

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2005** at **11:30 AM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

## FOR INFORMATION ONLY

### APOLOGIES

**Contact  
(01480)**

1. **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on the 21<sup>st</sup> July 2005.

**Mrs H Taylor  
388008**

2. **MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

To receive from Members Declarations of Personal/or Prejudicial interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any Agenda item.

(Please see notes 1 and 2 below.)

3. **FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2005** (Pages 5 - 14)

To consider a report by the Director of Commerce and Technology on the Council's future Financial Strategy.

**S Couper  
388103**

4. **QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF DEBTS WRITTEN OFF** (Pages 15 - 16)

To note a summary by the Head of Revenue Services of debts written-off during the quarter ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

**J Barber  
388105**

5. **CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 2005**  
(Pages 17 - 22)

To consider a report by the Head of Environmental Health Services outlining the implications for the District Council of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005.

**S Lammin  
388280**

6. **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (AMENDMENT)** (Pages 23 - 50)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services seeking approval for an amendment to the Local Development Scheme for Huntingdonshire prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.

**Dr M Bingham  
388431**

7. **PLANNING FOR HOUSING PROVISION - A CONSULTATION PAPER** (Pages 51 - 54)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services on the Government's objectives for delivering a better supply of housing

**C Bond  
388435**

through the planning system.

**8. DESIGN BRIEF - ALFRED HALL MEMORIAL FIELD/EYNESBURY ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB** (Pages 55 - 56)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services seeking approval for consultation purposes of the draft Design Brief for redevelopment of the Alfred Hall Memorial Field.

**M Huntington**  
**388404**

**9. DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT : WIND POWER** (Pages 57 - 80)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning Services to which is attached a draft Supplementary Planning Document on Wind Power, for public consultation.

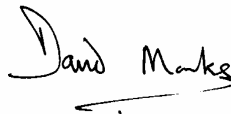
**Dr M Bingham**  
**388431**

**10. DISTRICT COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS AND OTHER ACCOMMODATION - MEMBERS' ADVISORY GROUP** (Pages 81 - 94)

To receive a report of the meeting of the District Council Headquarters and Other Office Accommodation Members' Advisory Group held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2005.

**A Roberts**  
**388009**

Dated this 24 day of August 2005



Chief Executive

**Notes**

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*
    - (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, a partner, relatives or close friends;*
    - (b) *a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors;*
    - (c) *any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £5,000; or*
    - (d) *the Councillor's registerable financial and other interests.*
  2. *A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would reasonably regard the Member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.*
-

Please contact Helen Taylor on 01480 388008 if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Cabinet.

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

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

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

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

#### ***Emergency Procedure***

*In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit and to make their way to the base of the flagpole in the car park at the front of Pathfinder House.*

This page is intentionally left blank

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 21 July 2005.

PRESENT: Councillor D P Holley – Chairman.

Councillors I C Bates, Mrs J Chandler,  
N J Guyatt, A Hansard, Mrs P J Longford,  
Mrs D C Reynolds, T V Rogers and  
L M Simpson.

### 38. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 30th June 2005 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 39. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor Bates declared a personal interest in Minute No 41 by virtue of his membership of Cambridgeshire County Council.

### 40. BUDGET 2005/06 CAPPING

Consideration was given to a report by the Director of Commerce and Technology (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which outlined the implications for the Council of the Government's decision to cap the Council's 2005/06 budget requirement.

Having discussed the need to approve a revised budget requirement that was no higher than £15.16m, the resultant reduction in Council Tax levels and issues surrounding rebilling, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that Council at their meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2005 be invited to –
  - (i) approve a revised budget requirement of £15.16m for 2005/06 and the use of an additional £387k of revenue reserves to achieve this;
  - (ii) set revised Council Tax levels for 2005/06 equating to £99.71 for Band D properties; and
- (b) that a supplementary revenue estimate of £60,000 to cover the estimated costs of rebilling be approved.

### 41. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN: CONSULTATION ON ISSUES AND OPTIONS

By means of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted

with the contents of a recent consultation paper issued by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council on options for a new framework for minerals and waste planning to 2021.

Having considered the implications of the proposals for Huntingdonshire and suggested responses to a series of questions about general policy issues which might be addressed in Core Strategy, the Cabinet emphasised that the new framework should refer to environmental issues impacting on the County and the importance of the Regional Environmental Strategy. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the contents of the Appendices to the report now submitted together with the sentiments expressed in paragraph 4 be approved as the basis of the District Council's response to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Plan.

**42. HOUSING CONDITION REPORT**

By way of a report by the Head of Environmental Health Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the findings of a condition survey of the housing stock in Huntingdonshire in terms of the District Council's enforcement and enabling responsibilities.

In considering the information contained in the report, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the findings of the House Condition Survey 2005 be noted.

**43. WEST OF STUKELEY ROAD, HUNTINGDON - URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK**

Further to Minute No 04/173 the Cabinet considered a report (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the responses received to consultation on the Urban Design Framework for land to the west of Stukeley Road. The report suggested amendments to the framework as a result of the consultation and these related principally to the requirement for a comprehensive approach to the development of the area.

Having considered the responses received, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Urban Design Framework, as amended to reflect the content of the annex to the report now submitted, be approved as Interim Planning Guidance to the Huntingdonshire Local Plan; and
- (b) that the Head of Planning Services, after consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Strategy, be

authorised to make any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations.

**44. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2004/05 AND 2005/06**

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 2004/5 and the implications for 2005/6.

Having noted those projects which had been delayed in 2004/05, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the capital outturn 2004/05 be noted;
- (b) that the position with regard to individual schemes as set out in Annex A to the report now submitted be noted; and
- (c) that a supplementary estimate of £10,000 for the purchase of a new Ramsey and District Community Bus as outlined in paragraph 3.4 of the report now submitted be approved.

**45. SAWTRY LEISURE CENTRE - EXTENSION OF FACILITIES**

By way of a report by the Leisure Centres Co-ordinator (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a request for the release of funding from the Medium Term Plan and a supplementary capital estimate to fund an extension to facilities at Sawtry Leisure Centre.

Members were advised that the figure quoted in paragraph 2.1 of the report as representing the level of deficit on capital expenditure should have read £59k instead of £54k. Having also been informed that the bid submission to Sport England for £206k, around 26% of the overall anticipated total cost of the scheme, had been successful, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that a transfer of £59,000 from the Leisure's Capital Programme be approved to fund the scheme's capital expenditure shortfall;
- (b) that a request for an additional supplementary capital estimate of £160,000 in respect of the acquisition of fitness equipment be approved;
- (c) that the reduction in net revenue costs for the scheme, as detailed in paragraph 2.3 of the report, be noted; and
- (d) that the release of £749,000 of capital funding for the extension of facilities at Sawtry Leisure Centre be

approved.

**46. ST NEOTS, RIVERSIDE PARK - ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

The Cabinet considered a joint report by the Heads of Environment and Transport and of Community Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) proposing the installation of a barrier system and improved lighting at the Riverside Car Park in St Neots to address anti-social behaviour in that area.

Having considered the content of the report, the financial implications associated with the recommended course of action and the impact of the Environment Agency's flood alleviation programme on the proposals, the Cabinet

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the contents of the report be noted and the works detailed in paragraph 5.1 at the Riverside Park, St Neots approved; and
- (b) that a supplementary estimate of £30,000 to fund the cost of the works to the Riverside Car Park be approved.

Chairman



CABINET

1 SEPTEMBER 2005

## FINANCIAL STRATEGY

(Report by the Director of Commerce and Technology)

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to assist discussion of the Council's Financial Strategy and obtain the Cabinet's proposals on key aspects. The report will also be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) on 13 September and Cabinet will have the opportunity to consider their comments on 15 September prior to finalising their own recommendations to Council (28 September).

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council is debt-free and has high levels of revenue and capital reserves which currently provide significant financial flexibility. The Council decided in February that it would use this flexibility to allow modest cash increases in the level of Council Tax each year so that the level of spending reductions required when reserves run out would be minimised. It therefore based the Medium Term Plan on increases in Council Tax of £12 per year. The following table summarises the approved plan:

<b>APPROVED PLAN</b>	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Net Spending before efficiency savings	16,685	17,775	19,670	20,749	22,429	24,116
Efficiency Savings Target	0	-402	-826	-1,273	-1,307	-1,342
<b>Net Spending</b>	<b>16,685</b>	<b>17,373</b>	<b>18,844</b>	<b>19,476</b>	<b>21,122</b>	<b>22,774</b>
<b>Funding</b>						
Total Government Support	-8,731	-9,508	-9,995	-10,481	-10,972	-11,219
Collection Fund Deficit	14	4	0	0	0	0
Council Tax	-5,308	-6,043	-6,790	-7,552	-8,328	-9,120
Use of Reserves	-2,660	-1,826	-2,059	-1,443	-1,822	-2,435
<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>£94.54</b>	<b>£106.54</b>	<b>£118.54</b>	<b>£130.54</b>	<b>£142.54</b>	<b>£154.54</b>
<b>Increase %</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>
<b>Remaining reserves (end of year)</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Revenue	17,312	15,486	13,427	11,983	10,162	7,727
Capital	43,038	28,051	17,114	14,864	10,837	5,619

- 2.2 The report to Council also included a graph that showed that service spending would need to be reduced by £4.2M by 2015/16 (in addition to the efficiency savings already included) if Council Tax increases were not to exceed £12 per year in the longer term.

### **3. CAPPING**

- 3.1 Unfortunately, the Government changed its approach to capping this year (it had excluded District Councils taxing at below average levels in 2004/05) and, despite a full explanation of the Council's financial strategy, determined that the Council's budget requirement (Net Spending less use of reserves = £15.547M) would be capped at £15.160M. Cabinet have recommended to Council a revised budget requirement of this sum which results in a reduced Council Tax level of £99.71 for a Band D property. This is a 5.5% increase on 2004/5, and a reduction of £6.83 on what we originally billed.
- 3.2 This reduction results in an extra use of reserves of £387k and an estimated cost of £60k to fund the re-billing exercise.
- 3.3 Inevitably, the possibility of future capping must be taken account of in determining the Council's financial strategy.

### **4. CONTEXT**

- 4.1 Huntingdonshire District Council's Council Tax for the year 2005/06 now compares to that of other Districts as follows (figures in brackets are before capping, where different):
- in the lowest 8% of Council Tax levels for all Shire Districts in England. Range £59 to £275, average £145. The total impact of capping has reduced the District average Council Tax by about 40p.
  - 8.4% (8.9%) of the total Council Tax bill\* for Huntingdonshire residents.

\* *This includes the amounts set by the County Council, the Fire and Police Authorities and Town or Parish Councils.*

### **5. UPDATING LAST YEAR'S BUDGET**

- 5.1 Some of the elements of the Council's finances are broadly outside of its control. Examples include take-up of services, inflation, interest rates, pension contributions and Government Support.
- 5.2 The Financial Strategy takes a longer-term view and, within that time frame, many of its assumptions will turn out to be inaccurate. This is especially true as local government exists in a dynamic environment of political change, both local and national, and increasing customer expectations. Because of these uncertainties the existence of a strategy becomes more important as, each time there is a significant change, the impact on the Council's plan can be identified and addressed.
- 5.3 The first step in the process is to review the assumptions that were included in the approved MTP. A number of adjustments need to be made:

- The impact of the 2005/06 capping.
  - Changes in interest rate expectations. The Base Rate was reduced to 4.5% on August 11 and there is general uncertainty about whether another reduction will follow. Fund Managers are therefore only forecasting 4.6 to 4.7% next year and it has been assumed that this rate will continue thereafter. An extra 0.25% would produce an extra £110k next year but as reserves fall in later years the impact becomes insignificant.
  - Reassessment of the existing inflation provisions. Electricity supply has just been re-tendered with a 50% increase from October (£140k in a full year) and pay awards are tending to exceed the general level of inflation (3.2% rather than 2.5% this year). It is therefore considered prudent to add an extra 0.5% although this amounts to a significant figure over the forecast period.
  - The 2004/05 outturn. Adjustment has been made for deferral of revenue and capital spending to the current year together with additions to reserves to reflect one-off budget savings.
  - The 2005/06 capital programme. Deferral of £6.8M from 2005/06 to 2006/07 has already been identified, mostly relating to the replacement of the Council's offices.
- 5.4 Paragraph 7.1 below further considers the impact of variations from the interest and inflation rates that have been chosen.
- 5.5 There are also some items that it is not possible to take account of at this stage but will need to be brought into the MTP before it is approved next February. These include:
- Our assumption as to the speed with which the Council will get its additional Government Support (spread over the next 3 years), which may be optimistic.
  - Government plans to revise the formulae for distributing Government Support, which are currently the subject of consultation.
  - Any revisions to the existing provision for replacing the Council's offices. Additional capital expenditure within the plan period will need to be financed from loan as capital reserves will run out in 2011/12. Each additional £1m of capital expenditure will therefore require eventual reductions in service spending of around £85k per annum to compensate for the extra loan repayments.
- 5.6 The next step is to consider any general provision for service variations beyond the level to March 2010 agreed in the MTP. It has been assumed that, given the financial position the Council will be facing in the coming years, there should be no additional provision for revenue developments but £3.5M per year for capital investment (at current prices). No allowance has been made for unavoidable additional costs other than the Contingency Reserve (£132k). It has been assumed that any additional items that do not meet the criteria for the reserve would need to be funded from savings.
- 5.7 The final element is the balance between the use of Reserves and increases in Council Tax. The approach determined in last year's budget was to increase the Council Tax by £12 per year and to reduce spending, in due course, to create a balanced position.

## 6. OPTIONS FOR MEMBER CONSIDERATION

6.1 **Option 1** is based on items described in paragraph 5 above. It is summarised below and additional detail is supplied in Annex A. It represents maintaining the Council's existing strategy.

OPTION 1	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Net Spending before savings/reductions	17,569	19,451	20,989	22,777	24,557	26,283	27,627
Efficiency Savings Target	-402	-826	-1,273	-1,307	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342
Additional Spending Reductions	0	0	0	0	0	0	-3,666
<b>Net Spending</b>	<b>17,167</b>	<b>18,625</b>	<b>19,716</b>	<b>21,470</b>	<b>23,215</b>	<b>24,941</b>	<b>22,619</b>
Funding excl. Reserves	15,159	16,394	17,637	18,901	19,937	20,990	22,066
Use of Reserves	2,008	2,231	2,079	2,569	3,278	3,951	553
<b>COUNCIL TAX</b>	<b>£ 99.71</b>	<b>£ 111.71</b>	<b>£ 123.71</b>	<b>£ 135.71</b>	<b>£ 147.71</b>	<b>£ 159.71</b>	<b>£ 171.71</b>
Increase £	£5.17	£12	£12	£12	£12	£12	£12
Increase %	5.5%	12.0%	10.7%	9.7%	8.8%	8.1%	7.5%
Increase % in Budget Requirement	8.1%	8.1%	7.6%	7.2%	5.5%	5.3%	5.1%

### 6.2 Comment on Option 1

For capping, the Government chose authorities which had more than a 5.5% increase in Council Tax AND more than a 6% increase in Budget Requirement. There is no certainty that there will be capping in future years or at what level it would be. Clearly, if the criteria were the same as this year the above option would result in capping next year. Capping would result in a repeat of rebilling costs (circa £60k) and a significant amount of officer time.

Conversely taxpayers understand the £12 a year plan and the public survey showed some support for this level of increase.

The table above goes to 2011/12. Under this strategy, the Additional Spending Reductions required rise to £6.2M by 2016/17. The Council Tax level would be £231.71 in 2016/17.

6.3 Obviously the Council can revise its strategy in any way it chooses but the following two further options seem most relevant in the Council's particular situation.

6.4 **Option 2** is similar to Option 1 except that it is based on retrieving the original plan by recovering from taxpayers over the next 7 years the £6.83 that the Government has required us to reduce Council Tax by this year. Increases would be £13 for the next 6 years, £12.83 for the 7<sup>th</sup> year and then revert to £12. The impact is shown below:

<b>OPTION 2</b>	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Net Spending before savings/reductions	17,569	19,450	20,985	22,766	24,537	26,250	27,594
Efficiency Savings Target	-402	-826	-1,273	-1,307	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342
Additional Spending Reductions	0	0	0	0	0	0	-2,322
<b>Net Spending</b>	<b>17,167</b>	<b>18,624</b>	<b>19,712</b>	<b>21,459</b>	<b>23,195</b>	<b>24,908</b>	<b>23,930</b>
Funding excl. Reserves	15,159	16,451	17,753	19,076	20,172	21,288	22,427
Use of Reserves	2,008	2,173	1,959	2,383	3,023	3,620	1,503
<b>COUNCIL TAX</b>	<b>£99.71</b>	<b>£112.71</b>	<b>£125.71</b>	<b>£138.71</b>	<b>£151.71</b>	<b>£164.71</b>	<b>£177.71</b>
Increase £	£5.17	£13.00	£13.00	£13.00	£13.00	£13.00	£13.00
Increase %	5.5%	13.0%	11.5%	10.3%	9.4%	8.6%	7.9%
Increase % in Budget Requirement	8.1%	8.5%	7.9%	7.5%	5.7%	5.5%	5.4%

### 6.5 Comment on Option 2.

The same comments apply as do in Option 1 regarding capping.

It should be possible to explain to taxpayers the logic behind this approach.

Under this strategy, the Additional Spending Reductions required rise to £5.8M by 2016/17.

The Council Tax level would be £238.54 in 2016/17.

6.6 **Option 3** is based on remaining within the Government's 2005/06 capping criteria. Reserves would be used to keep the budget requirement increase down to 6% whilst maintaining our spending plans for as long as possible. While this means that Reserves are used more quickly, this is compensated for by higher Council Tax increases from 2009/10 onwards.

<b>OPTION 3</b>	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Net Spending before savings/reductions	17,569	19,454	21,011	22,831	24,652	26,384	27,646
Efficiency Savings Target	-402	-826	-1,273	-1,307	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342
Additional Spending Reductions	0	0	0	0	0	-2,999	-4,800
<b>Net Spending</b>	<b>17,167</b>	<b>18,628</b>	<b>19,738</b>	<b>21,524</b>	<b>23,310</b>	<b>22,043</b>	<b>21,504</b>
Funding excl. Reserves	15,159	16,069	17,033	18,055	19,138	20,287	21,504
Use of Reserves	2,008	2,559	2,705	3,469	4,172	1,756	0
<b>COUNCIL TAX</b>	<b>£99.71</b>	<b>£106.04</b>	<b>£113.26</b>	<b>£121.23</b>	<b>£134.19</b>	<b>£147.91</b>	<b>£ 162.37</b>
Increase £	£5.17	£6.33	£7.22	£7.97	£12.96	£13.72	£14.45
Increase %	5.5%	6.3%	6.8%	7.0%	10.7%	10.2%	9.8%
Increase % in Budget Requirement	8.1%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%

### 6.7 Comment on Option 3

If capping continued and the 2005/06 criteria were retained the Council would not be capped. Unfortunately there has been, and is unlikely to be, any certainty or consistency of approach by the Government. Thus, all that can be said is that there would be less likelihood of capping and

the Council could demonstrate it was reacting in a positive way to the Government's wishes.

It could be explained to taxpayers that the Council is attempting to comply with the Government's wishes.

Under this strategy, the Additional Spending Reductions required rise to £5.2M by 2016/17.

The Council Tax level would be £247.62 in 2016/17.

6.8 Whichever option is chosen, **major efficiencies / spending cuts will be required in service developments already included in the MTP and / or in existing services**. The Customer Consultation Survey and the Council's targets will provide a starting point for this prioritisation but it will be necessary to determine the relative importance of potential options within that framework.

6.9 These reductions are shown in the year when they become inevitable. In practice, the best approach will be to achieve savings and / or make cuts progressively by the required dates.

## 7. SENSITIVITY

7.1 Option 1 has been adjusted for changes in some factors, to see if they have a significant impact. The table below shows the factor that has been changed and the resulting change in the level of savings required.

	First year in which savings are required	Impact	
		Variation in savings required	
		Total to March 2017 £M	Permanent per year by 2016/17 £M
<b>OPTION 1 (as above)</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	-	-
<b>With</b> Interest rate variations			
0.25% increase from 2006/07	2011/12	-0.3	0
0.25% decrease from 2006/07	2011/12	+0.3	0
<b>With</b> Inflation variations			
0.25% increase from 2006/07	2010/11	+4.2	+0.7
0.25% decrease from 2006/07	2011/12	-4.1	-0.7

## 8. REDUCING THE LIKELIHOOD OF CAPPING

8.1 Attempts are being made, via the LGA, to persuade the Government to consider a range of areas where they could provide some comfort short of pre-announcing the capping levels (which they adamantly refuse to do). These areas include:

- No capping for an authority that has a council tax that is below average for its class.
- No capping that would result in a refund of less than £x per year.
- No capping that would result in a refund of less than x times the re-billing cost.

- Capping rules to recognise an additional test e.g. more than X% increase in budget requirement and more than Y% increase in Council Tax **and** more than Z% increase in “service spending” (budget requirement after excluding use of reserves).

**8.2** It is possible that there will not be any certainty as to whether these attempts have been successful in time to influence the 2006/07 budget decisions.

## 9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Cabinet, and subsequently Council, are faced with a decision which revolves around the Government’s future attitude to capping District Councils that currently have low levels of Council Tax.

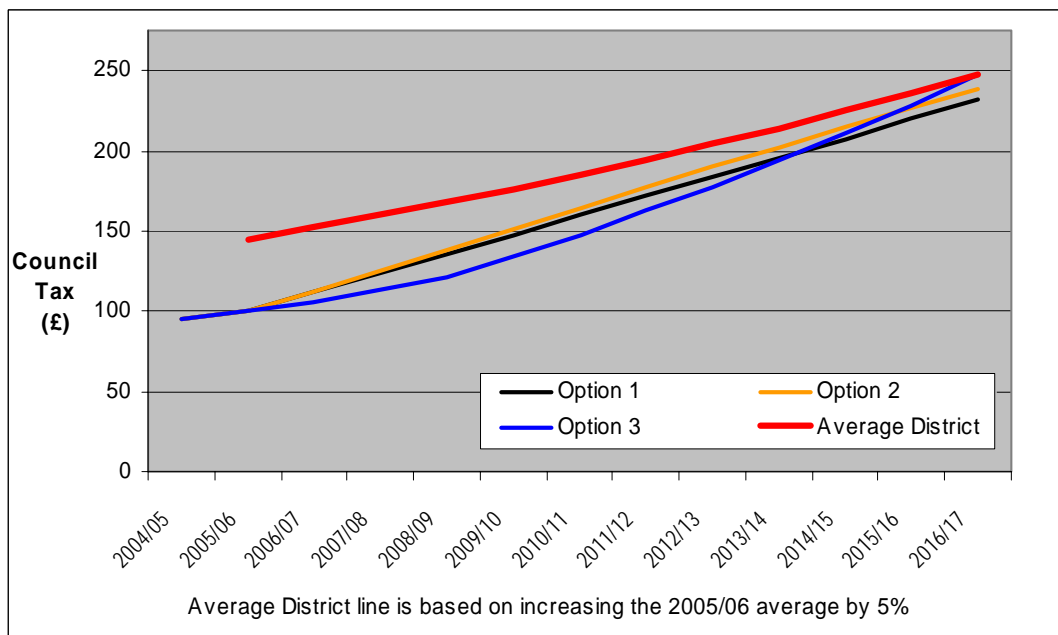
9.2 Fortunately, the Council’s reserves still allow some flexibility if the Council were to agree a strategy that resulted in the Council being capped again.

9.3 None of the options illustrated in this report guarantee that the Council will not be capped either in 2006/07 or later years. Each requires eventual reductions in service spending of over £5.2M per year.

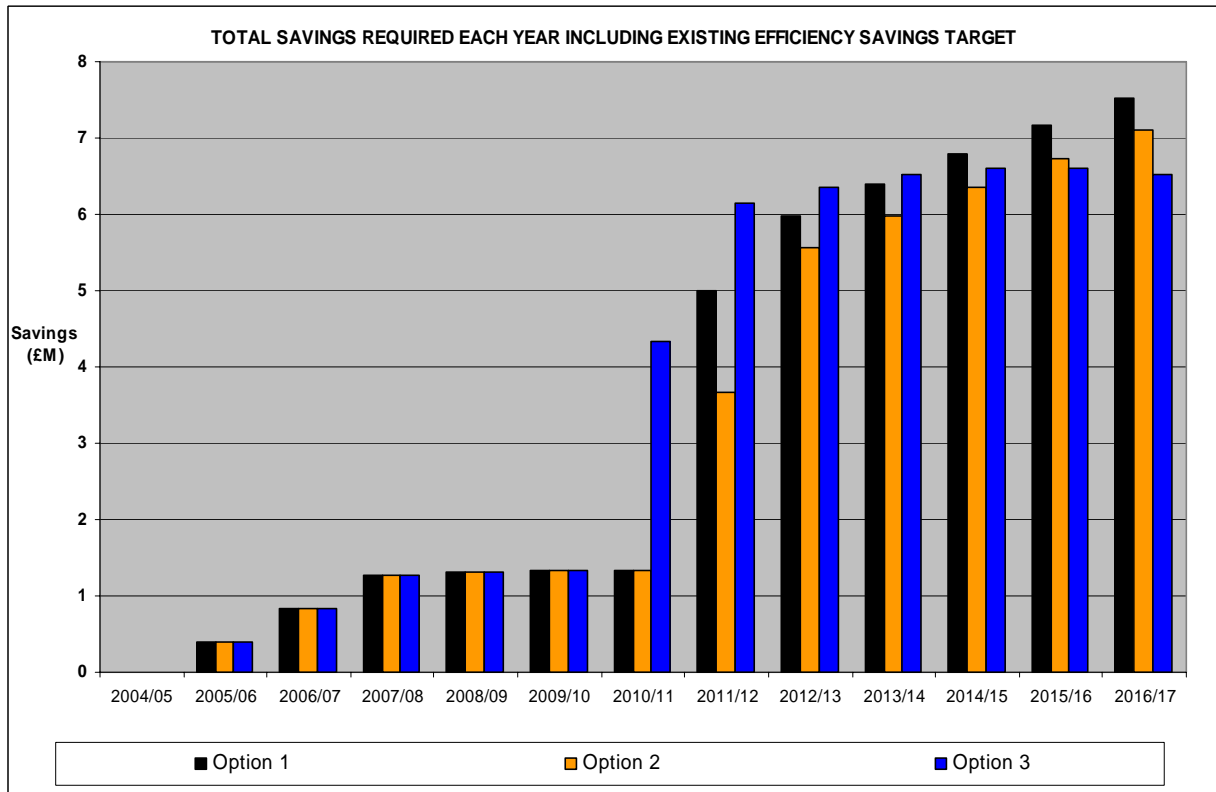
9.4 Option 1 will be most easy to communicate to taxpayers as it continues the £12 a year increase but is more prone to capping and requires the largest eventual reductions (£6.2M).

9.5 Option 2 is only marginally different to Option 1, will require slightly less reductions (£5.8M) savings but the concept of retrieving this years repayment will need to be explained. It is the most prone to capping but only slightly more so than Option 1.

9.6 Option 3 requires least service reductions (£5.2M), is least prone to capping and would be recognised as attempting to follow the Government’s approach. It does however result in smaller tax increases now but larger ones in due course. The graph below illustrates this point.



9.7 The following graph shows the total savings required each year including the efficiency target already included in the MTP.



9.8 **Cabinet is invited to consider the information outlined above and ask the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) for its comments. Cabinet will then have the opportunity to debate its recommendation to Council at the meeting on the 15 September.**

9.9 To allow the review of the Medium Term Plan to progress the recommendations will need to include:

- The preferred option
- Whether the assumed continuation of a small capital programme beyond 2009/10 is acceptable.

**ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985**

Source Documents:

1. Working papers in Financial Services
2. 2005/06 Revenue Budget and the 2005/010 MTP

**Contact Officer:**

**Steve Couper**, Head of Financial Services

**01480 388103**



OPTION 1	2004/05 £000	2005/06 £000	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	2009/10 £000	2010/11 £000	2011/12 £000	2012/13 £000	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	2015/16 £000	2016/17 £000
Efficiency savings target already included	0	-402	-826	-1,273	-1,307	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342	-1,342
<b>2005/06 BUDGET/MTP/Forecast</b>	<b>16,685</b>	<b>17,373</b>	<b>18,844</b>	<b>19,476</b>	<b>21,122</b>	<b>22,774</b>	<b>24,366</b>	<b>25,542</b>	<b>26,617</b>	<b>27,717</b>	<b>28,817</b>	<b>29,917</b>	<b>31,017</b>
Rebiling	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue/capital adjustment	-315	-169	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004/05 outturn	-1,557	292	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Inflation adjustment	0	70	224	312	405	503	606	714	828	948	1,074	1,207	1,346
<b>Additional required savings</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-3,666</b>	<b>-4,644</b>	<b>-5,050</b>	<b>-5,443</b>	<b>-5,823</b>	<b>-6,189</b>
Funding capital expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	81	367	677	990	1,306	1,625
Interest adjustment	-257	-459	-443	-71	-57	-62	-31	-52	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28
<b>2006/07 BUDGET/MTP/Forecast</b>	<b>14,556</b>	<b>17,167</b>	<b>18,625</b>	<b>19,716</b>	<b>21,470</b>	<b>23,215</b>	<b>24,941</b>	<b>22,619</b>	<b>23,164</b>	<b>24,282</b>	<b>25,423</b>	<b>26,585</b>	<b>27,771</b>
% Increase		17.9%	8.5%	5.9%	8.9%	8.1%	7.4%	-9.3%	2.4%	4.8%	4.7%	4.6%	4.5%
<b>FUNDING</b>													
Government support	-8,731	-9,508	-9,995	-10,481	-10,972	-11,219	-11,471	-11,730	-11,994	-12,263	-12,539	-12,821	-13,110
Collection fund deficit	14	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Council tax	-5,308	-5,655	-6,399	-7,157	-7,929	-8,717	-9,519	-10,337	-11,170	-12,018	-12,883	-13,763	-14,660
<b>USE OF REVENUE RESERVES</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>2,008</b>	<b>2,231</b>	<b>2,079</b>	<b>2,569</b>	<b>3,278</b>	<b>3,951</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>COUNCIL TAX</b>	<b>£94.54</b>	<b>£99.71</b>	<b>£111.71</b>	<b>£123.71</b>	<b>£135.71</b>	<b>£147.71</b>	<b>£159.71</b>	<b>£171.71</b>	<b>£183.71</b>	<b>£195.71</b>	<b>£207.71</b>	<b>£219.71</b>	<b>£231.71</b>
% Increase	14.5%	5.5%	12.0%	10.7%	9.7%	8.8%	8.1%	7.5%	7.0%	6.5%	6.1%	5.8%	5.5%
Revenue reserves End of year	18,669	16,661	14,430	12,351	9,782	6,504	2,553	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Capital reserves End of year	49,861	35,242	16,829	13,879	9,852	4,634	968	0	0	0	0	0	0



**COMT  
CABINET**

**26 July 2005  
1 September 2005**

## **QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF DEBTS WRITTEN-OFF (Report by the Head of Revenue Services)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Head of Revenue Services, or in her absence the Head of Financial Services is authorised to write-off debts with an individual value of up to £4,000, or of a greater amount after consultation with the Executive Councillor, having taken appropriate steps to satisfy herself that the debts are irrecoverable or cannot be recovered without incurring disproportionate costs. A summary, detailing debts written-off, shall be submitted to the cabinet quarterly.
- 1.2 The summary of debts written-off during the quarter ended 30 June 2005 and during the 2005/06 financial year, is shown below with the comparative amount for the previous financial year shown in brackets.
- 1.3 Whilst these amounts have been written-off in this period of the 2005/06 financial year, much of the original debt would have been raised in previous financial years as the table at 4 demonstrates.

### **2. WRITE-OFFS UP TO £4,000**

Approved by the Head of Revenue Services

Type of Debt	In Quarter		Financial Year Total		
	No. of Cases	Amount £	No. of Cases	Amount £	Previous Year (£)
Council Tax	181	34,530.96	181	34,530.96	(5,259.28)
NNDR	11	8,544.25	11	8,544.25	(4,999.97)
Sundry Debtors	29	7,429.57	29	7,429.57	(19,297.58)
Excess Charges	62	2,360.00	62	2,360.00	(40.00)

- 2.1 Please note that in 2004/5, Excess Charge write-offs were delayed and were brought up to date in the second quarter. The processing of Council Tax write-offs was similarly delayed at this point last year.

### 3. WRITE-OFFS OVER £4,000

Agreed by the Executive Councillor

Approved by the Head of Revenue Services

Type of Debt	In Quarter		Financial Year Total		
	No. of Cases	Amount £	No. of Cases	Amount £	Previous Year (£)
NNDR	1	26,803.21	1	26,803.21	(0.00)
Sundry Debtors	1	15,303.82	1	15,303.82	(0.00)

- 3.1 In this quarter the NNDR case, valued at over £4,000, was written-off following liquidation of the company. The Sundry Debtor case was written-off because the debtor had been declared bankrupt.

### 4. DATE ANALYSIS

Year of Debt	Council Tax (£)	NNDR (£)	Sundry Debtors (£)	Excess Charges (£)
Pre 97/98	1206.50	572.45	00.00	0.00
1997/98	341.49	0.00	195.98	0.00
1998/99	382.68	0.00	1,448.01	0.00
1999/00	644.84	0.00	749.64	0.00
2000/01	1,123.38	0.00	248.52	0.00
2001/02	4,299.68	841.75	41.25	0.00
2002/03	8,818.67	3,974.48	1,529.82	0.00
2003/04	12,341.87	25,093.91	1,619.91	0.00
2004/05	5,268.09	4,864.87	16,893.60	2,360.00
2005/06	103.76	0.00	6.66	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>34,530.96</b>	<b>35,347.46</b>	<b>22,733.39</b>	<b>2,360.00</b>

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Cabinet members are asked to note the content of this report

Contact Officer: Julia Barber, Head of Revenue Services ☎ [01480] 388105

## AGENDA ITEM NO.

**CABINET  
LICENSING AND PROTECTION PANEL**

**1 SEPTEMBER 2005  
20 OCTOBER 2005**

### **CLEAN NEIGHBOURHOODS AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 2005 (Report by Head of Environmental Health Services)**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to allow Members to consider the implications of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and to seek Member approval for the delegations of authority for dealing with powers and duties arising out of the implementation of the Act.

#### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 On 7 April 2005 the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Bill received Royal Assent. The majority of the measures will commence during the next year, and a consultation on the regulations and guidance is expected shortly from DEFRA.
- 2.2 The LGA has also produced (13 July 2005) a detailed 'Get in on the Act' guide to the new Act and the opportunities it brings for local authorities.
- 2.3 There are increased enforcement powers included in the Act for a variety of 'environmental crimes' also powers to adopt alternative enforcement strategies for some offences, such as the use of fixed penalty notices. These are powers rather than duties and the Council may determine that it has no wish to adopt the powers in this Act. However, the national publicity is likely to create an expectation among Council-tax payers that their local authority will enforce the law to resolve any neighbourhood problems.
- 2.4 Should Members chose to use these new enforcement powers Huntingdonshire District Council, in common with many local authorities, does not presently have the necessary trained staff to implement the provisions of this Act. In particular, the alternative enforcement strategies will need staff to be trained in the application and limitation of the new powers and also for the Council to agree an amended Enforcement Policy in relation to environmental crimes.

#### **3. IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 Some of the new powers that came into force on 7 June 2005, could potentially be added to existing enforcement briefs and the increased workload absorbed, in the first instance, by existing staff. Staff would need additional training. However, the likely demand for these enforcement powers cannot be estimated. After the first year the additional workload will need to be assessed. For example: the issues that could then be addressed would include:
- ◆ The parking of two or more motor vehicles on a road or roads, merely in order to be sold. This new role could be adopted by the Enforcement Officer (Abandoned Vehicles) or a Planning

Enforcement Officer (should it relate to private land or a private roadway).

- ◆ Causing annoyance by repairing vehicles on a road or a trader repairing vehicles on a road. This new role could be adopted by Officers within the Environmental Health Services Division and would supplement their existing powers in relation to noise nuisance.

3.2 There are new powers that came into force on 7 June 2005. The authority does not necessarily have adequate staff to implement or enforce these offences. This would include tackling the offence of dropping litter anywhere in the open air, including rivers or lakes.

3.3 There are also new powers, which should come into force during 2006, which could be, potentially, added to existing enforcement briefs. Again the likely demand for these enforcement powers cannot be estimated. After the first year the additional workload will need to be assessed. The issues that could then be addressed would include:

- ◆ Notice to be served on the *owner* of the land requiring him to clear waste where there is no occupier or the occupier cannot be found without the enforcing authority incurring unreasonable expense. A waste collection authority can enter the land, remove the waste or take such specified steps and recover the costs of doing so from the occupier or owner. The enforcement could be implemented by Environmental Health, as it represents an amendment to their existing powers, and the practical remedy could be achieved by the Operations Division.
- ◆ Immediate removal of 'no-value' abandoned vehicles from public roads. This is an accelerated process. The work is already undertaken by the Enforcement Officer (Abandoned Vehicles). He currently (July 2005) achieves an average removal time of around 4 days (for all abandoned vehicles not just wrecks), within the present legal constraints.
- ◆ A new system will replace the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 and will involve 'dog control orders'. The enforcement may not be markedly different for the Council's Dog Warden. However the 'dog control orders' are potentially complicated and will require both extensive consultation with the Parish Councils in the district and support from the Council's Legal Services Division in drafting the new Orders. There is no existing capacity to undertake the breadth and detail of consultation that will be required without a noticeable impact on other work. There are also likely to be difficulties in providing the necessary legal support and input from existing resources.
- ◆ The creation of a new statutory nuisance: "insects emanating from relevant industrial, trade or business premises and being prejudicial to health or a nuisance" **creates a new duty**, rather than just conferring powers. This new role will be adopted by Environmental Health Enforcement Officers and Environmental Health Officers and is an extension of their existing duties in relation to nuisance.

- ◆ The creation of a new statutory nuisance: "artificial light emitted from premises so as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance" **creates a new duty**, rather than just conferring powers. This new role will be adopted by Environmental Health Enforcement Officers and Environmental Health Officers and is an extension of their existing duties in relation to nuisance. This change in particular may require more night-time working.
- 3.4 Gating of minor highways that attract anti-social behaviour can be undertaken by the Highways Authority. A new role to determine the need for gating in Huntingdonshire could be implemented by the Community Safety Unit (CSU). The CSU would need to liaise with Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways officers to co-ordinate the use of the powers. The community safety activity is also grant funded in part so the longevity of the unit is heavily dependent on continued funding.
- 3.5 There are new powers, which should come into force during 2006. The authority does not currently have staff to implement or enforce these new areas. They are powers that the Council does not have to adopt but there may be an expectation among residents that any neighbourhood problems will be resolved. This expectation may be hard to meet in any other way.
- ◆ Service of "litter clearing notices" on particular occupiers where Officers are of the view that defacement caused by litter or refuse is detrimental to the amenity of the locality.
  - ◆ Extension of the application of street litter control notices to cover also vehicles, stalls and other moveable structures used for street vending.
  - ◆ Designation of leaflet control areas, and consent system.
  - ◆ Cost recovery for removing or obliterating illegally displayed posters or placards.
  - ◆ Designation of Huntingdonshire (or part of it) as an audible intruder alarm notification area – previous register administered by police (linked to noise enforcement).
  - ◆ Extended powers under the Noise Act 1996 to take action to deal with noise at night from premises where there is either a premises licence or a temporary event notice in effect under the Licensing Act 2003.
- 3.6 There is also a changed **duty** that may come into force during 2006 that Huntingdonshire District Council does not currently have resources to meet. This Act removes the responsibility of the police for dealing with stray dogs. The effect will be that there will be no round-the-clock facility for people to use to leave stray dogs that have been found. The terms of the change have not yet been set nor have the national implications for funding been agreed with Central Government.
- 3.7 This Act will allow, eventually, the issue of fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to offenders instead of resorting to prosecutions through the Courts for some offences. Members will recall the Anti-Social

Behaviour Act 2003 included similar scope for some offences. However, the use of FPNs is a significant business process change. The offences that may in future attract a fixed penalty under this Act include:

- ◆ Offences under the Noise Act 1996.
- ◆ Offence of abandoning a vehicle - £200 maximum penalty.
- ◆ Dropping litter – penalty fixed at £75, unless set by the local authority.
- ◆ Person who has not complied with a litter clearing notice or a street litter control notice – £100, unless set by the local authority.
- ◆ Increased penalty for graffiti and fly posting - £75, unless set by the local authority. (The penalty was previously £50.)
- ◆ Breach of 'dog control orders' - £75, unless set by the local authority.
- ◆ Offence of failing to nominate or notify details of a key-holder, in an alarm notification area - £75, unless set by the local authority.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

4.1 This report gives an indication of the breadth of the new powers that are to become available in the next 12 months. The list is not exhaustive as the Act is an extensive document with 111 sections and 5 schedules. There are increased enforcement powers included in the Act for a variety of 'environmental crimes' also powers to adopt alternative enforcement strategies for some offences, such as the use of fixed penalty notices.

4.2 This Act requires local authorities to become increasingly pro-active in resolving neighbourhood problems. Huntingdonshire District Council does not presently have suitable resources to implement all the provisions of this Act. In order to plan for the implementation of the Act and to facilitate the use of existing powers as the need arises officers need the necessary authority to act.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 To consider an initial response to the powers outlined in the report.

5.2 It is RECOMMENDED that delegated authority be given to the Director of Operational Services to appoint authorised officers to enforce the relevant provisions of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005:

- ◆ Under Part 2 of the Act in relation to nuisance parking, abandoned and illegally parked vehicles.
- ◆ Under Part 3 of the Act as it extends the statutory offence of dropping litter and amends the powers of local authorities in relation to litter.



- ◆ Under Part 4 of the Act as it amends the law relating to graffiti, fly-posting etc.
  - ◆ Under Part 5 of the Act in relation to the miscellaneous provision about waste.
  - ◆ Under Part 6 of the Act as it allows local authorities to create offences relating to the control of dogs.
  - ◆ Under Part 7 of the Act as it addresses various issues relating to noise nuisance.
- 5.3 That delegated authority be given to the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the relevant executive councillor:
- ◆ To have proceedings instituted to prosecute an offender through the Courts, for offences under the provisions of Parts 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Act.
- 5.4 That delegated authority be given to the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman of the Licensing and Protection Panel (as appropriate):
- ◆ To have proceedings instituted to prosecute an offender through the Courts, for offences under the provisions of Part 7 of the Act.
- 5.5 That delegated authority be given to the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the portfolio-holder of 'Housing and Public Health' (or successor) and a relevant Ward Member to formally request Cambridgeshire County Council to exercise their authority:
- ◆ Under Part 1 of the Act to allow the gating of minor highways that attract anti-social behaviour.
- 5.6 That a further report be submitted to Cabinet related to the implementation of Fixed Penalty Notices.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

Cabinet Report 6 May 2004 - Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

**Contact Officer: Susan Lammin, Head of Environmental Health Services**  
**☎ 01480 388280**

This page is intentionally left blank

**CABINET**

**1 SEPTEMBER 2005**

## **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (FIRST AMENDMENT) (Report by Head of Planning Services)**

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report informs Cabinet of a minor amendment to the Local Development Scheme for Huntingdonshire, and seeks approval for its submission to the Secretary of State.

### **2 PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 17 March this year Cabinet approved the first 'Local Development Scheme' (LDS) for Huntingdonshire for submission to the Government. In April Go-East indicated that it was content with the scheme.
- 2.2 The LDS is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It sets out the range of statutory planning documents which the Council will produce under the new system. As well as informing the community and other stakeholders of what to expect, the LDS is designed to assist with project management.

### **3 AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEME**

- 3.1 It was anticipated when the first LDS was produced that regular reviews would be needed, due to the many factors that can affect the timetable for producing planning documents (the principal risks are listed at paragraph 5.4 of the LDS).
- 3.2 This initial amendment is required because consideration of the Wind Power SPD has slipped from the 21 July to 1 September meeting of Cabinet, as a result of new software being procured and used to produce the document. The software enables reports to be published in a variety of formats, as well as allowing on-line consultation (and so helps to meet e-government targets).
- 3.3 The resulting changes to the LDS are very minor, and limited to the timetable for the Wind Power document. However, the opportunity has also been taken in Figure 2 (page 7) to show some slippage which has occurred in the timetable for Regional Spatial Strategy production: the start of the examination has been put back from September to November this year, so the RSS is unlikely to be adopted until early in 2007.

### **4 RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet endorses the amended Local Development Scheme for submission to the Secretary of State.

**Background Papers:**

Report to Cabinet, 17 March 2005, and minutes: *Local Development Scheme*

ODPM, 2004, *Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks*

**CONTACT OFFICER** - enquiries about this report to Dr Michael Bingham (Development Plans Manager), on 01480 388431.

*Local Development Framework*  
**Local Development Scheme for Huntingdonshire**

*September 2005*

**Huntingdonshire**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Malcolm Sharp BSc, DipTP, MRTPI**  
*Head of Planning Services*

Further copies of this document can be obtained from:

Planning Division,  
Operational Services Directorate,  
Huntingdonshire District Council,  
Pathfinder House,  
St Mary's Street,  
Huntingdon,  
PE29 3TN.

Telephone: 01480 388423 / 388424

e-mail: PlanningPolicy@huntsdc.gov.uk

It can also be viewed on our web site at:

<http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk>

## CONTENTS

### Part A Introduction

1.	Purpose of this document	.....	1
2.	A guide to the new system	.....	1
3.	Transitional arrangements	.....	2

### Part B Summary of framework

4.	Structure and interrelationships	.....	3
5.	Production programme	.....	4
6.	The evidence base	.....	8
7.	Sustainability appraisal and SEA	.....	8
8.	Resources, monitoring and review	.....	9

### Part C Document profiles

.....	10
-------	----

### Appendices

1	Terminology	.....	19
2	Replacement of 'saved' policies	.....	22
3	Supplementary planning guidance	.....	23

## **PART A INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Purpose of this document**

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) outlines the programme for preparing and reviewing statutory planning documents in Huntingdonshire.
- 1.2 The LDS is required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which introduced new types of plans for guiding land-use change, and new procedures for preparing them. The **Local Development Framework** (LDF) will replace the Huntingdonshire Local Plan in setting out planning policies and proposals for the area.
- 1.3 The Local Development Framework will comprise a number of documents to be prepared over a period of time. The LDS sets out what will be produced and when, and explains what will happen to existing policies during the transition period. It focuses on the next three years, but also gives an indication of work that is proposed beyond that horizon. The LDS will be kept under review and updated when necessary.
- 1.4 Section 2 gives a brief overview of the new system and its associated terminology, followed in Section 3 by an explanation of the transitional arrangements. Part B then provides a summary of the proposed LDF for Huntingdonshire: its overall structure (Section 4); the production programme (Section 5); and details of resources, monitoring and review arrangements (Section 6). Part C concludes with profiles of key documents in the LDF. For ease of reference a glossary of terms is included at Appendix 1.

### **2. A guide to the new system**

- 2.1 The **Development Plan** provides the main point of reference when planning applications are considered: decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless 'material considerations' indicate otherwise<sup>1</sup>.
- 2.2 Under the previous system of plan production the Development Plan comprised **Structure Plans**, which set out strategic planning policies, and **Local Plans**, which contained more detailed guidance. The current Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan was adopted in October 2003. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan was adopted in December 1995, but was superseded in part by the Local Plan Alteration, adopted in December 2002.
- 2.3 Under the new system the Development Plan will instead comprise:
- The **Regional Spatial Strategy** (RSS) prepared by the East of England Regional Assembly; and
  - **Development Plan Documents** (DPDs) prepared by the local planning authority.
- 2.4 The range of Development Plan Documents to be produced must include a **Core Strategy** (setting out the spatial framework and key policies for the area), one or more documents setting out site-specific allocations and a proposals map. **Action Area Plans** may also be produced for areas where more detailed guidance is needed.

---

<sup>1</sup> Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Section 38(6).



- 2.5 Supplementary Planning Guidance has in the past been used to expand upon the policies and proposals contained in the Development Plan. Under the new system such material will be known as **Supplementary Planning Documents**.
- 2.6 A new requirement is for local planning authorities to prepare a **Statement of Community Involvement** to explain how the public and other interests will be involved in the process of preparing these various documents, and also in significant development control decisions.
- 2.7 Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement are given the generic name **Local Development Documents** (LDDs) in the new arrangements. The particular set of these documents prepared by the local planning authority, together with the Local Development Scheme and an Annual Monitoring Report, make up the **Local Development Framework** as a whole. It should be noted that both 'Local Development Documents' and 'Local Development Framework' are umbrella terms rather than adding to the particular collection of documents to be produced.
- 2.8 A diagram showing how these various documents interrelate within Huntingdonshire is contained in Section 4.

### **3. Transitional arrangements**

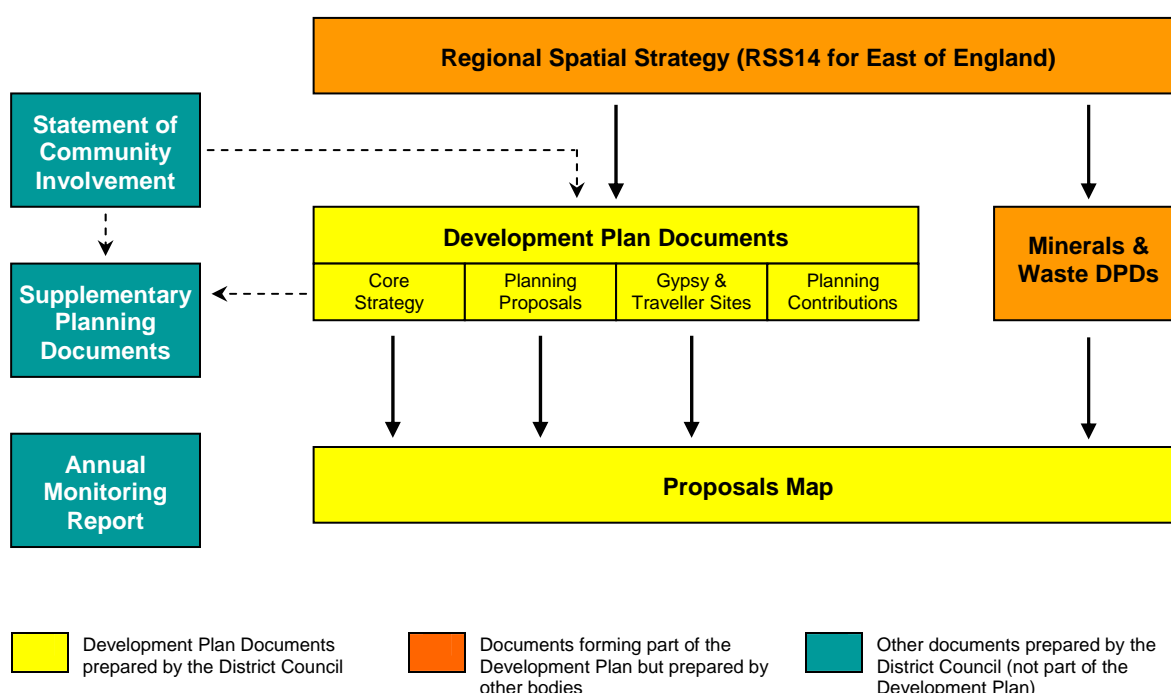
- 3.1 Most policies and proposals in the Structure Plan and Local Plan will remain in force until they are replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy or a Development Plan Document. Under the new legislation existing plans are 'saved' automatically for three years until September 2007, and the Council can ask the Secretary of State to extend the life of particular policies or proposals beyond this period if they have yet to be replaced (and they remain appropriate).
- 3.2 Appendix 2 shows how existing Local Plan policies will be replaced over time by the new DPDs. Existing supplementary planning guidance (SPG) will also continue to carry weight as a strong 'material consideration' in decisions, so long as the Local or Structure Plan policies to which it is linked remain in force. Appendix 3 shows what will happen to SPG as these 'parent' policies are replaced.
- 3.3 'Interim Planning Guidance' will continue to be prepared as and when required. This provides guidance for sites or areas where development is proposed, but where a specific allocation does not exist in the Local Plan (or an emerging DPD). Such documents do not form part of the Local Development Framework, but are subject to public consultation and will be a material consideration in decisions relating to the sites or areas concerned.

## PART B SUMMARY OF FRAMEWORK

### 4. Structure and interrelationships

4.1 Figure 1 gives an overview of the documents that will provide the new planning policy framework for Huntingdonshire, and the way in which they interrelate.

Figure 1 Overview of the new planning policy framework



N.B. The boxes shaded yellow and turquoise will together comprise the LDF for Huntingdonshire  
The yellow and orange boxes are the elements that will form the Development Plan

4.2 Within the strategic context provided by the Regional Spatial Strategy, the District Council intends to produce DPDs covering four areas:

- Core Strategy: This will provide the spatial framework for other DPDs produced by the Council; it will also contain policies to guide development proposals and decisions.
- Planning Proposals: Allocations for housing, business development and other uses.
- Gypsy and Traveller Sites: Allocations to meet identified needs in Huntingdonshire.
- Planning Contributions: Standards governing the social and physical infrastructure that may be required in association with new development, such as affordable housing and open space.

4.3 A separate DPD for gypsy and traveller sites is proposed because of the urgency with which this issue needs to be addressed, and the particular issues involved in identifying appropriate sites (relating to the requirements of the travelling community and the difficulty of securing suitable sites within existing towns and villages).

- 4.4 The Planning Contributions DPD will focus on district-specific requirements, but this is likely to be complemented by a further document detailing strategic needs (such as strategic open space). This is intended to be produced on a joint basis with other councils in Cambridgeshire, but the approach requires further discussion and agreement between the authorities concerned and the Government's regional office. For this reason details of the proposed document will be included in a future review of this Local Development Scheme.
- 4.5 Separate DPDs covering minerals and waste matters will be produced by Cambridgeshire County Council (which is the local planning authority for minerals and waste matters). The spatial extent of policies and proposals contained in all DPDs (including those for minerals and waste) will be illustrated on the proposals map, which will be updated as and when individual DPDs are adopted and will itself form part of the Development Plan.
- 4.6 In terms of Supplementary Planning Documents, priority is being given to guidance on the visual sensitivity and capacity of Huntingdonshire's landscapes in relation to wind turbine development. Guidance on this issue is needed urgently due to the number of turbine enquiries being received and the significant impact that turbines may have upon the landscape. In due course some existing guidance on other topics will be updated and re-issued as SPDs, as detailed in Appendix 3.

## **5. Production programme**

- 5.1 Work to produce the documents making up the LDF will be phased over several years. This will make best use of resources, and also ensure that policies and proposals conform with principles established in the RSS and the Core Strategy DPD.
- 5.2 Table 1 lists the DPDs and SPDs that will be produced (together with the Statement of Community Involvement) and summarises the anticipated timetable for their production. It also shows the 'chain of conformity' for each document (i.e. the relationship with higher levels of policy-making). The information is presented graphically in Figure 2. More detailed profiles of each document are contained in Part C.
- 5.3 The first DPD to be produced is the Core Strategy, due to its role in providing an overarching framework for other documents and the need to replace outdated development control policies in the existing Local Plan. The timetable for the Planning Proposals DPD is dictated by the preparation of the Regional Spatial Strategy – specifically, the need for certainty about the number of dwellings that Huntingdonshire is expected to accommodate in the period to 2021. A reasonable degree of certainty on this issue is not expected until the Government publishes proposed changes to the draft RSS, expected in late 2006 (consultation on the Council's preferred options is timed to follow this).
- 5.4 The timetable takes into account the procedures required by law, the time required for research and public involvement and the need for approval at key stages by Council Members. However the timings are indicative, as they rely upon a number of assumptions. Revisions to the LDS may be required if any of these assumptions do not hold true:
- a) **Staff turnover:** The timetable includes a degree of flexibility to accommodate normal staff turnover. However, a number of vacancies over an extended period of time would

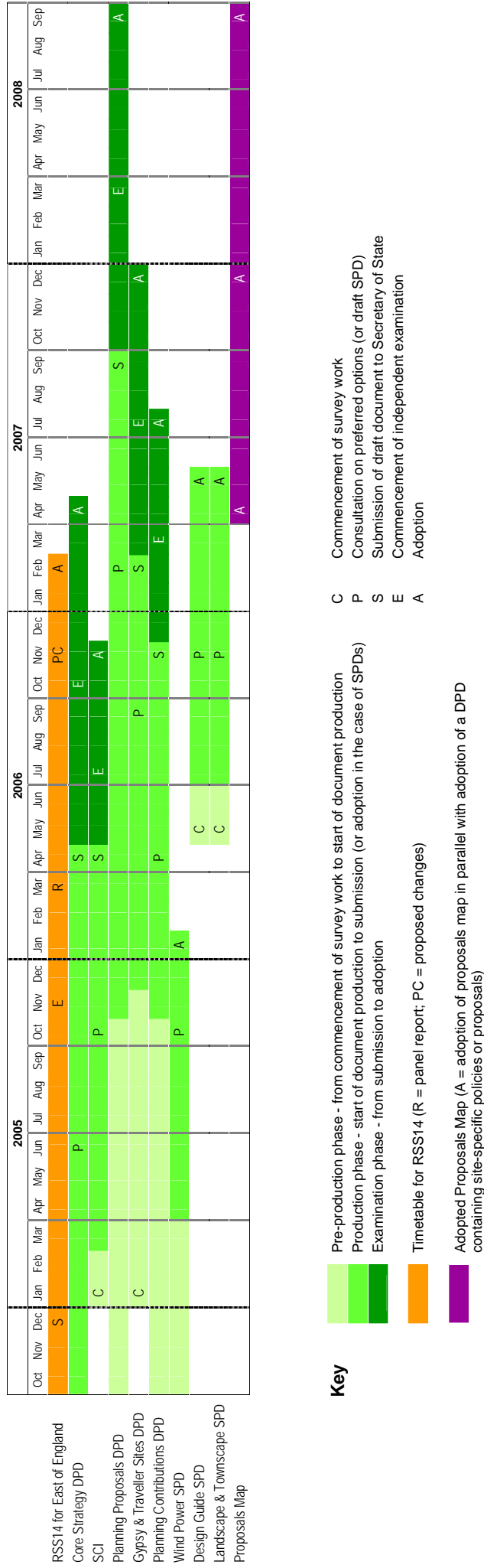
hinder progress against targets. This is a risk due to a current shortage of qualified planning staff and related professionals.

- b) **Budgetary provision:** It is assumed that current levels of funding for development plan work will continue, including the contribution made by Planning Delivery Grant (or any funding scheme that succeeds this).
- c) **Availability of external resources:** Much of the research which feeds into the evidence base (Section 6 below) requires the use of specialist consultants, and consultants are also assisting with the sustainability appraisal of emerging documents (Section 7). The timetable assumes that this expertise will be available at the appropriate times, but delays may be encountered if it is not. The greatest risk relates to sustainability appraisal, which is known to be placing considerable demands upon the consultancy sector. To limit this risk Council officers have developed expertise in sustainability appraisal so that as much work as possible can be undertaken in-house if required.
- d) **Timing of RSS:** The Core Strategy and Allocations DPDs are timed to follow key stages in preparing the Regional Spatial Strategy. This will allow a reasonable degree of certainty about the regional context when progressing local policies and proposals, but could be affected by any further 'slippage' in the RSS timetable (this edition of the Local Development Scheme takes into account a delay in the start of the RSS examination, which has been put back from September to November 2005).
- e) **Changes in government advice:** In the context of national consultation about reforms to planning obligations, there has been uncertainty about the appropriate vehicles for setting out different levels of policy and guidance on this issue (i.e. DPDs or SPDs). Discussions are continuing, and this may affect the proposed form and timetable of the Planning Contributions DPD (as well as any document detailing more strategic requirements).
- f) **Level of public engagement:** Based upon past experience the DPDs are likely to attract many representations at Preferred Options and Submission stages. The timetable accounts for this, but an abnormally large volume of comments at any stage would require some additional time for analysis and response.
- g) **Examination process:** The anticipated time required for arranging examinations into DPDs and the SCI, and for the examinations themselves and subsequent reporting stages, take into account advice from the Planning Inspectorate. However they could be affected by any changes in the availability of Inspectorate resources, or by a larger than expected volume of appearances at an examination.

**Table 1 Production programme**

Document title	Role & content	Chain of conformity	Timetable		
			Participation on preferred options	Submission to Secretary of State	Adoption
Core Strategy DPD	Sets out the spatial vision, objectives and policies for managing development in the area	Consistent with national planning guidance and in general conformity with Regional Spatial Strategy	June-July 2005	April 2006	April 2007
Statement of Community Involvement	Sets out the Council's approach to involving the community in preparing DPDs and SPDs, and in determining significant planning applications	Consistent with statutory requirements for involvement in DPD/SPD production	October-November 2005 (draft SCI)	April 2006	November 2006
Planning Proposals DPD	Contains site-specific proposals for different forms of development up to 2021, plus policies relating to the overall scale and timing of growth	Consistent with spatial framework set out in the Core Strategy	February-March 2007	September 2007	September 2008
Gypsy & Traveller Sites DPD	Contains site-specific proposals for gypsy and traveller sites to meet identified needs up to 2021, plus policies relating to the overall scale of site provision	Consistent with spatial framework set out in the Core Strategy	September-October 2006	February 2007	December 2007
Planning Contributions DPD	Details the district-specific standards for social and physical infrastructure that may be required in association with new development, including affordable housing and open space.	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy	April-May 2006	November 2006	July 2007
Wind Power SPD	Provides guidance on the visual sensitivity and capacity of Huntingdonshire's landscapes in relation to wind turbine development.	Consistent with saved policies in the Structure Plan (and, in due course, with the Core Strategy)	October-November 2005 (draft SPD)	Not required	January 2006
Design Guide SPD	Provides guidance on the design process and key design principles for different forms of development	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy	November-December 2006 (draft SPD)	Not required	May 2007
Landscape & Townscape SPD	Provides guidance on the distinctive qualities of Huntingdonshire's landscape character areas and market towns	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy	November-December 2006 (draft SPD)	Not required	May 2007

Figure 2 Production programme (RSS14 timetable and updates to Proposals Map shown for information)



## **6. The evidence base**

6.1 To ensure that the policies and proposals in the documents forming the LDF are sound, a number of studies and data sources will be drawn upon during their preparation. The main studies include:

- Huntingdonshire Retail Study (August 2001; review to be published 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2005)
- Urban Capacity Study (January 2003; review to be published 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2005)
- 2002 Housing Needs Survey (April 2003)
- Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment (July 2003)
- Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (October 2004)
- Huntingdonshire Wind Turbine Capacity Study (March 2005)
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Traveller Needs Assessment (forthcoming – 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2005)
- Peripheral Sites Study (forthcoming – 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2005)
- Huntingdonshire Local Economy Study (forthcoming – 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2005)
- Huntingdonshire Integrated Open Space Assessment (forthcoming – 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2005)

6.2 In addition relevant research and analysis appears in the sustainability appraisal Scoping Report (see below) and a background paper on settlement hierarchy issues (produced to accompany the initial consultation on Core Strategy options).

## **7. Sustainability Appraisal and SEA**

7.1 All DPDs and SPDs will need to undergo sustainability appraisal (SA). This is a systematic process carried out during plan production; its purpose is to assess the extent to which emerging policies and proposals will help to achieve relevant environmental, social and economic objectives. The SA process incorporates the 'strategic environmental assessment' (SEA) required for plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment<sup>2</sup>.

7.2 At each stage of DPD or SPD production a sustainability appraisal will be carried out to inform the consultation process, assist in refining policies and proposals and support submitted DPDs during the examination stage. The Council has produced a Scoping Report (January 2005) which identifies appropriate high-level objectives for appraising policies against, and examines 'baseline' conditions in the district. The Scoping Report has been designed to provide a foundation for the range of DPDs and SPDs that the Council intends to produce, but will if necessary be updated during the early stages of DPD or SPD production to ensure that the information and analysis it contains remain relevant.

7.3 Although sustainability appraisal is required for all DPDs and SPDs, they are not subject to the legal requirements associated with SEA if their content or geographical scope means

---

<sup>2</sup> SEA is mandatory in these circumstances as a result of European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment'

that they are unlikely to have a significant effect upon the environment. The document profiles in Part C indicate whether the SEA requirements are considered to apply.

## **8. Resources, monitoring and review**

8.1 The District Council's Development Plans Section (part of Planning Services) will take the lead in preparing all DPDs, some SPDs, the Statement of Community Involvement and the Annual Monitoring Report. The section can draw upon specialist skills elsewhere in the Council:

- The Implementation Section of Planning Services (see below)
- Policy Division (which carries out corporate monitoring and research, and undertakes economic development work)
- Housing Services Division (for inputs regarding housing policy)
- Environment & Transport Division (specialist advice on traffic and highways matters)
- Environmental Health Division (advice on air quality, noise and contaminated land)

8.2 Advice is also obtained from Cambridgeshire County Council in relation to socio-economic research, transport, countryside, biodiversity and archaeology. Where expertise is not available from these sources, other agencies may become involved (e.g. the Environment Agency) or consultants are employed. The budget for Planning Services makes allowance for anticipated consultancy costs, as well as for the other costs involved in plan production (such as consultation and holding examinations).

8.3 The Implementation Section in Planning Services offers professional advice in relation to urban design, conservation, landscape architecture, arboriculture and graphic design. Officers from that section will lead the preparation of any SPDs concerning these matters.

8.4 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will provide a regular review of progress in preparing and implementing the documents proposed in this Local Development Scheme. It will relate to each financial year, with the first AMR (for 2004-05) to be published by the end of 2005. Document production will be assessed against the milestones set out in Part C of the LDS, while information on the implementation of policies will relate to key targets and contextual indicators. In the light of this review the AMR will indicate whether any revisions to the Local Development Scheme are necessary.



**PART C DOCUMENT PROFILES**

## CORE STRATEGY DPD

<b>Overview</b>	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	Yes
What is it for?	Sets out the spatial vision, objectives and policies for managing development in the area.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with national planning guidance and in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy.
Is SEA required?	Yes

<b>Proposed timetable</b>	
Survey work commences	April 2003
Public participation on Preferred Options	June-July 2005
Submission to Secretary of State	April 2006
Pre-examination meeting	July 2006
Independent examination	October-November 2006
Receipt of Inspector's report	February 2007
Modify submitted plan & adoption	March-April 2007

<b>How will it be produced?</b>	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Development Plans Section of the District Council.
Who will approve it?	The Council, prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to participate at key stages throughout the process in accordance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations <sup>3</sup> , and the proposals contained in the emerging Statement of Community Involvement.

<b>Monitoring &amp; review</b>	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

<sup>3</sup> This reference and those that follow refer to The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

## STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

<b>Overview</b>	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	No
What is it for?	Sets out the Council's approach to involving the community in preparing DPDs and SPDs, and in determining significant planning applications.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with statutory requirements for public involvement in planning processes.
Is SEA required?	No

<b>Proposed timetable</b>	
Survey work commences	January 2005
Public participation on draft SCI	October-November 2005
Submission to Secretary of State	April 2006
Pre-examination meeting	Unlikely to be required
Independent examination	July 2006
Receipt of Inspector's report	October 2006
Modify submitted SCI & adoption	November 2006

<b>How will it be produced?</b>	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Development Plans Section of the District Council (with inputs from the Policy Division).
Who will approve it?	The Council's Cabinet, prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to participate at key stages throughout the process in accordance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations.

<b>Monitoring &amp; review</b>	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

## PLANNING PROPOSALS DPD

<b>Overview</b>	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	Yes
What is it for?	Contains site-specific proposals for different forms of development up to 2021, plus policies relating to the overall scale and timing of growth.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with spatial framework set out in the Core Strategy.
Is SEA required?	Yes

<b>Proposed timetable</b>	
Survey work commences	April 2003
Public participation on Preferred Options	February-March 2007
Submission to Secretary of State	September 2007
Pre-examination meeting	December 2007
Independent examination	March-April 2008
Receipt of Inspector's report	July 2008
Modify submitted plan & adoption	August-September 2008

<b>How will it be produced?</b>	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Development Plans Section of the District Council.
Who will approve it?	The Council, prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to participate at key stages throughout the process in accordance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations, and the proposals contained in the emerging Statement of Community Involvement.

<b>Monitoring &amp; review</b>	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

## GYPSY & TRAVELLER SITES DPD

<b>Overview</b>	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	Yes
What is it for?	Contains site-specific proposals for gypsy and traveller sites to meet identified needs up to 2021, plus policies relating to the overall scale of provision.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with spatial framework set out in the Core Strategy.
Is SEA required?	Yes

<b>Proposed timetable</b>	
Survey work commences	January 2005
Public participation on Preferred Options	September-October 2006
Submission to Secretary of State	February 2007
Pre-examination meeting	May 2007
Independent examination	July 2007
Receipt of Inspector's report	November 2007
Modify submitted plan & adoption	December 2007

<b>How will it be produced?</b>	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Development Plans Section of the District Council.
Who will approve it?	The Council, prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to participate at key stages throughout the process in accordance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations, and the proposals contained in the emerging Statement of Community Involvement.

<b>Monitoring &amp; review</b>	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

## PLANNING CONTRIBUTIONS DPD

<b>Overview</b>	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	Yes
What is it for?	Details the district-specific standards for social and physical infrastructure that may be required in association with new development, including affordable housing and open space.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy.
Is SEA required?	Yes

<b>Proposed timetable</b>	
Survey work commences	January 2004
Public participation on Preferred Options	April-May 2006
Submission to Secretary of State	November 2006
Pre-examination meeting	January 2007
Commencement of examination	March 2007
Receipt of Inspector's report	June 2007
Modify submitted plan & adoption	July 2007

<b>How will it be produced?</b>	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Development Plans Section of the District Council.
Who will approve it?	The Council, prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to participate at key stages throughout the process in accordance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations, and the proposals contained in the emerging Statement of Community Involvement.

<b>Monitoring &amp; review</b>	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

## WIND POWER SPD

<b>Overview</b>	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	No
What is it for?	Provides guidance on the visual sensitivity and capacity of Huntingdonshire's landscapes in relation to wind turbine development.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with saved policies in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan (and, in due course, with the Core Strategy).
Is SEA required?	Yes

<b>Proposed timetable</b>	
Survey work commences	August 2004
Public participation on draft SPD	October-November 2005
Adoption	January 2006

<b>How will it be produced?</b>	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Development Plans Section of the District Council (technical content produced by consultants).
Who will approve it?	The Council's Cabinet.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to comment on the draft SPD in accordance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations.

<b>Monitoring &amp; review</b>	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

## DESIGN GUIDE SPD

<b>Overview</b>	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	No
What is it for?	Provides guidance on the design process and key design principles for different forms of development.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy.
Is SEA required?	Yes
<b>Proposed timetable</b>	
Survey work commences	May 2006
Public participation on draft SPD	November-December 2006
Adoption	May 2007
<b>How will it be produced?</b>	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Implementation Section of the Council's Planning Services Division.
Who will approve it?	The Council's Cabinet.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to comment on the draft SPD in accordance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations, and the proposals contained in the emerging Statement of Community Involvement.
<b>Monitoring &amp; review</b>	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	



## LANDSCAPE & TOWNSCAPE SPD

<b>Overview</b>	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	No
What is it for?	Provides guidance on the distinctive qualities of Huntingdonshire's landscape character areas and market towns.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy.
Is SEA required?	Yes

<b>Proposed timetable</b>	
Survey work commences	May 2006
Public participation on draft SPD	November-December 2006
Adoption	May 2007

<b>How will it be produced?</b>	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Implementation Section of the Council's Planning Services Division.
Who will approve it?	The Council's Cabinet.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to comment on the draft SPD in accordance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations, and the proposals contained in the emerging Statement of Community Involvement.

<b>Monitoring &amp; review</b>	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

## APPENDIX 1 TERMINOLOGY

Within each definition links to other terms are shown in italics.

<b>Action Area Plan</b>	A <i>Development Plan Document</i> setting out detailed policies and proposals for a small area.
<b>Adoption</b>	The point at which the final agreed version of a document comes into use.
<b>Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)</b>	Document produced each year to report on progress in producing the <i>Local Development Framework</i> and implementing its policies.
<b>Core Strategy</b>	The <i>Development Plan Document</i> which contains the overall vision, objectives and policies for managing development in Huntingdonshire.
<b>Development Plan</b>	The documents which together provide the main point of reference when considering planning proposals. Under the new system the Development Plan includes the <i>Regional Spatial Strategy</i> and <i>Development Plan Documents</i> .
<b>Development Plan Document (DPD)</b>	A document containing local planning policies or proposals which forms part of the <i>Development Plan</i> , and which has been subject to independent <i>examination</i> .
<b>Examination</b>	Independent inquiry into the soundness of a draft <i>Development Plan Document</i> (or draft <i>Statement of Community Involvement</i> ), chaired by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State.
<b>Interim Planning Guidance</b>	Informal guidance for sites or areas where development is proposed, but no allocation exists in a <i>Development Plan Document</i> .
<b>Local Development Document (LDD)</b>	The collective term for <i>Development Plan Documents</i> , <i>Supplementary Planning Documents</i> and the <i>Statement of Community Involvement</i> .
<b>Local Development Framework (LDF)</b>	The collection of documents to be produced by Huntingdonshire District Council that will provide the new planning policy framework for the district.

<b>Local Development Scheme (LDS)</b>	Sets out the Council's programme for preparing and reviewing statutory planning documents.
<b>Local Plan</b>	The existing document containing local planning policies and proposals for Huntingdonshire. Under the new system it will be phased out and replaced by <i>Development Plan Documents</i> .
<b>Material Considerations</b>	Factors that may be taken into account when making planning decisions.
<b>Preferred Options</b>	Public consultation on the intended content of a <i>Development Plan Document</i> , prior to the DPD itself being drafted.
<b>Proposals Map</b>	Shows the spatial extent of <i>adopted</i> planning policies and proposals affecting Huntingdonshire.
<b>Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)</b>	Plan covering the East of England as a whole, and setting out strategic policies and proposals for managing land-use change.
<b>Saved policies</b>	Policies contained within the adopted <i>Structure Plan</i> or <i>Local Plan</i> which remain in force pending their replacement by the <i>Regional Spatial Strategy</i> or a <i>Development Plan Document</i> .
<b>Scoping Report</b>	Report produced as the first stage of <i>Sustainability Appraisal</i> . It examines existing environmental, social and economic conditions in the district, and identifies appropriate objectives to appraise policies against.
<b>Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)</b>	Document setting out the Council's approach to involving the community in preparing planning documents and making significant development control decisions.
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)</b>	Process undertaken during plan production, to assess the potential environmental effects of emerging policies and proposals. It is incorporated within <i>Sustainability Appraisal</i> .
<b>Structure Plan</b>	The existing document containing strategic planning policies and proposals for the county. Under the new system it will be phased out and replaced by policies in the <i>Regional Spatial Strategy</i> and <i>Development Plan Documents</i> .

<b>Submission</b>	Point at which a draft <i>Development Plan Document</i> (or the draft <i>Statement of Community Involvement</i> ) is published for consultation. At the same time it is submitted to the Secretary of State in advance of its <i>examination</i> .
<b>Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)</b>	Provides additional guidance on the interpretation or application of policies and proposals in the <i>Local Plan</i> or <i>Structure Plan</i> . Under the new system this will be phased out and replaced by <i>Supplementary Planning Documents</i> .
<b>Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</b>	Provides additional guidance on the interpretation or application of policies and proposals in a <i>Development Plan Document</i> .
<b>Sustainability Appraisal</b>	Process undertaken during plan production, to assess the extent to which emerging policies and proposals will help to achieve environmental, social and economic objectives. It incorporates <i>Strategic Environmental Assessment</i> .

## APPENDIX 2 REPLACEMENT OF 'SAVED' POLICIES

This table shows how the issues addressed by existing Local Plan policies will be considered in preparing Development Plan Documents. For each existing policy (or group of policies) it indicates which DPD is likely to deal with the general subject matter. This does not mean that the existing policy approach will necessarily be continued, as circumstances may have changed since the original Local Plan policies were prepared.

Some policies are listed as 'not included', meaning that their subject matter is unlikely to be addressed by one of the new DPDs. This is because the issues are either not relevant to Huntingdonshire, are covered by other policy areas or are dealt with more appropriately in other plans or strategies.

Most policies in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan will be superseded by those in the Regional Spatial Strategy. However, the draft RSS lists some Structure Plan policies that it will not replace, as they deal with relatively local issues. The table shows how these 'saved' Structure Plan policies will be considered.

Policy area	Where will it be dealt with in LDF?	Policy area	Where will it be dealt with in LDF?	Policy area	Where will it be dealt with in LDF?
Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995		Huntingdonshire Local Plan (continued)		Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration	
LPS3	Not included	R3	Contributions (local)	STR1-STR6	Core Strategy
H11-H12	Core Strategy	R4-R5	Not included	HL1-HL3	Allocations
H17	Core Strategy	R6	Allocations	HL4-HL10	Core Strategy
H21	Not included	R7-R8	Contributions (local)	AH1-AH2	Core Strategy
H22-H35	Core Strategy	R9-R10	Allocations	AH3	Allocations
H36	Not included	R11	Not included	AH4	Contributions (local)
H37-H38	Core Strategy	R12	Contributions (local)	AH5	Core Strategy
H39-H42	Not included	R13	Core Strategy	OB1	Core Strategy
H43	Core Strategy	R14	Not included	OB2	Contributions (local)
H44	Gypsies/Travellers	R15-R18	Core Strategy		
E1	Core Strategy	En1-En9	Core Strategy	<b>Cambs &amp; Peterborough Structure Plan</b>	
E2-E3	Allocations	En10	Not included	P1/3	Core Strategy
E4	Not included	En11-En25	Core Strategy	P2/3	Allocations
E5	Allocations	En26	Not included	P2/4 (part)	Contributions (local)
E6-E13	Core Strategy	En27-En28	Core Strategy	P4/4	Core Strategy
E14	Not included	En29	Not included	P5/2	Core Strategy
E15	Core Strategy	En30	Core Strategy	P7/3	Core Strategy
S1-S4	Core Strategy	En31	Not included	P7/10	Not included
S5	Not included	En32	Core Strategy	P8/2	Core Strategy
S6	Allocations	To1-To3	Core Strategy	P8/3	Contributions (strategic)
S7	Core Strategy	To4-To5	Not included	P8/6 (part)	Not included
S8	Not included	To6-To11	Core Strategy	P8/7	Not included
S9-S10	Core Strategy	CS1	Not included	P8/9	Core Strategy
S11	Not included	CS2	Allocations	P8/10	Core Strategy/Allocations
S12-S17	Core Strategy	CS3-CS4	Not included	P9/1	Contributions (local)
T1-T7	Not included	CS5-CS6	Core Strategy	P9/2a-P9/3	Not included
T9-T17	Not included	CS7	Not included	P9/4	Core Strategy/Allocations
T18-T20	Core Strategy	CS8-CS9	Core Strategy	P9/5	Not included
T21-T23	Not included	CS10	Not included	P9/9	Core Strategy
T24	Allocations	Note: policies in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995 that were superseded by the Local Plan Alteration are not listed.		P9/10	Not included
T25-T27	Not included			P10/3	Core Strategy/Allocations
T28	Core Strategy			P10/5	Not included
R1-R2	Core Strategy			P10/7	Core Strategy

### APPENDIX 3 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

This table lists adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), which will remain a material consideration in planning decisions until the Local Plan and Structure Plan are replaced. The table also shows what will happen to the SPGs once the new Core Strategy is adopted.

Title	Date	How will it be dealt with in the LDF?
Conservation Area Character Statements	Various	Will be retained and continue to carry weight by virtue of the legislation governing conservation areas <sup>1</sup>
Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines	1990	Will be updated and re-issued as SPD. It will be produced jointly with other Cambridgeshire authorities, and a timetable will appear in the next edition of this Local Development Scheme
External Artificial Lighting	1998	Likely to be updated and reissued as an advice note
Trees and Development	1998	Likely to be updated and reissued as an advice note
Shopfronts	1999	Likely to be incorporated within Design Guide SPD
Hilton Village Design Statement	2000	Status and any future revision to be discussed with the Parish Council <sup>2</sup>
Land to the East of St Neots	2000	Not required (development likely to commence before September 2007)
Retention of Shops, Post Offices and Public Houses in Villages	2001	Approach incorporated within Core Strategy DPD
Holywell-cum-Needingworth Village Design Statement	2003	Status and any future revision to be discussed with the Parish Council <sup>2</sup>
Re-use and Redevelopment of Farm Buildings and Outbuildings	2003	Some parts incorporated within Core Strategy DPD; design elements likely to be included in Design Guide SPD
Market Housing Mix	2004	Approach incorporated within Core Strategy DPD
Huntingdonshire Design Guide	2004	Will be updated and re-issued as SPD once the Core Strategy is adopted
Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment	2004	Will be updated and re-issued as SPD once the Core Strategy is adopted

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup> The Council does not intend to re-publish existing conservation area character statements as Supplementary Planning Documents, as they are produced to accord with the requirements of separate legislation. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty upon local planning authorities to formulate proposals for preserving and enhancing conservation areas.

<sup>2</sup> Although adopted by the District Council as SPG, Village Design Statements are produced by the town or parish council concerned.

CABINET

AGENDA ITEM NO:  
1 SEPTEMBER 2005

## PLANNING FOR HOUSING PROVISION – CONSULTATION PAPER

(Report by Head of Planning Services)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides details of a consultation paper which sets out the Government's objectives for delivering a better supply of housing through the planning system. It proposes a new policy approach to making the planning system more responsive to the housing market within the overall objective of planning which contributes to sustainable development. It seeks approval for representations to be made to ODPM setting out concerns over the potential impact of the new approach.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Government intends to publish a draft new PPS3 on housing in the autumn. This will draw on the previous consultation 'Planning for Mixed Communities' (as reported to Cabinet on 7 April 2005) as well as the present consultation paper. The aim of the new paper is to ensure that plans will deliver land in the right places to meet the ongoing need for housing, in a way which takes better account of the housing market and is more responsive to changing circumstances. The new approach will require partnership working at every level of planning but in particular between local authorities and stakeholders and between local authorities in the same housing market area.

### 3. THE PROPOSALS

- 3.1 The consultation paper suggests three key challenges facing the Government and the planning system:
- Worsening affordability – one of the consequences of a long-term under-supply of housing with negative consequences for individuals and the wider economy
  - Land supply constraints – the effective supply of appropriate land through the planning system is fundamental to the successful delivery of the government's housing policies
  - Responding to the housing market – the tendency not to take adequate account of information about the housing market contributes to under-supply of housing in some areas.
- 3.2 The primary objective of the proposed approach is that land is allocated in plans to ensure a level of housing supply that better meets the need for housing, responds more effectively to changes in demand and promotes consumer choice. The Government expects this approach to help promote increased competition in the development industry and encourage constructive partnership between local authorities and developers in identifying and allocating land for housing. There are three key changes to the current policy framework which are set out below:

<b>Present policy &amp; practice</b>	<b>Proposed changes</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>Planning for housing market areas</b>		
Regions distribute housing provision to local authorities and must take account of household projections, capacity and other constraints.	Regions continue to distribute housing provision but use sub-regional housing markets as a basis for allocating housing numbers as well as other factors and tailor the approach to delivery to the circumstances of different markets.	To ensure that decisions about the level of new housing required in each area are based on considerations of the housing market, rather than administrative boundaries, and that they take proper account of affordability and market information about housing need as well as wider social, economic and environmental considerations.
<b>Identifying land</b>		
Local authorities plan for 10 years of housing supply, 5 years of which is allocated but some or all of this may not in practice be available for development. Windfalls are expected to ensure delivery of housing.	Plan horizon is extended to 15 years. Developable land should be allocated to meet the first 5 years of this period, with less reliance on windfalls in areas where it is possible to allocate land. Land to meet next 10 years should also be allocated, although it may not be suitable for immediate development (where 10 years reserve supply cannot be identified, broad directions for future growth should be identified in the Core Strategy).	To help ensure that new housing is delivered according to the plans. This is to address the current shortfall between plans and delivery which exists in some areas due to constraints on the supply of appropriate developable land.
<b>Plan, monitor and manage</b>		
Local authorities are encouraged to phase land for housing but many are not actively managing their supply, particularly where land in the first phase proves difficult to deliver.	5 year allocation of developable land rolled forward as it is developed, in line with plans. Local authorities required to bring forward land from their 10 year reserve to ensure supply of developable land is maintained.	To allow the planning system to be more responsive to the market while continuing to balance other social and environmental objectives and to recognise that plans need to be reviewed in response to significant changes in the housing market.

#### **4. SUGGESTED REPRESENTATIONS**

4.1 It is suggested that representations be made to ODPM based on the following concerns:

- That the revisions will weaken the 'brownfield sites first' policy currently in PPG3, which is an important tool in encouraging the regeneration of urban areas and conserving Greenfield land. Although in principle brownfield sites could be allocated first (as part of the 5 year supply), they tend to be more difficult to develop than greenfield ones. Developers will



potentially be able to pick-off the easiest sites from the 5 year supply and then seek to develop greenfield sites from the reserve list rather than more challenging brownfield sites.

- That although there is an obligation to deliver a minimum number of dwellings there is no ceiling. This could give rise to significant pressure for higher levels of house building than RSS targets in areas of high demand such as Huntingdonshire.
- That sub-regional housing markets would need careful definition, balancing information on the existence of sub-markets with the need to provide guidance for individual authorities. Moreover, the suggestion that suitable land could be identified through sub-regional assessments fails to recognise the fact that authorities produce plans to differing timescales and must be allowed to make use of local knowledge and information.
- That the proposed approach to rolling forward a five-year supply of developable land (which would be achieved through a series of supplementary planning documents, each of which releases the required amount of land from the 10 year 'reserve') risks over-complicating the planning system still further.
- That as a mechanism for promoting the affordability of housing this approach is likely to fail. Developers will continue to exercise considerable control over the rate of supply of new housing into the market (through their decisions over the timing of planning applications and the implementation of planning permissions). It is unrealistic to believe that developers will increase supply for the purposes of reducing housing costs and promoting affordability, even if more land were available (particularly given the added barrier of a shortage of construction skills).

## **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 That the Cabinet agree that a response be made to ODPM expressing considerable concern at the consultation proposals, with detailed comments based upon the points made above.

### **Background papers:**

*Planning for Housing Provision – Consultation Paper (ODPM, July 2005)*

*Planning for Mixed Communities – A Consultation Paper on a Proposed Change to Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: Housing (2005). Cabinet 7 April 2005*

### **Contact officer:**

Enquiries about this report should be made to Clare Bond, Principal Planner, tel: 01480 388435

This page is intentionally left blank

**CABINET**

**1<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER 2005**

**DESIGN BRIEF  
ALFRED HALL MEMORIAL FIELD / EYNESBURY ROVERS FC  
(Report by HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Design Brief examines the redevelopment opportunities on the Alfred Hall Memorial Field, currently the home of Eynesbury Rovers Football Club.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to consider the draft Design Brief, attached to the agenda separately, and approve it for consultation purposes. Once representations have been considered and reported to Cabinet, it is intended to adopt the document as Interim Planning Guidance.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Alfred Hall Memorial Field is included in the Urban Design Framework (UDF) for the area around St Neots Community College. This UDF was adopted as Interim Planning Guidance by the District Council in May 2005.
- 2.2 The UDF suggests that the Memorial Field should be considered for residential development, with the football club relocating to fields to the west.

**3.0 THE DESIGN BRIEF**

- 3.1 The purpose of this document is to present the design parameters, opportunities and constraints to the site; and provides clear guidance to any potential housing developer of what would be required on the site if this land is redeveloped.

**4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Production of a Design Brief is best practice and will help to secure the most appropriate form of development over this area if this land is redeveloped. If Cabinet approves the document in draft form, there will be a period of consultation with the local and statutory bodies. Any comments or changes will be brought back to the Cabinet before it is adopted.

**5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 5.1 That the Cabinet approves the Design Brief as draft Interim Planning Guidance for a period of public consultation.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations June 2002

Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPG Sept 2004

Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment SPG Sept 2004

St Neots Community College Urban Design Framework May 2005

**Contact Officer: Mike Huntington**  
**☎ 01480 388404**

**CABINET**

**1 SEPTEMBER 2005**

## **DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT: WIND POWER (Report by Head of Planning Services)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report informs Cabinet of a draft Supplementary Planning Document on Wind Power, a copy of which is attached to the agenda separately and seeks Cabinet's endorsement of the document as a basis for public consultation.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 There has been growing interest in wind turbine development in Huntingdonshire. In addition to the existing turbines at Wood Green Animal Shelter and Ramsey a scheme involving twelve turbines has been granted permission at Tick Fen (north-east of Warboys), and enquiries relating to several other locations have been received.
- 2.2 National policy on this issue is set out in PPS22 'Renewable Energy'. This encourages local planning authorities to respond positively to renewable energy projects where the technology is viable and the environmental and other impacts can be addressed satisfactorily. It suggests that authorities should formulate key criteria against which proposals may be assessed, and appropriate considerations are set out in the Council's emerging Core Strategy DPD, as well as the draft Regional Spatial Strategy and the adopted Structure Plan.
- 2.3 Inevitably, landscape and visual effects are a key issue where wind turbines are proposed. PPS22 acknowledges this, and makes the obvious point that "the impact of turbines on the landscape will vary according to the size and number of turbines and the type of landscape involved". In this context Land Use Consultants were commissioned last year to provide the Council with advice on the relative sensitivity of the district's landscapes in relation to this form of development.
- 2.4 Their report – 'Wind Turbine Development in Huntingdonshire' – has now been used as the basis for a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on this topic, a copy of which is attached as Appendix 1. Provision for the SPD was made in the Council's Local Development Scheme, which was endorsed by the Government in April this year.

### **3. THE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

- 3.1 SPDs form part of the suite of new documents that local planning authorities may prepare as a result of the planning reforms introduced last year. Their purpose is to expand upon the policies contained in Development Plan Documents (such as this Council's emerging Core Strategy DPD).

- 3.2 The production of SPDs involves more rigorous procedures than those employed for Supplementary Planning Guidance prepared under the previous system. In particular a sustainability appraisal is required as part of the process to help gauge any potentially significant environmental, social and economic effects. A sustainability appraisal of the draft SPD has been produced by officers and is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.3 The SPD contains chapters on each of the landscape character areas identified previously in the Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment, as well as providing guidance on the particular visual considerations that arise at the edge of urban areas. It provides an indication of the capacity of each area to accommodate different scales of turbine development, and also points to particular issues and mitigation opportunities that should be taken into account in each area.
- 3.4 It should be noted that the SPD provides a starting-point for the consideration of proposals, not an absolute indication of what may or may not be acceptable in specific locations. Every site is unique, and turbine proposals will need to be supported by a detailed assessment of their potential impact as part of the application process.
- 3.5 Nonetheless, the SPD does indicate clearly that some parts of the district are more sensitive than others, and importantly it explains both the reasons why and the ways in which this sensitivity varies depending upon the potential scale of development. The sustainability appraisal confirms that producing guidance on this topic is beneficial in addressing overall environmental, social and economic objectives, and in particular in addressing the tension that arises between the need to harness renewable energy and the importance of conserving valued landscapes.

#### **4. NEXT STEPS**

- 4.1 Once approved by Cabinet the draft SPD and accompanying sustainability appraisal will be issued for public consultation (this process will include consideration by Development Control Panel). The results of that consultation (and any amendments suggested in response) will then be reported to a future meeting of Cabinet, following which the document can be adopted as part of the Local Development Framework. An adopted SPD which has been through this process can be expected to be given considerable weight as a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 4.2 The proposed timetable for these remaining steps is as follows:
- Public consultation – October/November 2005
  - Report back to Cabinet – January 2006

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

Cabinet is recommended to endorse the draft Supplementary Planning Document on Wind Power as a basis for public consultation.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 (Cambridgeshire County Council & Peterborough City Council, 2003)

East of England Plan (Draft RSS14) (East of England Regional Assembly, 2004)

Huntingdonshire Core Strategy: Preferred Options Report (HDC, 2005)

Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment (HDC, 2004)

Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy (ODPM, 2004)

Wind Turbine Development in Huntingdonshire: Final Report (Land Use Consultants, 2005)

**CONTACT OFFICER** - enquiries about this report to Michael Bingham (Development Plans Manager) on 01480 388431, or Julia Wilkinson (Planning Officer) on 01480 388432.

This page is intentionally left blank



*Local Development Framework*  
**Wind Power SPD: Sustainability Appraisal Report**

*September 2005*

**Huntingdonshire**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Malcolm Sharp BSc, DipTP, MRTPI**  
*Head of Planning Services*

Further copies of this document can be obtained from:

Planning Division,  
Operational Services Directorate,  
Huntingdonshire District Council,  
Pathfinder House,  
St Mary's Street,  
Huntingdon,  
PE29 3TN.

Telephone: 01480 388423 / 388424

e-mail: PlanningPolicy@huntsdc.gov.uk

It can also be viewed on our web site at:

<http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk>

## CONTENTS

### Part A Summary & outcomes

1	Non-technical summary	1
2	Difference made by the process	1

### Part B Background

3	Purpose of sustainability appraisal	2
4	Content & objectives of the SPD	2
5	Relationship to other plans & programmes	3
6	Baseline conditions and problems	4

### Part C Appraisal methodology

6	Approach to sustainability appraisal	6
8	Production & consultation	7
9	Difficulties & limitations	7

### Part D SPD options & effects

10	Alternatives identified	8
11	Likely significant effects	8
12	Mitigation measures and monitoring	9

### Appendices

1	Compliance with the requirements of the SEA Directive	12
2	Sustainability appraisal objectives and appraisal questions	13



## **PART A SUMMARY & OUTCOMES**

### **1. Non-technical summary**

- 1.1 This report contains a sustainability appraisal of a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Wind Power. The SPD provides guidance on the landscape and visual considerations that arise in relation to wind turbines, and explores the potential capacity of Huntingdonshire's landscape character areas to accommodate this form of development.
- 1.2 Sustainability appraisal is a systematic process undertaken during the preparation of a plan or programme. Its role is to assess the extent to which the emerging policies and proposals will help to achieve relevant environmental, social and economic objectives. In doing so it provides an opportunity to consider ways in which the plan or programme can contribute to improvements in environmental, social and economic conditions, as well as a means of identifying and addressing any adverse effects that draft policies and proposals might have.
- 1.3 This Sustainability Appraisal Report builds upon a 'Scoping Report' produced to underpin the appraisal of the various plans and SPDs that will comprise Huntingdonshire's Local Development Framework. The Scoping Report should be read in conjunction with the present document.
- 1.4 The appraisal considers two options: the approach taken in the draft Wind Power SPD (of using landscape character and visual sensitivity to help gauge the capacity of different areas to accommodate wind turbines), or not producing an SPD along these lines at all. This limited range of options is justified because it is difficult to conceive of a realistic alternative form that the guidance in the SPD could take.
- 1.5 The options are assessed using a scoring system to gauge their potential impact upon a set of broad environmental, social and economic objectives (which were identified in the Scoping Report). The conclusion from this exercise is that producing the SPD is beneficial for the pursuit of these objectives, compared with the option of not producing guidance on this subject.

### **2. Difference made by the process**

- 2.1 As well as confirming the desirability of producing the SPD, the appraisal indicates that no significant adverse effects are likely to arise should the draft guidance be adopted. Consequently the appraisal has also helped to confirm that the approach employed in the draft SPD is appropriate, and has not resulted in any changes being made to the document.

## PART B BACKGROUND

### 3. Purpose of sustainability appraisal

- 3.1 Sustainability appraisal is a systematic process undertaken during the preparation of a plan or programme. Its role is to assess the extent to which the emerging policies and proposals will help to achieve relevant environmental, social and economic objectives. In doing so, it provides an opportunity to consider ways in which the plan or programme can contribute to improvements in environmental, social and economic conditions, as well as a means of identifying and addressing any adverse effects that draft policies and proposals might have.
- 3.2 The overall aim of the appraisal process is to help ensure that documents that will form part of Huntingdonshire's Local Development Framework make an effective contribution to the pursuit of 'sustainable development'. The most widely-used definition of this concept is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"<sup>1</sup>.
- 3.3 This Sustainability Appraisal Report builds upon a 'Scoping Report' produced to underpin the appraisal of the LDF<sup>2</sup>. The Scoping Report should be read in conjunction with the present document as its purpose is to:
- Identify environmental, social and economic objectives contained in other plans and programmes that are relevant to the Local Development Framework;
  - Assess the broad environmental, social and economic characteristics of Huntingdonshire, and how these are changing;
  - In the light of these reviews, consider key issues and problems that the LDF should address in the pursuit of sustainable development;
  - Set out an appropriate framework for carrying out the remainder of the sustainability appraisal process, including objectives against which draft policies and proposals may be assessed, and indicators against which progress towards meeting those objectives can be monitored in future.
- 3.4 Taken together, the Scoping Report and this Sustainability Appraisal Report are intended to satisfy the requirement for an 'Environmental Report' set out in European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' (the 'SEA Directive'). Appendix 1 indicates where the information required for the purpose of the Directive can be found.

### 4. Content & objectives of the SPD

- 4.1 The draft Supplementary Planning Document contains the following elements:
- A introductory section, which sets out the document's purpose, outlines recent trends and explains the basis for the guidance (including its limitations);

---

<sup>1</sup> World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987.

<sup>2</sup> *Sustainability Appraisal: Scoping Report* (HDC, 2005).

- An overview of landscape capacity in relation to wind turbine development, which highlights the key criteria to be taken into account and summarises the conclusions for each landscape character area;
  - A series of chapters that provide more detailed guidance for each area, and in relation to different scales of wind turbine development.
- 4.2 The overall purpose of the guidance is to assist the interpretation and application of development plan policies concerned with the location of renewable energy schemes. In more specific terms the guidance seeks to:
- Provide information on the relative sensitivity and capacity of the district's landscapes in relation to wind turbines;
  - Indicate criteria that need to be taken into account when considering specific proposals; and
  - Provide guidance on potential mitigation measures where appropriate

## **5. Relationship to other plans & programmes**

5.1 The production of the Huntingdonshire Local Development Framework needs to take into account a wide range of other plans and programmes. These may contain policy objectives or specific requirements that need to be addressed through DPDs or SPDs. The Scoping Report contains an analysis of relevant documents, but this section highlights those that are most relevant to the Wind Power SPD.

5.2 The key policy documents can be grouped into four categories:

- Parts of the statutory Development Plan that the SPD will supplement:  
*Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan* (Cambs CC / Peterborough CC, 2003)  
*Draft RSS14 for the East of England* (East of England Regional Assembly, 2004)  
*Core Strategy Preferred Options Report* (HDC, 2005)
- Policy documents that address climate change and renewable energy production:  
*Kyoto Protocol* (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 1992)  
*Our Energy Future: Creating a Low Carbon Economy* (DTI, 2003)  
*Planning Policy Statement 22* (ODPM, 2004)  
*Living with Climate Change in the East of England* (East of England Sustainable Development Round Table, 2003)
- Policy documents that address landscape character and protection:  
*Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines* (Cambs CC, 1991)
- Cross-cutting documents concerned with environmental protection:  
*Securing the Future* (UK Sustainable development Strategy) (HM Government, 2005)  
*A Sustainable development Framework for the East of England* (EERA, 2001)  
*Our Environment, Our Future* (Regional Environment Strategy) (EERA, 2003)  
*Environment Strategy & Action Plan* (Cambs CC, 2002)

- 5.3 Two key concerns are apparent from these documents, and these concerns have prompted both the production of the SPD and its approach to the subject. The first is the importance of facilitating an increase in renewable energy production, as part of efforts to reduce our reliance on non-renewable supplies and cut emissions of greenhouse gasses and other pollutants. In this context the Scoping Report identifies the following targets that are relevant to the SPD:
- Nationally, a 10% increase in renewable energy generating capacity by 2010, and a 20% increase by 2020 (DTI, 2003)
  - A 20% reduction in UK carbon dioxide emissions by 2010, and a 60% reduction by 2050 (DTI, 2003)
  - Within the East of England, a target of 14% of energy requirements being met from renewable sources by 2010 (EERA, 2004)
- 5.4 The second concern is the importance of recognising and responding to landscape character when considering the appropriateness of different forms of development (a message which is reinforced by best practice advice issued by the Countryside Agency)<sup>3</sup>.

## **6. Baseline conditions and problems**

- 6.1 Part C of the Scoping Report contains an overview of baseline conditions and issues in the district. The section on landscape, townscape and archaeology draws upon the more detailed analysis contained in the *Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment* (HDC, 2004), and further consideration of existing landscape conditions is contained in the report by Land Use Consultants that accompanies the SPD<sup>4</sup>.
- 6.2 A key finding from these studies is the diversity of landscape types found in the area. Nine principal character areas are identified, although in broad terms four types of landscape dominate:
- The low-lying fens in the north-east of the district
  - The undulating claylands that comprise much of central and southern Huntingdonshire
  - Higher land to the west, rising up to 70m AOD (the Huntingdonshire Wolds)
  - The main river valleys of the Great Ouse and, in the extreme north-west, the Nene
- 6.3 This diversity – and the characteristic features of each area – are key issues that need to be considered in relation to the potential impact of wind turbine development. Further issues that are relevant to note include:
- A long-term decline in historic landscape features across much of the district
  - The poor quality of the edges of many urban areas
  - The opportunities that exist to address these problems through appropriate mitigation measures and land management regimes

---

<sup>3</sup> *Landscape Character Assessment: Guidance for England and Scotland* (Countryside Agency & Scottish Natural Heritage, 2002)

<sup>4</sup> *Wind Turbine Development in Huntingdonshire: Final Report* (2005)



- The large number of villages found across the district, many of which retain their historic urban form
- The area's substantial built and archaeological heritage, with over 60 conservation areas, 2,800 listed structures and extensive areas of archaeological interest

6.4 Turning to energy use and production, the Scoping Report identifies a need – as well as opportunities – to reduce overall energy consumption, and also points to the potential for increased use of renewable sources. In particular, it notes the results of a sub-regional study which identifies areas in north and west Huntingdonshire, along with higher areas of land between Huntingdon and St Neots, as having sufficient wind speeds to be of interest for commercial wind power development. This potential is confirmed by the recent interest shown in the district by developers of such schemes.

## PART C APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

### 7. Approach to sustainability appraisal

- 7.1 The appraisal builds upon two existing bodies of work. The first is the generic Scoping Report produced as the first stage of the appraisal of Huntingdonshire's Local Development Framework. Key parts of that document, relating to the background to sustainability appraisal and relevant issues and objectives, are summarised in this Sustainability Appraisal Report (see Parts B & D). Nonetheless the two reports should be read together, as the Scoping Report forms an integral part of the appraisal process.
- 7.2 The second body of work is the previous appraisal of planning policies designed to facilitate renewable energy developments in appropriate locations and promote a character-based approach to the assessment of landscape impacts. These include<sup>5</sup>:
- Policies ENV2 & ENV8 in draft RSS14 for the East of England (2004)
  - Policies P7/4 and P7/7 in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan (2003)
  - Policy areas G2 and T5 in the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy Preferred Options Report (2005)
- 7.3 As the SPG develops and applies these policy approaches, the results of the previous appraisals have been drawn upon in arriving at the conclusions reached in sections 11 and 12 of the present report.
- 7.4 The appraisal methodology takes into account ODPM guidance on sustainability appraisal<sup>6</sup>. Taken together, the Scoping Report and this Sustainability Appraisal Report are also intended to satisfy the requirement for an 'Environmental Report' set out in European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' (the 'SEA Directive')<sup>7</sup>. Appendix 1 indicates where the information required for the purpose of the Directive can be found.
- 7.5 The Scoping Report contains a set of high-level 'appraisal objectives' for use in assessing the potential effect of emerging policies on environmental, social and economic conditions. These were derived from existing published objectives and a review of relevant international, national, regional and local plans and strategies. The appraisal objectives are reproduced in Appendix 2. In addition, more detailed 'appraisal questions' were used to provide more specific criteria for judging emerging policies against the objectives, and these are also set out in Appendix 2.

---

<sup>5</sup> For the appraisal of these policies please refer to the following:

- *East of England Plan: Sustainability Appraisal Report* (Levett-Therivel/Land Use Consultants, 2004)
- *Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan Review: Sustainability Appraisal Stage 3 – Deposit Draft Plan* (Land Use Consultants et al, 2002)
- *Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Preferred Options for the Core Strategy Development Plan Document: Draft Final Sustainability Report* (Scott Wilson, 2005)

<sup>6</sup> *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks: Consultation Paper* (ODPM, 2004) and *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks: Interim Advice Note on Frequently Asked Questions* (ODPM, 2005)

<sup>7</sup> The relationship between sustainability appraisal (SA) and SEA is explained in section 2 of the Scoping Report.

- 7.6 A scoring system has been used to record the likely nature, impact and potential significance of the SPD upon each of the appraisal objectives, and is explained in section 11. This is supported by a more generalised analysis of cumulative and other impacts.

## 8. Production and consultation

- 8.1 The baseline methodology and tables contained in the Scoping Report were developed by the Development Plans Section of the District Council, with assistance from South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. The appraisal of the draft SPG on Wind Power contained in the present report was also undertaken by the Development Plans Section, and employs techniques used by Scott Wilson for the appraisal of the Core Strategy DPD.

- 8.2 Section 6 of the Scoping Report details the consultation that was carried out during its preparation. In addition, consultation on the intended approach to the preparation of this appraisal report took place with a number of environmental, social and economic agencies during the early summer of 2005. The agencies involved were:

- Environment Agency
- English Nature
- Countryside Agency
- English Heritage
- East of England Regional Assembly
- East of England Development Agency
- Norfolk, Suffolk & Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust

- 8.3 No issues arose as a result of this consultation, although the Countryside Agency confirmed that it was happy with the approach being taken to the appraisal.

## 9. Difficulties and limitations

- 9.1 The baseline situation is reasonably well documented, both in terms of the character of Huntingdonshire's landscapes (by virtue of the *Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment*) and the physical characteristics of current proposals for wind turbine development. Instead, the main difficulty in conducting the appraisal has been gauging the potential impact of the SPD, as it does not propose specific locations for development. While it provides broad guidance on the capacity of each character area to accommodate different forms of turbine development, it does not define what development will occur, where or on what timescale.

- 9.2 In view of this the appraisal adopts a qualitative approach that takes into account the likely directions of change as a result of implementing the SPD. This does, however, mean that the appraisal cannot quantify levels of significance in the way that Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of specific projects seeks to do.

## PART D SPD OPTIONS & EFFECTS

### 10. Alternatives identified

10.1 Only one alternative option to the approach taken in the draft Wind Power SPD has been identified, and would involve not producing an SPD at all. Within the context of the objectives that it seeks to pursue (paragraph 4.2 above), and the emphasis in other plans and programmes on a character-based approach to considering landscape capacity and impacts, it is difficult to conceive of a realistic alternative form that the guidance in the SPD could take.

### 11. Likely significant effects

11.1 The scoring system used to assess the potential effect of the SPD (and, alternatively, of not producing the SPD) is set out in Table 1 below. This system was employed by Scott Wilson for the appraisal of the Council's Core Strategy Development Plan Document (which the SPD will supplement).

**Table 1: Assessment scoring symbols**

Symbol	Likely effect against upon appraisal objectives
+++	Strong and significant beneficial impact
++	Potentially significant beneficial impact
+	Policy supports this objective although it may have only a minor beneficial impact
~	1. Policy has no impact; or 2. Effect is neutral insofar as the benefits and drawbacks appear equal and neither is considered significant (this is indicated in comments)
?	Uncertain or insufficient information on which to determine base the assessment at this stage
-	Policy appears to conflict with the objective and may result in adverse impacts
--	Potentially significant adverse impact
---	Strong and significant adverse impact

11.2 The result of applying this system to the options identified is set out in Tables 2A (which considers the potential effects of the draft SPD) and 2B (which considers the 'no SPD' alternative).

11.3 The key issue in relation to whether the SPD is produced or not is the likely significant effect upon the environment. Wind turbines inevitably have some impact upon the landscape, while helping to secure the wider environmental objective of reducing our reliance on fossil fuels. The advantage of producing the SPD lies in steering such developments towards those landscapes best able to accommodate them, and in identifying suitable mitigation measures.

11.4 Hence, on the assumption that proposals for wind turbines will come forward in any case, producing guidance of this sort should benefit the landscape relative to not producing it at

all. However, to some extent production of the SPD may also encourage and facilitate wind power development in the area; this makes it beneficial in pursuing wider environmental goals relating to climate change, but also implies some dampening of its positive effects when seen solely from a landscape perspective.

- 11.5 Tables 2A and 2B enable short, medium and long-term effects to be differentiated, although no significant variations over time have been identified. In terms of secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, facilitating renewable energy development should yield secondary benefits by assisting with efforts to combat climate change (through reducing our reliance on fossil fuels), although the extent to which this benefit is realised will depend upon overall levels of energy consumption. The SPD makes specific note of the potential cumulative impacts of more than one wind power scheme in particular landscape character areas, and to the extent that it provides guidance on this matter the document should yield cumulative benefits over time.

## **12. Mitigation measures and monitoring**

- 12.1 The analysis in the preceding section indicates that producing the SPD is clearly more beneficial for the pursuit of environmental, social and economic objectives than not producing it. Moreover, no significant adverse effects have been identified as likely to result from this option, so no mitigation measures are required.
- 12.2 A monitoring framework is being developed to help assess the implementation and effects of the policies and proposals that form part of the Local Development Framework (including the Wind Power SPD). Appropriate indicators and analysis will be contained in an Annual Monitoring Report.

Table 2A: Appraisal of SPD proposals

<b>Option 1</b>		<b>Produce Wind Power SPD</b>		
<b>Summary of option: Provides guidance on the siting of wind turbines including detailed guidance on siting within landscape character areas and in urban extensions.</b>				
Appraisal objectives <i>[paraphrased in some cases]</i>	Impact			Supporting comments
	Short	Med.	Long	
1.1 Minimise irreversible loss of undeveloped land	~	~	~	
1.2 Reduce use of non-renewable energy sources	+	+	+	SPD supports this objective by providing a clear framework for wind power schemes
1.3 Limit water consumption to sustainable levels	~	~	~	
2.1 Avoid damage to designated sites and protected species	~	~	~	Not addressed specifically
2.2 Maintain and enhance the viability of habitats & species	+	+	+	Objective supported as guidance on siting reduces risk of damage to habitats and species
2.3 Improve opportunities for access to wild places	~	~	~	
3.1 Avoid damage to protected sites and historic buildings	+	+	+	Guidance will help protect heritage assets against inappropriate development
3.2 Maintain and enhance landscape and townscape	++	++	++	Steers schemes to most suitable locations, although may enable/encourage more schemes to be developed
3.3 Create spaces and places that work well	~	~	~	
4.1 Reduce greenhouse gases and levels of other pollutants	+	+	+	SPD supports this objective by providing a clear framework for wind power schemes
4.2 Minimise production of waste and support recycling	~	~	~	
4.3 Limit / reduce vulnerability to climate change effects	+	+	+	Greater use of wind power helps reduce reliance upon fossil fuels
5.1 Maintain and enhance human health	~	~	~	
5.2 Reduce crime and the fear of crime	~	~	~	
5.3 Improve quantity / quality of public open space	~	~	~	
6.1 Improve quality, range and accessibility of services, etc.	~	~	~	
6.2 Redress inequalities in age, gender, race, income, etc.	~	~	~	
6.3 Ensure everyone has access to affordable housing	~	~	~	
6.4 Encourage / enable active community involvement	~	~	~	
7.1 Help people gain satisfying work reflecting circumstances	~	~	~	
7.2 Appropriate investment in people, infrastructure, etc.	~	~	~	
7.3 Improve the efficiency and vitality of the local economy	~	~	~	
<b>Assessment summary: The SPD is clearly sustainable and has no obvious drawbacks</b>				
<b>Proposed changes: None required</b>				

**Table 2B: Appraisal of potential effects of not producing the SPD**

<b>Option 2</b>		<b>No SPD</b>			
<b>Summary of option: Providing no guidance on siting of wind turbines other than that included in policy approaches G2 and T5 and strategic guidance</b>					
Appraisal objectives <i>[paraphrased in some cases]</i>	Impact			Supporting comments	
	Short	Med.	Long		
1.1 Minimise irreversible loss of undeveloped land	~	~	~		
1.2 Reduce use of non-renewable energy sources	?	?	?	Not producing the guidance would have an uncertain impact upon how many schemes come forward	
1.3 Limit water consumption to sustainable levels	~	~	~		
2.1 Avoid damage to designated sites and protected species	~	~	~		
2.2 Maintain and enhance the viability of habitats & species	—	—	—	Without guidance on siting there is more risk of damage to habitats and species	
2.3 Improve opportunities for access to wild places	~	~	~		
3.1 Avoid damage to protected sites and historic buildings	—	—	—	Without guidance on siting there is more risk of damage to heritage assets	
3.2 Maintain and enhance landscape and townscape	—	—	—	Without guidance on siting there is more risk of damage to landscape and townscape	
3.3 Create spaces and places that work well	~	~	~		
4.1 Reduce greenhouse gases and levels of other pollutants	?	?	?	Not producing the guidance would have an uncertain impact upon how many schemes come forward	
4.2 Minimise production of waste and support recycling	~	~	~		
4.3 Limit / reduce vulnerability to climate change effects	?	?	?	Not producing the guidance would have an uncertain impact upon how many schemes come forward	
5.1 Maintain and enhance human health	~	~	~		
5.2 Reduce crime and the fear of crime	~	~	~		
5.3 Improve quantity / quality of public open space	~	~	~		
6.1 Improve quality, range and accessibility of services, etc.	~	~	~		
6.2 Redress inequalities in age, gender, race, income, etc.	~	~	~		
6.3 Ensure everyone has access to affordable housing	~	~	~		
6.4 Encourage / enable active community involvement	~	~	~		
7.1 Help people gain satisfying work reflecting circumstances	~	~	~		
7.2 Appropriate investment in people, infrastructure, etc.	~	~	~		
7.3 Improve the efficiency and vitality of the local economy	~	~	~		
<b>Assessment summary: This option is less sustainable than option 1</b>					
<b>Proposed changes: Not applicable; option should not be pursued</b>					

## Appendix 1: Compliance with the requirements of the SEA Directive

The table below indicates where the material required for the purposes of Article 5(1) of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment') may be found within the present document and the Scoping Report that supports it.

Requirement of SEA Directive	Location in SA report	Location in Scoping Report
Contents and main objectives of the plans or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans/programmes	Sections 4 & 5	N/A
Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and its likely evolution without the implementation of the plan	Section 6	Part C & Appendix 6
The environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be significantly affected	Section 6	Part C & Appendix 6
Any existing environmental problems, in particular those relating to areas of particular environmental importance	Section 6	Part C & Appendix 6
Relevant environmental protection objectives established at international, EU or national levels, and how they have been taken into account	Section 5	Appendices 2 & 5
The likely significant effects on the environment [of the plan or programme], including secondary and cumulative effects	Section 11	N/A
The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment	Section 12	N/A
An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken, including any problems encountered	Sections 7-10	N/A
A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring	Section 12	N/A
A non-technical summary of the above	Section 1	N/A



**Appendix 2: Sustainability appraisal objectives and appraisal questions**

Sustainability appraisal topic	Sustainability appraisal objectives	Appraisal questions (decision-making criteria)
Land and water resources	1.1 Minimise the irreversible loss of undeveloped land and productive agricultural holdings	<p>Will it use land that has been previously developed?</p> <p>Will it use land efficiently?</p> <p>Will it protect the best and most versatile agricultural land?</p>
	1.2 Reduce the use of non-renewable energy sources	<p>Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by reducing energy consumption?</p> <p>Will it lead to an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources?</p>
	1.3 Limit water consumption to levels supportable by natural processes and storage systems	<p>Will it reduce water consumption?</p> <p>Will it conserve ground water resources?</p>
Biodiversity	2.1 Avoid damage to designated sites and protected species	<p>Will it protect sites designated for their nature conservation interest?</p> <p>Will it help achieve Biodiversity Action Plan targets?</p>
	2.2 Maintain and enhance the range and viability of characteristic habitats and species	<p>Will it conserve species, reverse their decline, and help to enhance diversity?</p> <p>Will it reduce habitat fragmentation?</p>
	2.3 Improve opportunities for people to access and appreciate wildlife and wild places	<p>Will it improve access to wildlife, and wild places?</p> <p>Will it maintain and, where possible, increase the area of high-quality green space in the district?</p> <p>Will it promote understanding and appreciation of wildlife?</p>
Landscape, townscape and archaeology	3.1 Avoid damage to protected sites and historic buildings	<p>Will it protect or enhance sites, features or areas of historical, archaeological, or cultural interest (including conservation areas, listed buildings, historic parks and gardens and scheduled ancient monuments)?</p>

Sustainability appraisal topic	Sustainability appraisal objectives	Appraisal questions (decision-making criteria)
	<p>3.2 Maintain and enhance the diversity and distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character</p>	<p>Will it maintain and enhance the diversity and distinctiveness of landscape and townscape character?</p> <p>Will it protect and enhance open spaces of amenity and recreational value?</p> <p>Will it maintain and enhance the character of settlements?</p>
	<p>3.3 Create places, spaces and buildings that work well, wear well and look good</p>	<p>Will it improve the satisfaction of people with their neighbourhoods as places to live?</p> <p>Will it lead to developments built to a high standard of design?</p>
Climate change and pollution	<p>4.1 Reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses and other pollutants (including air, water, soil, noise, vibration and light)</p>	<p>Will it reduce emissions of greenhouse gases?</p> <p>Will it improve air quality?</p> <p>Will it reduce traffic volumes?</p> <p>Will it reduce levels of noise or noise concerns?</p> <p>Will it reduce or minimise light pollution?</p> <p>Will it reduce diffuse and point source water pollution?</p>
	<p>4.2 Minimise waste production and support the recycling of waste products</p>	<p>Will it reduce household waste?</p> <p>Will it increase waste recovery and recycling?</p>
	<p>4.3 Limit or reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change (including flooding)</p>	<p>Will it minimise risk to people and property from flooding, storm events or subsidence?</p> <p>Will it improve the adaptability of buildings to changing temperatures?</p>
Healthy communities	<p>5.1 Maintain and enhance human health</p>	<p>Will it reduce death rates?</p> <p>Will it encourage healthy lifestyles, including travel choices?</p>
	<p>5.2 Reduce and prevent crime, and reduce the fear of crime</p>	<p>Will it reduce actual levels of crime?</p> <p>Will it reduce the fear of crime?</p>

Sustainability appraisal topic	Sustainability appraisal objectives	Appraisal questions (decision-making criteria)
	5.3 Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space	Will it increase the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space?
Inclusive communities	6.1 Improve the quality, range and accessibility of services and facilities (e.g. health, transport, education, training, leisure opportunities)	Will it improve the availability of key local services and facilities, including health, education and leisure (shops, post offices, pubs etc.)? Will it improve accessibility by means other than the car? Will it support and improve community and public transport?
	6.2 Redress inequalities related to age, gender, disability, race, faith, location and income	Will it improve relations between people from different backgrounds or social groups? Will it reduce poverty and social exclusion for those areas and groups most affected? Will it promote accessibility for all members of society, including the elderly and disabled?
	6.3 Ensure all groups have access to decent, appropriate and affordable housing	Will it support the provision of a range of house types and sizes, including affordable and key worker housing, to meet the identified needs of all sectors of the community? Will it reduce the number of unfit homes? Will it address the particular needs of the travelling community?
	6.4 Encourage and enable the active involvement of local people in community activities	Will it increase the ability of people to influence decisions? Will it encourage engagement with community activities?
Economic activity	7.1 Help people gain access to satisfying work appropriate to their skills, potential and place of residence	Will it encourage businesses development? Will it support the growth of sectors that offer scope to reduce out-commuting? Will it improve access to employment, particularly by means other than the private car? Will it encourage the rural economy and support farm diversification?

Sustainability appraisal topic	Sustainability appraisal objectives	Appraisal questions (decision-making criteria)
	7.2 Support appropriate investment in people, places, communications and other infrastructure	<p>Will it assist the provision of appropriate land and premises for business activity?</p> <p>Will it support provision of key communications infrastructure?</p> <p>Will it improve access to education and training, and support provision of skilled employees to the economy?</p>
	7.3 Improve the efficiency, competitiveness, vitality and adaptability of the local economy	<p>Will it facilitate business development and enhance competitiveness?</p> <p>Will it enable tourism opportunities to be exploited?</p> <p>Will it support the vitality and viability of market town centres?</p>

## DISTRICT COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS AND OTHER OFFICE ACCOMMODATION MEMBERS' ADVISORY GROUP

### (Report of the Advisory Group)

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Advisory Group met on 26th July 2005 and Councillors I C Bates, PLE Bucknell, PJ Downes, DP Holley and T V Rogers were present. Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors WT Clough and K Reynolds.
- 1.2 Also in attendance were Messrs D Monks, R Preston, A Roberts and M Sharp and Mrs E Wilson.
- 1.3 The report of the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 31st May 2005 was received and noted.

#### 2. HEADQUARTERS AND OTHER ACCOMMODATION – AN UPDATE

- 2.1 The Advisory Group gave consideration to a report by the Director of Operational Services on a range of matters relating to the procurement of the Council's future office and other accommodation. A copy of the report is attached as an Appendix.
- 2.2 Having being acquainted with progress of the procurement process to date, the Advisory Group noted those matters not included in the tender specification, which would contribute to the overall cost of the project. In that context it was emphasised that an exercise should be carried out to identify savings, in particular, by reusing existing furniture where at all possible.
- 2.3 With regard to the appointment of technical and legal advisors, it was noted that appointments shortly would be made. It was expected that the technical advisors would be able to identify areas in which savings could be driven into the process. The Advisory Group also noted that technical advice would be available to tenderers from officers of the District Council on planning and operational matters during negotiations.
- 2.4 In reviewing the Procurement Programme, the Advisory Group decided to present all Members with details of the proposals and progress of the process to date prior to the joint meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels on 13th September 2005.
- 2.5 The Advisory Group endorsed a proposed Communications Plan for the replacement headquarters and other accommodation.

- 2.6 Following discussion on various other matters, the Advisory Group requested further information on the financial implications of providing separate premises for the headquarters and customer service centre and on the future of the existing depot. Whereupon, it was

**RESOLVED**

that the Cabinet be recommended to:

- (a) note the progress on work related to costs related to tender evaluation;
- (b) note the tender timetable and agree the process as set out in Annex B to the attached report;
- (c) approve the Communications Strategy as set out at Annex C to the attached report; and
- (d) request an appraisal of the Godmanchester Depot site at a future meeting.

**3. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 3.1 The Advisory Group agreed that the next meeting should be held on 12th September 2005 at 8am.

Chairman

**HEADQUARTERS & OTHER ACCOMMODATION – AN UPDATE  
(Report by Director of Operational Services)**

**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To update the Advisory Group on the work being undertaken on the Headquarters, Customer Service Centre and Operations Centre (Depot) procurement project.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 Tenders were issued to six potential bidders on 22 June 2005 and will be returned on 19 August 2005. Bidders have been provided with a broad outline specification of our requirement which will allow them to work-up tenders based on the overall quality and size of buildings to be provided.

- 2.2 Bidders have to bid for all three of our required buildings as a package:

- ❖ new main building
- ❖ customer service centre in the town centre
- ❖ operations centre

- 2.3 Bidders will be allowed to provide alternative bids giving a different mix of sites, but still delivering the full package. They have the option of combining the new main building and the customer service centre if they can offer a town centre site.

- 2.4 The important thing is that evaluation will be on the packages as they are bid. We will not be able to pick individual buildings/sites from different packages.

- 2.5 Bids will be made in the form of a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for each package offered. This will be built up from the GMP for each individual building within the package, net of the Guaranteed Minimum Value for the disposal of the existing Pathfinder House/Castle Hill House site unless this is the proposed site for the new headquarters.

- 2.6 For each package the bidder will have to provide

- ❖ location plans for proposed buildings
- ❖ illustrative site and floor plans
- ❖ illustrative elevational drawings or artist's impressions
- ❖ price matrix showing the build-up of the package GMP
- ❖ GMP price breakdown for each individual building in the package
- ❖ GMV for the disposal/development of Pathfinder House
- ❖ programme and cash flow projections

### 3. Issues

#### 3.1 Costs not within the Tender

3.1.1 As part of the tender evaluation, there will be other costs that the Council will incur which do not form part of the bidders' tender. Work has already started on the following areas –

- ❖ IT connections between sites
- ❖ furniture and moves
- ❖ extra on-going operating costs due to separation of Headquarters and Customer Service Centre), if appropriate
- ❖ Possible additional costs on options where temporary decanting (eg. staff travel) may be necessary.

3.1.2 In addition to the items identified above estimates will also be required for the items identified in Annex A, to allow the overall project cost to be forecast.

#### 3.2 Tender Evaluation Process

3.2.1 By 30 August 2005 we will have evaluated the tenders, narrowing them down ideally to not more than two bidders who, subject to any decision by Council on 29 September 2005, will be asked to provide further details. This will include –

- ❖ an initial response to the draft development principles and draft disposal agreement principles included in the tender (i.e. the contract the appointed developer will be required to enter into)
- ❖ procedures for appointing architects, builders etc
- ❖ organisational structure and range of consultants and others to be engaged for the project
- ❖ proposed procurement strategy
- ❖ enhanced site plan, layouts and elevations
- ❖ floor plans demonstrating compliance with space budgets
- ❖ schedule of principal materials and design principles

3.2.2 By 9 November 2005 we will have enough information to choose between the bidders who are still in the process. Council on 7 December 2005 will make the final selection and the award of contract will then be made on 'subject to contract basis'.

3.2.3 The award will require the selected bidder to complete the development and disposal agreements by 31 March 2006. Between the award and the signing of the agreements the developer will have to supply –

- ❖ draft detailed layout and elevation proposals
- ❖ room pages detailing fixtures and finishes in each area
- ❖ draft planning package and project programme
- ❖ draft production information required for the preparation of tenders
- ❖ assessment of planning (development control) position
- ❖ agreed form of parent company guarantees



- 3.2.4 Following the signing of the agreements the developer will have to submit a detailed planning application within two months.
- 3.2.5 Once a scheme is agreed the developer will finalise the design and then invite tenders for the construction of the buildings. Hopefully, a combination of value engineering in the design process and competition for the construction work will deliver a final price which is less than the GMP. If this happens the contract provides for the saving to be shared between the developer (typically 20%) and the council (typically 80%).
- 3.2.6 The GMP can only increase if we add requirements or fundamentally change the broad outline specification we issued with the tender documents in a way that increases the cost of the project.
- 3.2.7 This process is set out in Annex B.

### **3.3 Communication**

- 3.3.1 The need for internal and external communication on this project is vital and a draft Communication Strategy is attached as Annex C for consideration.

### **3.4 Use of Existing Depot Site After Move**

- 3.4.1 It has always been part of the property strategy to clear and dispose of the Godmanchester Depot site as part of the new HQ, etc project.
- 3.4.2 The development potential and/or temporary uses for the cleared site have yet to be evaluated and will be the subject of a separate report to a future meeting of Cabinet.

## **4. Conclusions**

- 4.1 Note the progress on work related to costs related to tender evaluation.
- 4.2 Note the tender timetable and agree the process as in Annex B.
- 4.3 Agree the Communication Strategy in Annex C.
- 4.4 Note that Cabinet will consider an appraisal of the Godmanchester Depot site at a future meeting.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Contact Officer: Elizabeth Wilson, Director of Operational Services**  
**☎ 01480 388301**

## **ANNEX A – FURTHER ITEMS CONTRIBUTING TO THE OVERALL PROJECT COST**

### **Fees –**

- costs for project management
- external technical advisors
- external legal advisors

### **Cost during the construction/initial occupation phase –**

- CCTV Control Room equipment replacement
- first aid room furniture/equipment
- post room equipment
- projection and audi-visual equipment in meeting rooms
- relocate post-lifts from existing vehicle workshop
- relocation of IT desk-top equipment
- relocation of print room equipment
- relocation/re-commissioning of IT servers
- video conferencing equipment

### **Ongoing costs after occupation –**

- cleaning/maintenance of external areas
- courier for transfers between office and operations centre
- energy and water
- equipment and systems servicing
- insurances
- internal and window cleaning
- NNDR
- premises maintenance
- refreshment vending in lieu of canteen
- waste recycling/disposal services

## ANNEX B: HEADQUARTERS & OTHER ACCOMMODATION — CONTRACT AWARD PROCESS

Date	Stage	Comments
26 July 2005	Members' Advisory Group considers project processes.	<p>Report will provide –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communications plan</li> <li>• tender approval programme</li> <li>• financials to be used in tender evaluation</li> </ul>
19 August 2005	Tenders Received – tender evaluation commences	An initial tender report will be completed by our technical advisors which will check that bids are complete and compliant.
22/23 August 2005	Initial tender evaluation	This will involve review by individual officers, and then a plenary session to agree a consensus on overall ranking.
25 August 2005	Bidder interviews	Initial tender evaluation will reduce tenderers to probably two preferred bids and to establish order of cost for project.
30 August 2005	Closing date for bidders to submit clarifications.	Officer project management group members seek further clarification arising from initial tender evaluation.
31 August 2005	Project Management Board approval	Sign-off initial tender evaluation
7 September 2005	Complete Initial Tender Evaluation Report for submission to Members.	<p>Report will provide –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number of tenders received – but not names of bidders</li> <li>• outline of sites proposed by each bidder</li> <li>• range of tender values submitted</li> <li>• overall financial impact of project</li> <li>• proposals for bidders to be taken to next stage of evaluation</li> </ul>

Date	Stage	Comments
12 September 2005	Members' Advisory Group considers Initial Tender Evaluation Report	
13 September 2005	Overview and Scrutiny Panels joint meeting to consider Initial Tender Evaluation Report	
15 September 2005	Cabinet considers Initial Tender Evaluation Report	
28 September 2005	Full Council – Stage II tender evaluation commences	Initial Tender Evaluation Report submitted to Council. Report order of cost and obtain authority to continue – MTP variation bid.
29 September 2005	Notify bidders not progressing to clarification stage	
30 September 2005	Commence clarification with [two] final bidders.	
9 November 2005	Project Management Board approval	Sign-off final tender evaluation
11 November	Complete Final Tender Evaluation Report	Report will provide – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• names of all tenders received</li> <li>• detail of sites proposed by final [two] bidders</li> <li>• details of all tender values submitted</li> <li>• final tender values of clarified bids</li> <li>• overall financial impact of project</li> <li>• recommendation to accept tender</li> <li>• heads of terms of the development agreement</li> </ul>

Date	Stage	Comments
21 November 2005	Members' Advisory Group consider Final Tender Evaluation Report	
22 November 2005	Special Joint Meeting of OV&S consider Final Tender Evaluation Report	
24 November 2005	Cabinet consider Final Tender Evaluation Report	Recommend contract award and heads of terms to Council together with MTP implications.
7 December 2005	Full Council consider Final Tender Evaluation Report and authorises start of negotiation of the development agreement	Final Tender Evaluation Report submitted to Council. Authorise award subject to completion of Development Agreement
8 December 2005	Commence negotiation of Development Agreement	Approve heads of terms and delegate signing of Development Agreement Notify bidders of award.
24 March 2006	Project Management Board review Development Agreement	
27 March 2006	Members Advisory Group review Development Agreement	
31 March 2006	Sign Development Agreement	

# Replacement Headquarters and Other Accommodation Communications Plan

## Introduction:

We are delivering a project that will bring benefits for our customers, employees and elected members. The key benefits are –

- greatly improved access for customers favouring or requiring face-to-face contact with services
- an improved working environment for employees which will help them perform at their optimum level throughout the year – and contribute to improved service provision
- improved public access to decision making with the potential to promote greater involvement in the democratic process

While seeking to highlight the benefits we must recognise that this a high profile project may evoke a negative reaction from some people.

Therefore a structured communications plan is important to ensure that all interested parties have timely and appropriate information, so that the scheme may progress smoothly, with audiences understanding why the replacement accommodation is needed, and the benefits to be gained.

As well as communicating with employees, our own elected members, and local residents it is important that other interested parties are appropriately informed and engaged. For example: county and parish councillors, media, partners, governmental representatives and organisations and other national organisations, eg MPs. Government Office, Audit Commission.

The outcomes we are seeking to achieve as a result of our communications programme are:

- Employees feel well informed about the proposals, are aware of the benefits to be gained and understand the reasons for the change,
- Members who feel well informed about the proposals, understand the reasons for them and are aware of the benefits to be gained and how risks are being managed
- Local residents feel adequately informed about the proposals and are aware of the benefits in improved standards of customer service
- Other key audiences feel well informed and accepting of the way the project is being achieved.

These are linked to the outcomes in the corporate communications and consultation strategy ie: that our key audiences

- understand what the council stands for and believe it has a good reputation,
- feel well informed about the council, its priorities, and the services we provide,
- and in the case of partners, understand the council's role and want to work with us.

**The messages:**

In order to achieve a successful outcome, a communications programme must be structured and sustained. Research demonstrates that people feel better about organisations that communicate with them. In the case of employees effective communications contributes to improved morale and greater participation in change.

Messages must be clear, concise and consistent, in other words transmitted from sender to receiver without distortion. Key messages to be communicated in this project are:

- the business benefits to be gained by the new accommodation, both for staff and for customers
- improved customer service and public facilities
- improved working environment for staff
- savings in running costs
- assets to dispose of to contribute towards costs of providing the new accommodation.

In formulating messages it is important to consider what perceptions people may already have and what may need to be done to change them, and it would be naïve to assume that the concept of replacement accommodation for a local authority will be viewed by the local community in a totally positive light.

An extensive proactive communications programme with employees, turning each of them into ambassadors, will help counteract negative comment. We should involve elected members too in our communication programme, over and above the information they will receive from reports to cabinet, overview and scrutiny panels, and council, in order that they can ensure the appropriate messages are conveyed to the communities they serve.

**Methods of communication:**

While the messages should be consistent across all audiences, the method of communication is not necessarily the same for everyone. It is important too with a long term project to recognise that there may be times when there is no new information. When there is nothing to say – say there is nothing to say! Silence provokes suspicion and loses goodwill.

Internal and external communications should run in parallel making sure that employees have the opportunity to be aware of fresh developments before they are placed in the public domain.

Time and time again research shows that the most favoured method of communication by employees is face-to-face conversation with their manager or supervisor. This is even true of those who have access to electronic methods of communication. The intranet is a valuable tool, and ideal for placing documents for easy access to those who wish to view them, but it should be remembered that not everyone wishes to wade through detailed information – edited highlights are sufficient. Not everyone with access to the intranet wishes to use it.

Therefore use should be made of our Team Talk briefing system or Team News newsletter – depending on whether the topic is more suited to two-way discussion or is simply a matter of information that can be read. Specific presentations, drop-in sessions where people can chat informally and ask questions which they may be too timid to ask in a group environment, or workshops, may also be arranged as appropriate. All directorates will be encouraged to have a standing agenda item for their regular team meetings.

Although members will be kept in touch as the various elements go through the decision-making process, not all of them will receive the information in a timely way, therefore briefings, or presentations for councillors and other key audiences may be appropriate in order to achieve their support and address any points of concern.

District Wide should be the principal channel for communicating with local residents – it enables our messages to be conveyed in the way we want them rather than the interpretation a local newspaper editor may place on them. However positive press and media coverage is important as local residents will form views about the proposals as a result of what they see and hear in the press and media, so a proactive programme, starting with a briefing for the journalists/editors, and followed with news releases and photo opportunities where appropriate, should be adopted.

The following action plan is proposed.

Dates are indicative and will be confirmed and/or amended when the timetable of work is finalised and as the project progresses.

Proactive approaches to the press and media have been identified, however there are likely to be occasions when journalists 'pick up' matters and we need to respond reactively. Therefore from time to time reactive statements will be prepared in case they are needed – but not necessarily released.

It is important that all inquiries from newspapers, radio, television, or trade journals are channelled through the Communications Manager.

Heather Gilling  
Communications Manager  
Ext: 8033  
May 2005



<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>
June 2005	Expressions of interest received and evaluated	Intranet Team News	-
June 2005	Invitations to tenderer- issued	Intranet Team News	-
August 2005	Receipt and evaluation of tenders	Intranet Team News	
September 2005	Obtain council approval to proceed <i>Tender negotiations will be ongoing at this time and will be commercially sensitive!</i>		
January 2006	Award of contract	Intranet Team News Report to cabinet/council Decision Digest	Press briefing and news release
January – June 2006	How the project will be managed Who will be located where Project board Reference groups Pilots of new practices	Intranet Team News Team Talk Individual team briefings Member briefings	
July – December 2006	What the new buildings will look like/contain/planning applications Start of work on Operations Centre	Presentations/drop-in sessions (staff and members Naming of new premises	District Wide
January 2007-June 2007	Outcomes of pilots Progress of work on Operations Centre	Team Talk Team News	
Summer 2007	Work starts	Intranet Team Talk Briefing for members	News release District Wide Local government/ construction/ specialist press
To completion	Identify 'milestones: eg construction progress, special features, décor, furniture, logistics of moving, naming of building (competition?) implementation of travel plan	Intranet Team News Team Talk Individual team briefings Presentations Drop-in sessions Visits (staff and members)	News releases District Wide Visits by partners/government and other reps Local government press Construction press

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>
On completion	The move! New corporate identity	Team Talk Individual team briefings	News release, press visits(highlighting customer/public facilities) Opening ceremony to take place in the customer service centre with unveiling of new corporate identity.
Following completion	Disposal of existing sites/demolition of Pathfinder House	Intranet Team News Reports to cabinet/council	News releases District Wide Briefings to partners/government representatives

### **Evaluation:**

Successful implementation of this whole project depends on buy-in by staff and members. If staff feel they have been kept informed and made to feel part of the project then there will be greater acceptance of the major changes it will inevitably bring.

Keeping all members apprised is likely to achieve greater buy-in from them, and minimise the risk of negative headlines caused by misinformation.

Proactively issuing news releases and creating articles for District Wide and other publications concentrating on our key messages will help local residents to accept that the project was an essential rather than desirable exercise and that we have achieved it in as effective and efficient manner as possible.