension of areas of charged on-street parking also will require the approval of the County Council's Cabinet.
- 5.3 The order making process is such that it is anticipated that the earliest that off-street orders could be implemented would be February 2005. Draft on-street orders could be approved for consultation by the AJC at their December 2004 meeting with any objections determined at the February 2005 meeting. Implementation of the on-street orders, therefore, is unlikely to be before 1 April 2005.
- 5.4 In the circumstances Cabinet will need to take a view on the separate or concurrent introduction of new orders in respect of off-street and on-street car parking.
- 5.5 The council has entered into agreements with both Waitrose (St Neots and St Ives) and Sainsbury (Huntingdon) concerning the operation of car parks associated with the supermarkets. Those agreements require the charging arrangements to be agreed with the supermarket operators and they will be consulted on the proposed charging policy.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The table at Annex B compares three possible levels of revised car parking charges to the current levels. The options are as follows:-
- Option A = proposals contained in approved strategy
 - Option B = revised proposals by Cabinet in January 2004
 - Option C = further increase to cost (compared with option A) for stays in excess of 2 hours
- 6.2 The table below shows the forecast revenue surplus (the amount by which income exceeds expenditure) if all measure in the car parking strategy are implemented.

	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Option A	-19	-162	-69	-219	-223
Option B	-18	-147	-57	-206	-212
Option C	-31	-239	-149	-318	-324

- 6.3 The deferred implementation of new charges (from April 2004 to February 2005) is substantially responsible for the significantly reduced surplus in 2004/05. The approved budget forecast the surplus as £118k for 2004/05 based on the April 2004 implementation of new charges. Other changes from the approved budget are dealt with in paragraphs 6.7 and 6.8 below.
- 6.4 In 2004/05 the MTP revenue budget provided for Transportation Strategy and Public Transport amounts to £1,060k. This included more than £400k in contributions to assets created on behalf of the County Council, through partnership schemes e.g. cycleways.
- 6.5 Developments in the approved MTP will increase the net revenue expenditure by a further £60k in 2005/06. Future unavoidable schemes to maintain the condition of the Council's assets (e.g. bus stations) and to protect current levels of services (e.g. support for community transport) will further increase the budget requirement in future years.
- 6.6 The Cabinet may, in the context of its committed expenditure on transportation developments, wish to secure the additional revenue income associated with the adoption of the parking charges proposed in Option C. The additional income comes from the increased charges for staying over two hours and will not, therefore, impact on the shorter shopping trips that form the vast majority of the car park usage.
- 6.7 The forecasts at 6.2 assume the implementation of all car parking service developments currently included in the MTP. Where necessary the approved funding has been reprogrammed to reflect the later start on the implementation of the strategy than was initially planned.
- 6.8 Cabinet are requested to approve the release of funding in 2004/05 for the items listed below and for which release forms detailing the financial implications of each are included at Annex C:-
- New off-street car parking charges – increased income (C1, C2 & C3)
 - Cessation of Ramsey car parking charges – loss of income (C4)
 - Signage and promotional activity – changes to off-street car park designations and new charges (C5)
 - Rural Transport Officer (C6)
- 6.9 The financial implications from the requested release of funds are summarised in the table at Annex D

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The car parking strategy, considered by Cabinet in January 2004, was developed through public consultation. Further consultation, on levels of charges, has been undertaken as requested by Cabinet and this has shown broad support for current levels of charges.
- 7.2 With regard to charges the strategy contains the following objective –

“Car park charges revised at three-yearly intervals to adjust levels, as a minimum, in line with movements in RPI in the period since the last review.”

- 7.3 The strategy also recognises the opportunity that exists to support the council's broader transportation objectives from income derived from car parking (see paragraph 3.1 above). These transportation objectives appear, from the results of the recent consultation, to be well supported by the public.
- 7.4 The level of charges initially proposed in the strategy (Option A) were intended to recoup the effect of inflation since the last increase. Cabinet proposed changes to rationalise the charges to better reflect coinage making the charges more convenient for car park users, resulting in a smaller forecast increase of income (Option B).
- 7.5 Option C is now also is proposed for Cabinet's consideration. This retains the charges proposed in Option A for stays up to two hours in 'Shoppers' Car Parks' and up to three hours in 'Edge of Centre Car Parks' but then proposes increased charges for longer stays. The principal impact of this will be on people employed in the town centres – most shopping trips are less than two hours. It should not, therefore, have an impact on shopping trips and will not adversely affect the economy of the town centres.
- 7.6 The Council already spends substantially more on transportation initiatives than the budgetary contribution made by car parking charges. This investment in the delivery of the MTTs and the broader LTP supports improved road safety and the promotion of schemes to encourage modal shift.
- 7.7 Adopting car parking charges that help to encourage the shift from private cars to other modes of transport, for people working in town centres, is wholly compatible with both the MTTs and LTP and will help to secure the benefits of the transportation investment the council is making.

8 RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 Cabinet are recommended to –
- (a) determine the initial level of car parking charges to be adopted and their implementation dates;
 - (b) approve the removal of car parking charges in Ramsey and the immediate cessation of enforcement (insofar as it relates to charges) pending the car parking order being revised;
 - (c) approve the advertisement of new car parking orders in respect of off-street car parks;
 - (d) authorise the Head of Environment & Transport to seek approval from the Huntingdonshire Environment & Transport Area Joint Committee to the making of new on-street car parking orders based on the charges approved by Cabinet;
 - (e) authorise the Head of Environment & Transport to seek approval from Cambridgeshire County Council to the extension of charges to further areas of town centre on-street parking during 2005/06;
 - (f) authorise the Director of Operational Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to seek agreement with the developer of Chequers Court with regard to the provision and operation of additional public car parking in Huntingdon town centre and to report to a future meeting of the Cabinet;

- (g) authorise the Head of Environment & Transport to conduct a study into the provision of additional free long stay car parking at Riverside/Hartford Road Playing Fields and to report to a future meeting of the Cabinet;
- (h) approve the release of funds for the actions detailed in Annex C required for the implementation of the strategy;
- (i) subject to their decision in respect of recommendation (h) approve the appointment of a Rural Transport Officer (Grade 9); and
- (j) approve subject to their decision in respect of recommendations (a) to (i) the implementation of the car parking strategy previously considered at their meeting in January 2004.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:-

1. 'Huntingdonshire Car Parking Study; Final Report' prepared by Transportation Planning (International) on behalf of the District Council
2. Consultation on priorities and budgets
3. Financial Model – Head of Environment & Transport

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ANNEX A: DESIGNATION OF CAR PARKS 2004

	Shoppers' Car Park SH	Edge of Centre EC	Out of Centre OC	On Street Charged CH	On Street Free FR	Residents R/RO
GODMANCHESTER			Bridge Place			
HUNTINGDON (* ** Saturday Only)	Princes Street Sainsburys St Germain St (Disabled) Waitrose Trinity Place	Gt Northern St Mill Common St Germain Street Minor Pathfinder House ** Ingram Street Anglian Water **	Riverside	Ambury Road High Street (North) Ferrars Road St Mary's Street Chequers Way Princes Street	Hartford Road High Street (South)	
RAMSEY			Mews Close New Road (not charged)		Great Whyte High Street Little Whyte New Road	
SAINT IVES	Cattle Market (part)	Cattle market (part) Darwoods Pond Globe Place Dolphin Hotel		East Street Market Hill (centre) Market Hill (edge) Station Road The Quarant The Broadway	Bridge Street (loading/disabled)	Cromwell Place (on-street)
SAINT NEOTS	Waitrose Brook Street Priory Lane	Priory Tan Yard Tebbutts Road Westgate House	Cambridge St Riverside	Market Square High Street New Street		Avenue Road (on street) East Street (on street)

ANNEX B: CHARGING PROPOSALS OPTIONS

Key Current = nearest equivalent existing charge
Option A = proposals contained in approved strategy
Option B = revised proposals by Cabinet in January 2004
Option C = further increase to cost for longer stays

	Current	Option A	Option B	Option C
Shoppers' Car Park (charges include VAT)				
0 to 60 minutes	£0.20	£0.30	£0.30	£0.30
1 to 2 hours	£0.50	£0.60	£0.60	£0.60
2 to 3 hours	£0.90	£1.20	£1.00	£1.50
3 to 4 hours	-----	£2.40	£2.00	£2.50
Maximum Stay	3 hours	4 hours	4 hours	4 hours
Excess Charge (see Note 1)	£20/£40	£27/£40	£27/£40	£30/£40
Edge of Centre (charges include VAT)				
0 to 60 minutes	£0.70	£0.25	£0.20	£0.25
1 to 2 hours	£0.70	£0.50	£0.50	£0.50
2 to 3 hours	£0.70	£0.80	£0.80	£0.80
3 to 4 hours	£0.70	£0.80	£0.80	£1.00
over 4 hours	£0.70	£0.80	£0.80	£1.50
Maximum Stay	24 hours	23 hours	23 hours	23 hours
Excess Charge (see Note 1)	£20/£40	£27/£40	£27/£40	£30/£40
Season Ticket (see Note 2)	£110	£160/£224	£160/£224	£175/£250
Residents' Permits	free	£26	£26	£40
Out of Centre				
Up to 23 Hours	No charge	No charge	No charge	No charge
Maximum Stay	24 hours	23 hours	23 hours	23 hours
Excess Charge (see Note 1)	£20/£40	£27/£40	£27/£40	£30/£40
On Street (VAT exempt)				
0 to 20 minutes	£0.30	No charge	No charge	No charge
20 to 60 minutes		£0.40	£0.50	£0.50
Maximum Stay	60 minutes	60 minutes	60 minutes	60 minutes
Excess Charge (see Note 1)	£20/£40	£27/£40		£30/£40
Residents Permit (see Note 3)	£26	£26	£26	£26

Notes:-

- Excess charge** – The first figure shown is the discounted cost for early payment and the second is the full penalty.
- Season Ticket** – The first figure shown is the cost of a 5-day (Monday to Friday) season ticket and the second is for a 6-day (Monday to Saturday) season ticket.
- Residents Permit** – The level of charge for on-street residents' permits is determined by CCC

Annex C1 - Justification for Release of Funds

480 Implementation of Car Parking Strategy – Revised Charges Option A Income Richard Preston

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact						Net Capital					
	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Approved Budget	0	-142	-89	-88	-299	-289	0	0	0	0	0	0
Already Committed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amount for which release now requested	0	-43	-104	-100	-312	-300	0	0	0	0	0	0
Additional Impact on MTP	0	+99	-15	-12	-13	-11	0	0	0	0	0	0

Justification

The Approved Budget assumed implementation from October 2004 of the car parking charges approved by Cabinet in January 2004 (Option B). The release of funding assumes the introduction of the new off-street charges proposed in Option A from February 2005 and the on-street charges in respect of areas that are already charged from April 2005.

The loss of income arising from the delayed introduction of the increased charges gives rise to a +£99k budget requirement in 2004/05. In subsequent years there is a small increase in the income.

Annex C2 - Justification for release of funds

480 Implementation of Car Parking Strategy – Revised Charges Option B Income Richard Preston

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact						Net Capital					
	2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000
	Approved Budget	0	-142	-89	-88	-299	-289	0	0	0	0	0
Already Committed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amount for which release now requested	0	-42	-89	-88	-299	-289	0	0	0	0	0	0
Additional Impact on MTP	0	+100	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Justification

The Approved Budget assumed implementation from October 2004 of the car parking charges approved by Cabinet in January 2004 (Option B). The release of funding assumes the introduction of the new off-street charges in Option B from February 2005 and the on-street charges in respect of areas that are already charged from April 2005.

The loss of income arising from the delayed introduction of the increased charges gives rise to a +£100k budget requirement in 2004/05. In subsequent years income is as forecast in the approved budget.

Annex C3 - Justification for release of funds

480 Implementation of Car Parking Strategy – Revised Charges Option C Income Richard Preston

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact										Net Capital													
	2003/ 2004		2004/ 2005		2005/ 2006		2006/ 2007		2007/ 2008		2008/ 2009		2003/ 2004		2004/ 2005		2005/ 2006		2006/ 2007		2007/ 2008		2008/ 2009	
	£000		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000		£000	
Approved Budget	0	-142	-89	-88	-299	-289	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Already Committed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amount for release now requested	0	-55	-181	-180	-411	-401	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Additional Impact on MTP	0	+87	-92	-92	-112	-112	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Justification

The Approved Budget assumed implementation from October 2004 of the car parking charges approved by Cabinet in January 2004 (Option B). The release of funding assumes the introduction of the new off-street charges in Option C from February 2005 and the on-street charges in respect of areas that are already charged from April 2005.

The loss of income arising from the delayed introduction of the increased charges gives rise to a +£87k budget requirement in 2004/05. In subsequent years there is a significant increase in the income compared to the approved budget.

Annex C4 - Justification for release of funds

**480 Implementation of Car Parking Strategy – Ramsey: Removal of Parking Charges
Richard Preston**

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact						Net Capital					
	2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000
Approved Budget	0	10	10	10	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
Already Committed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amount for which release now requested	0	3	10	10	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0

Justification

The Approved Budget assumed implementation from April 2004 of the removal of car parking charges in Ramsey. The release of funding assumes their removal from November 2004.

The retention of charges from April to October has reduced the loss of income by £7k in 2004/05. In subsequent years it remains at £10k as forecast in the approved budget.

Annex C5 - Justification for release of funds

**480 Implementation of Car Parking Strategy – Signage and Promotional Activity
Richard Preston**

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact										Net Capital					
	2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000				
	Approved Budget	0	10	10	10	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Already Committed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Amount for which release now requested	0	10	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0				

Justification

This is an unavoidable cost associated with changes to the regime of car parking charges. The Approved Budget provides for the changing of signage and the re-programming of pay machines to accept the new charges. Funding in 2004/05 also will be used to sign the Dolphin Car Park, St Ives.

The release of the £5k of the 2005/06 funding is sought to support the changes to signs/pay machines associated with the change of on-street parking charges in April 2005.

Annex C6 - Justification for release of funds

480 Implementation of Car Parking Strategy – Rural Transport Officer Richard Preston

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact										Net Capital													
	2003/2004		2004/2005		2005/2006		2006/2007		2007/2008		2008/2009		2003/2004		2004/2005		2005/2006		2006/2007		2007/2008		2008/2009	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Approved Budget	0	27	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Already Committed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amount for which release now requested	0	9	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Justification

The Car Parking Strategy seeks to meet parking demand to 2016 and will require the provision of decked/multistorey car parks in Huntingdon, and St Ives. If a new car parking site cannot be found in St Neots consideration will need to be given similarly to providing a decked/multistorey car park at an existing site. The Council also is investing in other transport measures that should encourage modal shift from the private car to other means of travel. The more effective are the approaches to encouraging modal shift the lower will be the demand for car parking. Typically non-surface car parking spaces cost £5k-£8k each to provide at current prices.

The council is supporting a study into the scope of concessionary fares, is supporting improved bus passenger provision in west Huntingdonshire and has an extensive programme of bus shelter provision. All of these are in addition to the substantial investment in supporting the LTP and market town transport strategies. The purpose of the Rural Transport Officer is to promote the benefits of this investment to rural communities and to act as an advocate for those communities on transportation matters. If successful the salary cost will be saved many-fold in reduced need for future car parking provision.

ANNEX D: Impact of Requested Release of Funds on Approved MTP

		Net Revenue Impact							
		2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000		
Impact on income of increased charges – one option only can be implemented.									
C1	Revised Charges Option A Income	0	+99	-15	-12	-13	-11		
C2	Revised Charges Option B Income	0	+100	0	0	0	0		
C3	Revised Charges Option C Income	0	+87	-92	-92	-112	-112		
Loss of income from removal of charges									
C4	Ramsey: Removal of Parking Charges	0	+7	0	0	0	0		
Unavoidable changes to signage/pay machines if any of the charging options adopted									
C5	Signage and Promotional Activity	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Appointment of Rural Transport Officer to support access and transport initiatives.									
C6	Rural Transport Officer	0	-18	0	0	0	0		

CABINET

14TH OCTOBER 2004

RAMSEY AREA PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN (Report by Planning Policy Manager)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Cabinet is aware of the activities proposed to be undertaken by the locality-based Ramsey Area Partnership (R.A.P.) under the Market Town Initiative to address the priorities within the Community Strategy relating to the Ramsey area [Minute 82 refers].
- 1.2 This report highlights the developments in this area since the Ramsey Area Partnership was formed in the Autumn 2003 and submits the agreed Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan for endorsement.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The need for the regeneration of Ramsey has been recognised by many partners, including the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership and associated Thematic Groups.
- 2.2 The Community Strategy, within the key principle “Supporting Continued Economic Success”, incorporates the priority:
 - ◆ to develop a joint vision and action plan for Ramsey, including interim planning guidance for the development of the area north of Ramsey town centre.
- 2.3 Following a series of events, the community-based Ramsey Area Partnership was formed, covering the parishes of Ramsey, Bury, Conington, Holme, Upwood & the Raveleys, Warboys, Wistow and Woodwalton. It's aim is to develop and transform opportunities in Ramsey and the surrounding countryside into positive, sustainable actions by creating an environment of partnership working which will improve the quality of life for all who live, work and visit the area now and in the future. Over 50 groups and organisations are involved with the partnership plus a significant number from the business community through their linked membership of the Ramsey Town Centre Partnership.
- 2.4 To take this work forward, the partnership has been undertaking the Market Town Initiative (MTI) ‘Healthcheck’ process – an activity brought forward as part of the Rural White Paper 2000 – and been awarded up to £17,000 to do so. A comprehensive consultation exercise, including a Forum Event, a community questionnaire, a 3 week “Make a Difference” campaign, and a telephone business survey, has now been undertaken along with the completion of a statistical “Snapshot” of the area in order to identify community concerns, needs and ideas to help develop the Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan.
- 2.5 A Ramsey Area Partnership Officer Group has also been established, with officers from across all directorates of Huntingdonshire District

Council, which has helped to guide preparation and development of this plan. The Economic Development and Learning Group has also carried out a study tour of the area and outlined a number of development areas, which were highlighted to the HSP Board in April 2004.

3. THE R.A.P. HEALTHCHECK STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

3.1 The Healthcheck Strategy covers:

- ◆ Current performance and potential of the Ramsey area
- ◆ Local perceptions of performance
- ◆ The future picture of the Ramsey area, including the vision and objectives
- ◆ The way forward
- ◆ The Action Plan 2004 –2007

3.2 Ten Key Objectives are shown within the strategy document, set within the three key challenges of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Community Strategy. However, it is recognised that no individual objective or action should be looked at in isolation but rather collectively in order to meet the vision to improve the quality of life for all in the Ramsey area. The Action Plan is, therefore, not centred around the key objectives but the following five agreed themes:

- ◆ Our Community
- ◆ Enhancing our heritage, open spaces and waterways
- ◆ Creating sustainable development
- ◆ Vibrant town centre
- ◆ Effective transport choices

A summary of the key priorities of the Ramsey Area Partnership and linkages with Council work priorities is shown in Annex 1.

3.3 The MTI Healthcheck process has resulted in a wide group of partners understanding the current and future needs of local communities across the Ramsey area and this has meant that a large number of projects and activities have been agreed for inclusion in this first 3 year Action Plan. As such, it was not felt suitable to detail all in this report but rather highlight the overarching aims of the work. The detail of individual projects, activities, deliverables, funding and timescales will be recorded on an electronic Task Manager system currently being compiled.

3.4 A summary leaflet is also being prepared which will use pictures and sketches to highlight the work the partnership will work to achieve. This will be made available to all members of the local community.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 The Ramsey Area Partnership will now move into 'Phase 2' – the implementation phase. It is hoped that in the coming months, a delivery plan and individual project timetables will be agreed, where possible, along with identifying potential funding streams. To assist with this, steps have now been taken to request the release of years 1 & 2 MTP funding out of the set 5 year programme fund.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan has been approved by the Ramsey Area Partnership Board following consultation with partners and key groups, such as the Ramsey Action Group, Ramsey Area Community Safety Task Group, Ramsey Town Centre Partnership and Ramsey Town Council.
- 5.2 Key partners involved in the implementation of the programme of work are now being asked to consider the document for endorsement.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is recommended that Cabinet consider the Ramsey Area Partnership Healthcheck Strategy & Action Plan and agree to endorse it and the role the Council will play as a key delivery partner.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Ramsey Area Partnership File
Huntingdonshire Community Strategy 2004

Contact Officer: Claire Keck
 **01480 388274**

Annex 1

Theme	Ramsey Area Partnership Priority Actions	HDC Short-term Priority	HDC Long-term Priority	Community Strategy Priority
Our Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together with local communities and appropriate agencies to develop a plan for the establishment of multi-purpose community resources, including those for young people, in the town as part of the Ramsey Gateway proposal ▪ Work together to support the development and management of a local community chest fund ▪ Work together to promote the Ramsey Area Partnership vision and encourage increased community participation and engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community Information Shop ▪ Community learning ▪ HeLP sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-agency Community Resource Centre ▪ Meeting place for young people ▪ Joint Health Facility with greater expertise for provision of range of clinics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare plans for the provision of community facilities and service-hub centres ▪ Promote services and activities which contribute to healthy lifestyles ▪ Promote active involvement of young people in planning ▪ To work with communities to reduce anti-social behaviour
Enhancing our heritage, open spaces & waterways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to promote Ramsey and the Great Fen Project in partnership investigating ▪ Work together to develop the waterway for leisure, linking with other initiatives such as the Fens Waterways ▪ Work together to develop a 'visitor package' for residents and tourists promoting the heritage, cultural and recreational activities the area has to offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barge Dock ▪ Tourist Information Kiosk ▪ Tourism Signage ▪ Heritage interpretation ▪ Heritage Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Great Fen – interpretation and linkages to Ramsey ▪ Development of waterway based leisure activity ▪ Customer Care (Welcome Host) ▪ Tourism Development ▪ Improving local recreational open spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Co-ordination of and access to cultural and leisure activities
Creating sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to develop the northern entrance to the town, known as Ramsey Gateway, potentially incorporating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ business and enterprise centre ➢ housing ➢ community facilities ➢ links to and from town centre and the open countryside ➢ renewable energy schemes ➢ design methods that provide a high quality, safe environment which is in keeping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment Initiative ▪ Retail Skills ▪ Vocational Training ▪ RAF Upwood Brief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Northern Gateway ▪ Business & Enterprise Centre ▪ Renewable Energy ▪ Housing to meet local needs ▪ Designing out Crime ▪ Learndirect Facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interim Planning Guidance for Northern Gateway ▪ Housing to meet local needs ▪ Produce good practice to promote sustainable communities ▪ Support the development of and access to the countryside for informal recreation

	<p>with the character of the town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to successfully apply for external grant funding to help realise the Ramsey Area Partnership vision 			
Vibrant town centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to conserve and enhance the town centre supporting the development of a Conservation Area Character Statement and appropriate enhancement schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation Area Review ▪ Community Safety – CCTV, diversionary activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conservation Area Enhancements ▪ Environmental Improvements ▪ Historic Building Restoration ▪ Streetscape Continuity ▪ Increased investment ▪ Increased footfall in town ▪ Community safety – ASBOs ▪ Public space / Market Square 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage local employers to participate in workforce development ▪ Improve the facilities, competitiveness and appeal of Ramsey town centre
Effective transport choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work together to establish a Transport Strategy for the Ramsey area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promotion of community transport ▪ Cycle use – cycle racks ▪ Free car parking & signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased use of community transport ▪ Market Town Area Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote new and existing public transport schemes ▪ Prepare promotion of community transport

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CABINET

14 October 2004

REQUEST FOR THE FURTHER RELEASE OF FUNDING FOR THE CUSTOMER FIRST PROGRAMME & ASSOCIATED DELEGATED AUTHORITY

(Report by the Director of Commerce & Technology)

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this paper is to request the:

- Release (2¹) of Capital Funding for the hardware and software required to link to Cambridgeshire Direct (see Annex);
- Delegation of authority to issue a letter of intent to the County Council;
- Delegation of authority to sign a contract with County to provide implementation & managed services.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Cabinet approved the Customer First Programme on 26th June 2003. Subsequently the following releases of funding have been approved by Cabinet:

- 4-Mar-04: Development of Call Centre, website & GIS/LLPG
- 15-Jul-04: Revenue Spending for the lease of Speke House (Release 1)
- 27-May-04: Appointment of the Contact Centre Management and support staff (Release 3)
- 27-May-04: Appointment of Contact Centre Agents (Release 4)

Beyond the release now requested there will be a 5th and final release for the development of the **Customer Service Centre**.

2.2 Cabinet has also approved (15-Jul-04) that the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources, Welfare and IT, be authorised to approve the terms of the lease for Speke House.

3. INFORMATION

3.1 The Customer First Project Team have progressed the specification of the hardware and software necessary to provide the Call Centre infrastructure. Negotiations have been held with County (the prime contractor) and their sub-contractor SX3. We have received final quotations for sufficient elements of the Programme to allow us to proceed towards a contract which will provide both implementation services and an ongoing managed service once the Call Centre goes live, within the budget approved by Council as part of the Medium-Term Plan.

3.2 A key element of the software infrastructure is the CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system. With County, South Cambridgeshire and now Huntingdonshire all implementing the same CRM software, it is more economic for the partners to purchase an Enterprise CRM license which provides significant savings for the partners when compared against individual CRM licenses.

¹ refers to Release numbers in Forward Plan

3.3 The County has asked the Council to provide a letter of intent in lieu of the main contract to allow them to take advantage of a time-limited offer from the suppliers of the CRM software.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Release Capital Funding for the hardware and software required to link to Cambridgeshire Direct (see Annex);
- b) Authorise the Director of Commerce & Technology, after consultation with the Executive Member for Resources, Welfare and IT, to issue a letter of intent to County;
- c) Authorise the Director of Commerce & Technology, after consultation with the Executive Member for Resources, Welfare and IT, to sign a contract with County for the provision of Call Centre implementation and managed services within the approved budget.

Background papers

Customer Service Strategy (June 2003)

Cabinet papers and minutes relating to previous releases of Customer First funding (4th Mar 2004, 27th May 2004 & 15th July 2004).

Contact Officer: Chris Hall, Customer First Programme Manager
☎ 01480 388116

Scheme Number
 Scheme Name as per MTP: Customer First Programme
 Project Officer: David Oliver/Chris Hall

Financial Impact

	Net Revenue Impact								Net Capital							
	2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2003/ 2004 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000				
Approved Budget	38	442	729	764	826	827	546	1180	814	206	65					
Already Committed (before 4-Mar-04 Cabinet)	29	180	181	153	153	153	498	70								
Release 1: Development of Call Centre	8	36	72	85	85	85		402								
Releases 3 & 4: Call Centre staffing		155	297	297	297	297										
Not Yet Required Release 5: Customer Service Centre (CSC)				21	76	76				82						
Amount for which release now requested	1	71	179	208	215	216	48	708	814	124	65					

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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