

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2006** at **11:30 AM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

## **APOLOGIES**

**Contact  
(01480)**

**1. MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 2)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th February 2006.

**Mrs C Bulman  
388234**

**2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

To receive from Members declarations as to personal and/or prejudicial interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any Agenda item.

Please see notes 1 and 2 below.

**3. PRIMARY CARE TRUSTS**

**(a) COMMISSIONING A PATIENT-LED NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CONSULTATION** (Pages 3 - 6)

To consider a report by the Chief Executive on the outcome of consultations on the future configuration of Primary Care Trusts, Strategic Health Authorities and Ambulance Trusts.

**D Monks  
388001**

**(b) CONSULTATION ON NEW PRIMARY CARE TRUST ARRANGEMENTS IN NORFOLK, SUFFOLK AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE** (Pages 7 - 10)

To consider a report of the Older Persons Working Group

**A Roberts  
388009**

**4. LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT: GOVERNANCE** (Pages 11 - 12)

To consider a report by the Head of Policy to appoint a Member to the Local Area Agreement Board.

**I Leatherbarrow  
388005**

**5. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: SHAPING THEIR FUTURE** (Pages 13 - 22)

To receive a report by the Head of Policy and to consider and comment upon a consultation paper issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

**I Leatherbarrow  
388005**

6. **MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2005/06** (Pages 23 - 34)
- To consider a report by the Head of Financial Services outlining spending variations for 2005/06. **S Couper  
388103**
7. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT - INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE** (Pages 35 - 38)
- To consider a report by the Head of Financial Services on the performance of the Investment Fund, October to December 2005. **S Couper  
388103**
8. **HIGHWAYS AGENCY 2006** (Pages 39 - 42)
- To consider a report by the Head of Environment and Transport on the development of a new agreement between the Council and the Highways Agency. **R Preston  
388340**
9. **CONCESSIONARY FARES** (Pages 43 - 48)
- To consider a report by the Head of Environment and Transport on the implementation of a concessionary fares regime across the District. **S Bell  
388387**
10. **CAR PARKING ORDER - OAK DRIVE, HUNTINGDON** (Pages 49 - 50)
- To consider a report by the Head of Environment and Transport seeking approval for a new car parking order for the Oak Drive off-street car park at Sapley Square, Huntingdon. **C Allen  
388380**
11. **SMALL SCALE ENVIRONMENT IMPROVEMENTS** (Pages 51 - 54)
- To consider a report by the Head of Environment and Transport on progress of small scale environmental improvement schemes and outlining a programme of schemes for 2006/07. **C Allen  
388380**
12. **PLANNING GAIN SUPPLEMENT: A CONSULTATION** (Pages 55 - 58)
- To consider a report by the Planning Policy Manager outlining the implications for the District Council of the Government's proposals to introduce a new tax – the Planning Gain Supplement. **R Probyn  
388401**
13. **CONSULTATION ON PLANNING POLICY STATEMENTS** (Pages 59 - 68)
- To consider a report by the Planning Policy Manager on recent consultation papers published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on Housing and Development and Flood Risk. **R Probyn  
388430**

**14. DEVELOPMENT BRIEF - OLD FIRE STATION SITE/HOUSEHOLD WASTE DISPOSAL SITE, ST NEOTS** (Pages 69 - 70)

To consider the development brief for the Old Fire Station and Household Waste disposal site at St. Neots and to approve it as a basis for further discussion and consultation.

**M Huntington  
388404**

(A copy of the Development Brief is attached to the agenda separately).

**15. THE DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME** (Pages 71 - 78)

To consider a report by the Head of Policy on a proposed draft Disability Equality Scheme for the Council.

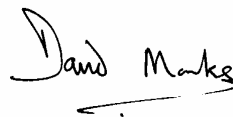
**I Leatherbarrow  
388005**

**16. DELEGATED POWERS** (Pages 79 - 80)

To consider a report by the Head of Environmental Health Services seeking approval to the delegation of enforcement powers under the Housing Act 1985.

**Mrs S Questier  
388286**

Dated this 14 day of February 2006



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 Mrs H Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Tel No. 01480 388008/e-mail Helen.Taylor@huntsdc.gov.uk 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.*

# Agenda Item 1

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Friday, 10 February 2006.

PRESENT: Councillor L M Simpson – Vice Chairman in the Chair

Councillors Mrs J Chandler, A Hansard, D P Holley, Mrs P J Longford, T V Rogers and L M Simpson.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors I C Bates, N J Guyatt and Mrs D C Reynolds.

### **163. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **164. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

No declarations were received.

### **165. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED

that the press and public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to applicants to become employees of the authority and terms proposed for the acquisition and disposal of property and the supply of goods and services.

### **166. COMMERCE AND TECHNOLOGY DIRECTORATE: APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR**

The Chairman reported on the outcome of the meeting of the Appointments Panel which had interviewed short-listed candidates for the post of Director of Commerce & Technology at a meeting held earlier that day.

Having been acquainted with the requirements of paragraph 4(e) of the Officer Employment Procedure Rules, the Cabinet confirmed that there was no material or well-founded objection to the Panel's proposals with regard to the offer of an appointment to fill the vacancy.

**167. HEADQUARTERS AND OTHER ACCOMMODATION DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT**

In conjunction with the report of the District Council's Headquarters and Other Office Accommodation Members' Advisory Group held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2006 (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) and with the assistance of a report by the Chief Officers' Management Team (a copy of which is also appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with progress on negotiations for the completion of a Development Agreement for the procurement of new headquarters and other accommodation for the District Council.

Having considered the deliberations of the Office Accommodation Members' Advisory Group & the Overview & Scrutiny Panels, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the recommendations of the Office Accommodation Members' Advisory Group at their meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2006 be commended for approval by the Council at their meeting to be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2006.

Chairman

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL  
(SERVICE DELIVERY & RESOURCES)**

**7TH FEBRUARY 2006**

**CABINET**

**23RD FEBRUARY 2006**

**COMMISSIONING A PATIENT-LED NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE:  
CONSULTATION  
(Report by the Chief Executive)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 In conjunction with the debate nationally on the future of the National Health Service (NHS) and following on from the consideration by Cabinet at its meeting held on 13th October 2005 of a report on proposals for the reconfiguration of Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) in the Eastern Region, Executive Councillors are now invited to consider formal proposals published by the Norfolk, Suffolk & Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) for consultation.
- 1.2 In addition to the proposals for PCTs, the SHA has published for consultation a proposal for a single SHA for the Eastern Region. The SHA has also published a proposal for one Ambulance Trust in the Region.
- 1.3 The following paragraphs summarise the proposals for all three branches of the NHS. The closing date for the receipt of comments is 22nd March 2006.

**2. PRIMARY CARE TRUSTS**

- 2.1 The earlier report to Cabinet outlined the background to the process for reconfiguring PCTs with a view to assessing proposals against their ability to —
- secure high quality, safe services;
  - improve health and reduce inequalities;
  - improve the engagement of general practitioners and the roll-out of practice-based commissioning with demonstrable practice support;
  - improve public involvement;
  - improve commissioning and the effective use of resources;
  - manage financial balance and risk;
  - improve coordination with Social Services through greater congruence of PCT and local government boundaries; and
  - deliver a reduction of at least 15% in management and administrative costs.
- 2.2 In his foreword to the options for consultation and while drawing attention to the increased investment – from £33 billion in 1997/98 to over £90 billion planned for 2007/08 – in “transforming” hospitals by reducing waiting times/lists, in improving accident and emergency

services and in updating buildings, Sir Nigel Crisp, Chief Executive to the Department of Health and NHS, has acknowledged the need for more to be done to deliver a service fit for the 21st Century.

2.3 The emphasis to be placed on the commissioning role of PCTs is evident but, in similar vein, reference also is made to safety, quality and the responsiveness of services. Essentially the consultation envisages PCTs in the future designing, planning and developing better services for patients, working more closely with local government and supporting good general practice. In that context, PCTs are described as “custodians of the taxpayers’ money, working to ensure that the NHS gets the best value for the public purse”.

2.4 The two options for the future configuration of PCTs in Norfolk, Suffolk & Cambridgeshire, on which the Secretary of State for Health has asked the SHA to undertake formal consultation, are as follows:-

Option 1 — 3 PCTs

- Norfolk PCT
- Suffolk PCT
- Cambridgeshire PCT (including Peterborough)

Option 2 — 5 PCTs

- Gt Yarmouth & Waveney PCT
- Norfolk PCT (excluding Gt Yarmouth)
- Suffolk PCT (excluding Waveney)
- Peterborough PCT
- Cambridgeshire PCT (excluding Peterborough).

*(Note: Currently there are 17 PCTs in the three Counties and 41 in the Eastern Region.)*

2.5 After having considered the matter at its meeting held on 13th October 2005, Cabinet resolved —

“that the Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Leader of the Council, be authorised to make appropriate representations to the Norfolk, Suffolk & Cambridgeshire SHA for the inclusion in the forthcoming round of consultation of the option to retain the existing Huntingdonshire PCT in any future reconfiguration of Primary Care Trusts in the Eastern Region”.

2.6 Representations subsequently were made to the SHA to include the option of a free-standing Huntingdonshire PCT in the options for consultation. The representations were copied to Sir Nigel Crisp, to partner organisations and stakeholders and to a range of other sources believed to be supportive of the retention of a PCT for Huntingdonshire as the best option for Huntingdonshire residents. Clearly, however, these have failed to influence the deliberations thus far.

2.7 The Huntingdonshire PCT has actively lobbied and canvassed support to retain its free-standing status. In that respect, the PCT has



produced a report, "Commissioning a Patient-Led NHS in Huntingdonshire", which it has submitted to the Secretary of State for Health and copied widely elsewhere. This can be viewed or downloaded from the Trust's website at [www.hunts-pct.nhs.uk](http://www.hunts-pct.nhs.uk).

- 2.8 The Executive Councillor for Office Accommodation & Other Special Projects, Councillor D P Holley, has tabled the following Notice of Motion for consideration by full Council on 22nd February:-

"that, in the interests of the people of Huntingdonshire and true local accountability, the District Council wholeheartedly supports the retention of Huntingdonshire PCT as an independent Trust under the Strategic Health Authority area so as to maintain and enhance a patient-led NHS".

### **3. STRATEGIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES**

- 3.1 In the second strand of consultation on restructuring of the NHS, the three existing SHAs in the Eastern Region – Bedfordshire/Hertfordshire, Essex and Norfolk/Suffolk/Cambridgeshire – support as their preferred option a single SHA for the six Counties, coterminous with the remit of the Government Office for the Eastern Region.

- 3.2 The rationale for a single, Regional SHA is —

- the likelihood that there will be a significant reduction in the overall number of PCTs;
- the Department of Health's criteria for reconfiguration at a strategic level to be aligned as closely as possible with a single Government Office and the requirement to achieve significant reductions in administration and management costs; and
- the expectation that a reduction from three to one SHA would generate savings of around half the existing core annual budgets of £14.1m in the Region for reinvestment in front line services.

### **4. AMBULANCE TRUSTS**

- 4.1 The consultation on changes to Ambulance Trusts proposes the replacement of the existing 34 Trusts in England with 11, based broadly around Government Regional Office boundaries. The exceptions are in each of the South East and South West Regions, where two Trusts are suggested.

- 4.2 In the Eastern Region, a single Trust is proposed to replace the existing three Trusts – East Anglian (Norfolk/Suffolk/Cambridgeshire), Essex and Bedfordshire/Hertfordshire.

- 4.3 The benefits which it is suggested would be achieved from the restructuring include —

- an opportunity to raise the standards of service provided by all Trusts to the level of the best;
- the savings in bureaucracy, overheads and procurement practices for investment in front line services;

- a quicker and more effective response to a diverse range of patients with different health care requirements;
- the capacity for larger Trusts to sustain better levels of performance; and
- better opportunities for staff.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

- 5.1 The proposals outlined in this report preface what are likely to be major changes in the structure and arrangements for the delivery of health services nationally and locally.
- 5.2 The earlier representations which were made on behalf of the District Council seeking the inclusion in the consultation of an option for the retention of the existing Huntingdonshire PCT were unsuccessful.
- 5.3 The outcome of debate on Councillor Holley's Motion to full Council on 22nd February is likely to determine the District Council's response to the consultation on the reconfiguration of PCTs. Otherwise, Cabinet is invited to consider its responses to the consultations on proposed arrangements for a single SHA and Ambulance Trust in the Eastern Region.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

"Creating a Patient-Led NHS – Delivering the NHS Improvement Plan" – Department of Health, March 2005

"Department of Health: Review of Health Structures" – Report to Executive Committee of the East of England Regional Assembly, September 2005

HDC Cabinet meeting, 13th October 2005

"NHS Consultation Papers – PCTs, SHAs and Ambulance Trusts" – December 2005 – March 2006

**Contact Officers:** Peter Watkins, Director of Central Services#

☎ (01480) 388002

Mrs Helen Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer

☎ (01480) 388008

## **CONSULTATION ON NEW PRIMARY CARE TRUSTS ARRANGEMENTS IN NORFOLK, SUFFOLK AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE (Report of the Older Persons Working Group)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to acquaint the Cabinet with the deliberations of the Older Persons Working Group established by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) arising from their consideration of the formal proposals published by the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority for the reconfiguration of Primary Care Trusts in the Eastern Region.
- 1.2 The Working Group met on 25th January 2006 and Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, K J Churchill, S J Criswell and J E Garner were present.
- 1.3 Also in attendance was Mr A Roberts.

### **2. CONSULTATION ON NEW PRIMARY CARE TRUSTS ARRANGEMENTS IN NORFOLK, SUFFOLK AND CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

- 2.1 The Working Group considered 'Consultation on New Primary Care Trusts Arrangements in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire', which was published by the Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Strategic Health Authority (SHA). It was noted that the document contained the following:

'There is no national blue print for the number or shape of PCTs - different reasons will invariably need different solutions. In some areas, for instance, the formation of larger PCTs may be seen as the key to really effective local commissioning and service planning. For others, smaller PCTs may fit local needs better'.
- 2.2 The Working Group also took into consideration correspondence received from the Chairman of Huntingdonshire PCT, Michael Lynch, to which was attached the PCTs submission to the Department of Health 'Commissioning a Patient-led NHS in Huntingdonshire' and a press release from Jonathon Djanogly, MP on the matter.
- 2.3 During initial discussions, it was noted that -
  - ◆ The District Council contributed to the cost of the Director of Public Health for Huntingdonshire;
  - ◆ If PCT boundaries were coterminous with local authority boundaries, Huntingdonshire would have a larger population than Peterborough, yet Peterborough was being considered as a stand alone PCT;

- ◆ Academic research had found ‘little evidence of the positive effects claimed for increased size on the costs of performance of Primary Care Organisations’ (Wilkins et al 2003). This finding was endorsed by Bojke et al 2001; and
- ◆ The Health Commission recently had described the national proposals as ill thought out and unwise so soon after the last restructuring.

2.4 The Working Group went on to express the view that the Council had a very good, close working relationship with the PCT. This relationship extended to the Strategic Partnership for Huntingdonshire. An example was cited concerning the Little Paxton surgery which demonstrated the ability of residents to influence the PCT and achieve the service they needed. This relationship could be jeopardised if either of the options for Cambridgeshire currently under consideration were adopted, and specifically, the ability of the Council to influence the PCT and the level of accountability to local people demonstrated by the Little Paxton example.

2.5 Members were also of the view that Huntingdonshire PCT was well run and financially viable. At the same time they recognised that others were not in the same position. In this case it was suggested that rather than reconfigure it, Huntingdonshire PCT should be held up as an example of best practice from which others could learn. This would not prevent reconfiguration of other PCTs where local circumstances meant it was appropriate.

2.6 With regard to the savings that were claimed would result from the reconfiguration, the Working Group were of the opinion that a countywide PCT would require an additional tier of officers at a local level to deliver the engagement with local residents and communities that would be required of the new PCT. This would mean that the predicted savings would not be realised. In addition, members felt that the benefits of larger scale purchasing could be achieved through partnership approaches between PCTs.

2.7 The Working Group expressed reservations at the capacity of general practitioners to carry out an enhanced role under the Practice Based Commissioning approach, which would be required of them by the end of 2006. They also had concerns at the potential loss of the local focus of community medicine. The SHA report suggested that the PCT would, in future, only have a commissioning role. At present, however, the PCT was the sole provider of community medicine, which included district nursing, school nursing, midwifery services, community psychiatry, services for children with learning difficulties, speech therapy and other similar community care. Clarification was required of who would provide these services in the future.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

3.1 The Working Group has reviewed the options set out by the Strategic Health Authority for the reconfiguration of PCTs in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. A number of concerns have been noted, which are set out above. However, Members felt that the Council response to the SHA should stress the positive aspects of the current

arrangements as the basis for retaining a separate PCT for Huntingdonshire, namely that Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust is well run, it meets local needs, operates within budget and currently complies with the duties referred to in the consultation document that will become the responsibility of the proposed countywide PCT. In addition, the Working Group suggested that the Council's response should be circulated to the SHA Huntingdonshire PCT, the Secretary of State for Health and Local MPs.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

##### **4.1 The Panel therefore**

###### **RECOMMEND**

- a) that the Cabinet be requested to consider informing the SHA that a PCT for Huntingdonshire should be retained having coterminous boundaries with the District Council;
- b) that the Cabinet be requested to stress the positive aspects of the Council's relationship with the PCT and of the way the PCT operates as set out above;
- c) that the Cabinet be requested to endorse the PCT submission to the Department of Health dated 31st October 2005 on a proposal for 'Commissioning a Patient-led NHS in Huntingdonshire'; and
- d) that the Cabinet be requested to send a copy of the response to the PCT, the Secretary of State for Health and local MP's.

(Note: Members are reminded that the District Council's response will be considered by way of a motion to full Council on 22nd February 2006)

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## LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT: GOVERNANCE (Report by Head of Policy)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council, subject to Reservations, has endorsed the draft Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Cambridgeshire. The governance arrangements for the LAA include the establishment of a Board to oversee the achievement of the Agreement.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek the appointment of a Council representative to sit on the LAA Board.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Partners to the Agreement have endorsed the principle of establishing a LAA Board in lieu of a County-wide Local Strategic Partnership, as an executive body with the purpose of developing, communicating and ensuring achievement of the LAA framework outcomes.
- 2.2 The Board will have 12 executive members drawn from business, District Councils/Local Strategic Partnerships, the County Council, the Children & Young People Strategic Partnership, the Police, health, voluntary and community sectors, as follows:-

District Councils/LSPs	5 representatives (one representative from each District, who is also a member of the LSP Board)
Cambridgeshire County Council	2 representatives (one to represent the interest of the Children & Young People Strategic Partnership)
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	1 representative
Health	1 representative
Business	1 representative (also member of the Greater Cambridge Partnership)
Voluntary Sector	2 representatives (one representative covering rural interests)

- 2.3 The terms of reference of the Board include —
- facilitate and deliver improvements to public services in the County by delivering the LAA;

- provide the leadership required to achieve delivery of the LAA having regard to Community Strategies and Plans and other jointly agreed strategies;
- improve partnership working that will lead to continuous development;
- ensure cross-cutting themes are explored and developed so that the full potential of the LAA can be realised;
- oversee the pooling and alignment of resources to tackle priorities in the most cost-effective way;
- oversee the effective use and management of resources;
- demonstrate flexibility and take account of the different needs of different partners;
- maintain clarity as to where responsibility and accountability lie and identify and address areas of under-performance;
- play a high level role in performance review and management to ensure priorities are being delivered; and
- respond to Government reviews of the LAA.

2.4 Currently the District Council is represented on the Board of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership and it would be appropriate for this level of representation to be carried forward to the LAA Board.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 In the circumstances, it is recommended that the Leader of the District Council be nominated to serve on the Local Area Agreement Board.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Cambridgeshire's Local Area Agreement

**Contact Officer:** Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy  
 (01480) 388005



## LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS: SHAPING THEIR FUTURE (Report by Head of Policy)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity to consider and comment on Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping Their Future, a consultation paper issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Copies of the consultation document are available at <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1162320> or on request from the Policy Division.
- 1.2 This report summarises some of the main points of the consultation paper under four sections –
- the role of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and *Sustainable Community Strategies* (SCS);
  - governance;
  - accountability; and
  - capacity.
- 1.3 The consultation is based on the development of existing models and thinking about LSPs and community strategies and is informed by a recent national evaluation and work undertaken by the Audit Commission. It poses a series of questions, set out in the Annexe to this report.
- 1.4 The consultation paper is being considered by a number of the partners involved in the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership (HSP), who will submit their own comments to the ODPM. The Board of the HSP has also considered the implications of the proposals and where appropriate their comments have been incorporated into section 7 – Implications and Conclusions, post.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The consultation is part of the Government's debate on the future of local government and includes key ambitions for the future development of LSPs, including –
- a commitment from to the LSP model of partnerships and the SCS as an over-arching local plan;
  - the involvement of local authorities, including Members, in facilitating action through the LSP and SCS;
  - delivering against the priorities for joint action in the SCS, Local Area Agreement (LAA), Local Development Framework, etc; and

- engagement with neighbourhoods and parishes so that they can influence service delivery.

### 3. THE ROLE OF LSPs AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGIES

3.1 The Government suggests that LSPs should increasingly become involved in the delivery and commissioning of services.

3.2 LSPs also have key roles in terms of increasing the opportunities for neighbourhood engagement and in supporting such engagement by ensuring that neighbourhoods and parish councils can influence priorities. Linked to this role is the development of coordinating community leadership through partnership.

3.3 A further influence on the role of the LSP is the change in focus of Community Strategies to become *Sustainable* Community Strategies with fully integrated social, environmental and economic objectives. The Government envisage enhancement of strategies by better definition and analysis of baseline data and evidence, input from neighbourhoods/partners and links to regional and sub-regional activities.

3.4 The Government therefore envisage the role of LSPs as —

- a partnership of partnerships, providing the strategic coordination and linking with other plans and bodies at regional, sub-regional and local level;
- producing and delivering a *Sustainable* Community Strategy;
- developing and driving the effective delivery of Local Area Agreements; and
- agreeing an action plan for achieving Sustainable Community Strategy priorities, incorporating the LAA outcomes.

3.5 In two tier areas, it is expected that —

- **County level LSPs** will agree the LAA and relevant action plan, taking into account priorities identified by District Councils and LSPs in their community strategies;
- **District level LSPs** will, through their Sustainable Community Strategies, be fully involved in the drawing-up and implementing of the County-wide Sustainable Community Strategy and will reflect the LAA outcomes in the District LSPs' action plans and future iterations of District-led plans including Local Development Frameworks.

3.6 The consultation paper also re-states the need to make explicit the relationship with Local Development Frameworks to ensure that the land use requirements of the SCS are implemented.

3.7 In two tier areas the consultation paper supports arrangements where either District level SCS are aggregated to form a County Strategy or the County Strategy focuses on where it can add value to District Strategies.

#### **4. GOVERNANCE**

4.1 The consultation paper identifies that transparent and effective governance arrangements are essential to enable LSPs to —

- fulfil their coordinating role as a partnership of partnerships;
- move from advisory to commissioning’
- avoid duplication; and
- ensure wide representation, particularly the involvement of local authorities.

4.2 It is recognised that the model of governance for LSPs must reflect local circumstances and detailed structures are not specified. However, the paper outlines a basic structure which includes an Executive Board which is able to take strategic decisions, underpinned by local thematic partnerships which will effectively be the delivery mechanisms for the partnership. Consideration is being given to the issue of geographic boundaries of partner organisation and whether these can be aligned. The consultation paper also discusses the idea of Local Public Service Boards, which it believes should be established within the LSP, rather than as a rival to it to avoid the blurring of accountability and decision-making.

4.3 Local Area Agreements are seen as a means of delivering outcomes to achieve the priorities of the LSP and SCS and the consultation paper suggests the usefulness of structuring LSPs around the four blocks of LAAs (safer, stronger communities; children and young people; healthier communities and older people; and economic development and enterprise) with other partnership groups as necessary.

4.4 Active and wide representation in all sections of the LSP is seen to be a key to effective governance and the consultation paper specifically highlights the need for involvement of the voluntary and community sector and business sectors.

4.5 The consultation paper discusses the benefits of providing LSPs with some form of legislative foundation, to —

- signal the importance of partnership working;
- reinforce and clarifying the LSP’s role;
- reiterate the local authority’s role;
- set out minimum expectation on partners; and
- ensure that key public sector agencies are engaged in the partnership.

4.6 However, the Government recognises that such a model could create a new statutory entity and a new layer of local bureaucracy to rival democratically elected local authorities. As such it is not a model

which they wish to pursue and as an alternative suggest a “duty to co-operate” - following the model applied to partnerships such as the Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships and, more recently, the Children’s Trust arrangements.

## **5. ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 5.1 The consultation paper identifies that clear accountability requires —
- mutually understood and accepted ways of working;
  - internal performance management; and
  - external scrutiny.
- 5.2 Within the LSP, each partner is responsible for the actions that they agree to undertake and as such are accountable to their organisation and to the local community. The consultation paper suggests that formal agreements or protocols between partners can be an effective way of ensuring clarity about who is responsible for the different elements of the SCS and LAA delivery.
- 5.3 Although the Government are considering creating a duty on public sector bodies to participate, they have no plans to make LSPs statutory bodies. Local authorities with their democratic mandate and community leadership role are ultimately responsible therefore for the LSP, SCS and the delivery of LAAs.
- 5.4 Effective performance management is an important element which will help to ensure accountability for allocating delivery of outcomes to partners and monitoring progress against performance.
- 5.5 Elected members of local authorities have a unique role and as such their support to the LSP and community strategy process is seen as crucial to achieving success. However, in terms of accountability, existing mechanisms like the Overview & Scrutiny role are not being used fully in terms of LSPs. Research supporting the consultation paper suggests that the precise role of elected members – both Executive and non-Executive - is not currently clear and highlights one potential role of Overview & Scrutiny Panels in working with their Executive to identify community needs, in scrutinising plans and priorities, and in evaluating success.
- 5.6 The consultation paper argues that it is crucial that local residents are involved in a coherent way that makes most efficient use of partner resources and residents’ time. It suggests that the alignment of the local development framework’s statement of community involvement with the development of SCS and the LAA would provide an opportunity to establish such a practice.

## **6. CAPACITY ISSUES**

- 6.1 The consultation paper recognises that to meet this changing role the capacity of LSPs is becoming increasingly important, in particular —
- the skills needed to develop effective partnerships;

- the resources available for developing the SCS and the operation of the Partnerships;
  - the availability of general support and training to partners of the LSP.
- 6.2 The consultation paper identifies some of the new or changing skills required by the shift in the role of Strategic Partnerships. It also identifies that the majority of funding for Strategic Partnerships currently comes from resources from within local authorities, but that increasingly partner organisations are allocating resources to the achievement of priorities through partnership.

## **7. IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 The consultation on the future shape of Local Strategic Partnerships is intended to form part of the debate on the future of local government. However, it is regarded as premature to consider these proposals in isolation from suggestions for changes in the structure of local government.
- 7.2 The model used in the consultation paper is based on a presumption that each local authority should have its own LSP and sustainable community Strategy. This model is different from the one currently operating in Huntingdonshire/Cambridgeshire. While there is some attempt to discuss the respective roles in a two-tier structure, the consultation paper does not appear to grasp the complexity of partnership working across a number of tiers, nor does it offer the clarity which would avoid duplication or add value to the work of individual partners.
- 7.3 There is a general consensus within the membership of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership that any guidance on the structure and roles of Strategic Partnerships should not be prescriptive. This would allow effective partnerships to develop which meet local circumstances. Many of the proposals to develop strategic partnerships identified in the consultation paper are being implemented locally, albeit some are in the early stages of development.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 The Cabinet are requested to endorse the comments set out in the conclusions to this report for submission as part of the consultation exercise, together with any specific comments relating to the direct questions set out in the Annexe to this report.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping Their Future – a consultation paper issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, December 2005.

**Contact Officer:** Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy  
 ☎ (01480) 388005

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**Key Questions*****The role of LSPs and Sustainable Community Strategies  
LSPs, Sustainable Community Strategies and LAAs***

1: Do you agree that the key role of the LSP should be to develop the vision for the local area, through the Sustainable Community Strategy and the 'delivery contract' through the LAA (as set out in figures 1 & 2)

***Regional/sub-regional engagement***

2: We believe it is important that LSPs reflect regional/sub-regional plans where relevant in their Sustainable Community Strategy priorities and that regional organisations and partnerships take account of key local needs. How can this greater co-ordination best be facilitated?

***Links to local plans***

3: Would a requirement on bodies producing theme or service-based plans to 'have regard' to the Sustainable Community Strategy in doing so and vice versa, increase the LSP's ability to take the over-arching view in an area?

***Sustainable Community Strategies***

4: Are the proposed steps in the development of a Sustainable Community Strategy correct?

5: What more could be done to ensure Sustainable Community Strategies are better able to make the links between social, economic and environmental goals and to deal more effectively with the area's cross-boundary and longer-term impacts ?

***Neighbourhood Engagement***

6: What should be the role of the LSP in supporting neighbourhood engagement and ensuring the neighbourhood/parish voice, including diverse and minority communities, is heard at the principal local level?

7: In two-tier areas, is it most appropriate for the responsibility for neighbourhood engagement to rest with the district level LSP?

***Links with Local Development Framework***

8: How can spatial planning teams best contribute to Sustainable Community Strategies through the LSP and ensure that LDFs and Sustainable Community Strategies are closely linked?

9: How could revised guidance and accompanying support materials best ensure that Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Development Frameworks join up effectively?

### ***Two-tier areas***

10: Should every local authority area have its own LSP?

11: Would the establishment of a greater delineation of roles between county and district LSPs as suggested be sensible?

12: We believe that it is important that the LSP is made up of the thematic partnerships in the area together with an LSP board. What is your view?

13: We believe that a rationalisation of local partnerships would help the LSP executive take an effective overview. Would clustering partnerships around the four LAA blocks be a sensible way to achieve this?

14: We believe that the geographic boundaries of partners within LSPs is important. What do you see as the opportunities for, and barriers to, co-terminosity shared geographic boundaries?

15: Within the LSP framework and its established priorities, would the creation of single delivery vehicles to tackle particular issues be helpful?

### ***Ensuring wide representation***

16: How can the neighbourhood and parish, tiers be involved most effectively on the LSP on a) the executive and b) individual thematic partnerships?

17: How can the private, voluntary and community sectors be involved most effectively on the LSP as a) the executive and b) individual thematic partnerships?

### ***Providing a legislative foundation***

18: Would a duty to co-operate with the local authority, in producing and implementing the Community Strategy, help to set LSPs on a firmer footing and better enable their enhanced delivery co-ordination role?

19: If so, what obligations, such as attendance, financial or staff support, would be useful to place on partners?

20: If so, which public sector agencies would the duty be most sensibly placed on?

21: Should there be a statutory duty on local authorities and named partners to promote the engagement of the voluntary and community sectors in the LSP?

### ***Accountability between partners***

22: Should each partnership be encouraged to produce protocols or 'partnership agreements' between partners to ensure clear lines of accountability for the delivery of agreed outcomes?



23: We believe that if partnership working was included as part of other key agencies' assessments it would be effective in securing greater commitment from other public sector agencies. What are your views?

***Involvement of local councillors***

24: What do you see as the key role for executive councillors within LSPs?

25: What do you see as the appropriate role for backbenchers particularly in ensuring a high quality of local engagement?

26: What would make councillors' powers of overview and scrutiny more effective in scrutinising the 4 blocks of the LAA?

***Involvement of Members of Parliament***

27: What would be the most appropriate way for a Member of Parliament to be involved with the LSP and how can we ensure that it is complementary to the role of local councillors?

***Involvement of Communities Served***

28: How can we promote effective community engagement and involvement, from all sections of the community in shaping local priorities and public services?

29: How can we maximise the opportunities for joint policy and joint activity on community engagement, including the LDF, the LAA and the Sustainable Community Strategy?

30: How can accountability to local people and businesses be enhanced?

31: What are your LSP's key support/skill gaps?

32: What extra or different support would be most helpful in shifting to a more delivery focused role?

33: How would LSPs prefer to receive information and support; through guidance, toolkits, sign-posting to existing information, practical learning opportunities etc?

34: How can LSPs ensure that adequate learning and support provision is available to build the capacity of communities to engage with the LSP and its partners at the various levels?

35: What learning or development do you feel is required by LSPs in order to delivery sustainable communities that embody the principles of sustainable development at the local level?

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**CABINET**

**23 FEBRUARY 2006**

## **MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME – 2005/06 (Report by the Head of Financial Services)**

### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1** This report highlights the variations from the currently approved Capital Programme (as updated for any member or officer decisions already taken in accordance with the Code of Financial Management).
- 1.2** More detailed information on specific schemes can be obtained from the relevant Head of Service.

### **2. MONITORING INFORMATION**

- 2.1** The Budget approved in February 2005 and any subsequent adjustments are shown below:-

	Gross Budget £000	External Contributions £000	Net Budget £000
<b>Capital</b>			
Approved (February 2005)	27,658	4,571	23,087
Delayed/Deferred from 2004/05 (21 July 2005)	5,760	1,008	4,752
Cabinet approved variations	729	-375	1,104
<b>Adjusted Total Capital Budget</b>	<b>34,147</b>	<b>5,204</b>	<b>28,943</b>
<b>Forecast Variations</b>			
Previously reported (21 July and 3 November)			
Timing Variations	-9,947	-649	-9,298
Cost Variations	-180		-180
Further variations included in draft Medium Term Plan and this report			
MTP Timing Variations	-2,379	-1,662	-717
MTP Cost Variations	-153	45	-198
Post MTP Variations (See para 2.2)	-181		-181
<b>Forecast Capital Expenditure for 2005/06</b>	<b>21,499</b>	<b>2,938</b>	<b>18,561</b>

- 2.2** Since the recent updating of the Medium Term Plan, further timing changes have been identified and are listed below:-

	<b>£000</b>
<b>Expenditure deferred to 2006/07</b>	
Great Whyte, Ramsey – Environmental Improvement – delayed due to objections by the Town Council which have now been resolved, now expected on-site May 2006.	-147
CCTV – Improvements at Leisure Centres – delayed as a result of delays to other projects at Sawtry and St Neots.	-45
Increase in staff time charged to capital schemes from revenue	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>-181</b>

- 2.3 Annex A shows, for each scheme, any variation in the planned completion date or the scheme cost. The final page of the Annex defines the content of each column.

### 3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

	2005/ 2006	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010
<b>Post MTP variations</b>	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Net Capital	-181	181			
Net Revenue	-15	-5			

### 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet:

- i) Note the monitoring statement at Annex A.
- ii) Note the latest variations and their estimated capital and revenue impact.

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS

Capital programme and monitoring working papers.

Previous Cabinet and Committee reports on capital expenditure.

Contact Officer – Steve Couper ☎ 01480 388103

## MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

## Active Schemes 2005/06

	Approved Date	COMPLETION		Slippage (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS
		Approved (weeks)	Deferral (weeks)		Approved 2005/06	Approved Total	Projected Variance	
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>								
<b>Economic Development</b>								
643	30-Mar-06	0	0	0	2091	8645	0	
<b>Information Technology</b>								
>>		0	0	0	0	20	0	
<b>Leisure Line Upgrades</b>								
<b>Total for Portfolio</b>					6574	8665	0	
<b>PORTFOLIO: Environment &amp; Transport</b>								
<b>Car Parks</b>								
480	31-Mar-07	0	0	0	0	2246	0	
00/014/A	30-Jan-06	0	0	0	22	115	0	
02/017/B	30-Dec-03	0	91	**	0	22	0	Now complete
<b>CCTV</b>								
00/020.02	30-Mar-06	0	0	0	0	99	0	
<b>Crime Reduction</b>								
00/036.03	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	0	23	0	St Neots Riverside car park - £15k committed Work started on site.
<b>Environmental Improvements</b>								
03/431.03	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	0	109	0	Objections removed by Town Council - design will now continue with start on site in May 2006
>>	30-Sep-05	0	43		22	184	0	complete Orders placed for streetlighting. Scheme has been reduced.
02/241/B	28-Jul-06	0	0	0	342	14	0	
01/049/A	31-Dec-05	0	-6	**	70	1130	0	
02/051/A	31-Mar-05	0	52		22	20	0	Most schemes now complete
>>	30-Mar-06	0	-13	**	0	66	0	
01/157.02	31-Mar-05	0	13	**	84	84	0	
01/157.03	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	0	86	0	
<b>Public Conveniences</b>								
01/163/A	01-Feb-04	0	112		0	36	0	Cabinet have approved the first years work. Construction starts in

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

10 February 2006

Active Schemes 2005/06

	Approved Date	COMPLETION Deferral (weeks)	Slippage (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's		COMMENTS			
				Approved 2005/06	Projected Variance				
>> 03/302/A	New Public Conveniences	31-Dec-06	0	0	300	1250	0	APC's in villages being removed Cabinet approved scheme and design is starting on the work	
<b>Public Transport Support</b>									
03/400.00	Bus Shelters - Extra Provision (03/04)	31-Jan-04	0	69 **	0	33	0		
03/400.01	Bus Shelters - Extra Provision (04/05)	30-Dec-04	0	26 **	35	35	0		
03/400.02	Bus Shelters - Extra Provision (05/06)	28-Feb-06	0	-22 **	0	70	0		
>> 483	Rural Bus Stop Provision	28-Feb-05	0	48 **	25	25	0		
<b>Transportation</b>									
>> 00/003.03A	Accessibility Improvements/Signs (05/06)	28-Feb-06	0	-9 **	0	0	#		
03/366/A	Cycle Route - Views Common, Huntingdon	30-Oct-03	0	122	1	18	0	Work started on site early Jan 2006, due completion in March 2006	
03/361.01	Huntingdon Market Town Transport Strategy (04/05)	31-Mar-05	0	30 **	72	72	0	Bus shelters completed	
03/361.02	Huntingdon Market Town Transport Strategy (05/06)	30-Mar-06	0	0	0	2	0	GMC safety and cycleway Ambury Rd Cycleway	
>> 01/095.02	Local Transport Plan (04/05)	05-Feb-05	0	0 **	88	88	0	schemes being designed	
01/095.03	Local Transport Plan (05/06)	30-Mar-06	0	0	0	89	0	Work planned to start in March 2006	
>> 02/132/A	Railway Stations - Improvements (04/05)	28-Feb-05	0	82	15	15	0	Work due to start in march	
02/132.01	Railway Stations - Improvements (05/06)	30-Mar-06	0	13	0	15	0	Strategy not being carried out yet - delay by County	
03/363.02	Ramsey Market Town Transport Strategy (05/06)	30-Mar-07	0	0	0	42	0	Possible Island Common cycleway Might be transferred to St Neots town to Railway Station	
01/152.02	Safe Cycle Routes (04/05)	31-Mar-05	0	52	105	0	0	GMC cycleway Island Common cycleway - delay due to legal and Env Agency problems	
01/152.03	Safe Cycle Routes (05/06)	30-Mar-06	0	0	0	20	0		
>> 02/250.02	St Neots Transport Strategy (04/05)	31-Mar-05	0	52	95	97	0	Dependant on claim from insurance companies which has been received but refused. Now passed to our insurers	
<b>Waste Management</b>									
602	Optional Wheeled Bins for Dry Recyclables	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	376	0		
<b>Watercourses</b>									
>>	Henbrook, St Neots - Retaining Wall	30-Mar-04	0	104	48	48	0		
<b>Total for Portfolio</b>					3973	6529	0		

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

10 February 2006

Active Schemes 2005/06

	Approved Date	COMPLETION		Slippage (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS
		Deferral (weeks)	Approved 2005/06		Approved Total	Projected Variance		
<b>PORTFOLIO: Finance</b>								
<b>Administration</b>								
	03/999.03	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	127	0	
	VAT Exempt Capital (05/06)							
<b>Housing Benefits</b>								
>>	626	31-Mar-06	0	21	0	18	0	
	Housing Benefits - Wireless Working							
<b>PORTFOLIO: Housing &amp; Public Health</b>								
<b>Housing Support</b>								
	443	30-Mar-06	0	0	0	53	0	
	Common Housing Register							
	01/039.03	30-Mar-06	0	0	0	769	0	
	Disabled Facilities Grants (05/06)							
>>	00/141.03	30-Mar-06	0	0	0	202	0	Underspend of £85k predicted. Drop in OT referrals as a result of staff shortages at the PCT.
	HRAs and RENs (05/06)							
		31-Mar-05	0	52	1000	336	0	Underspend of £14k predicted. Budget is £1m plus £27k inflation plus £751,034 carried over (for Barford Road etc). £630,160 is anticipated expenditure for the year. As agreed, remainder is carried over pending announcements on Housing Corporation allocation.
	Social Housing Grant (Contingency) (04/05)							
		30-Mar-06	0	0	0	686	0	
	Social Housing Grant (Contingency) (05/06)							
<b>PORTFOLIO: Leader</b>								
<b>Economic Development</b>								
>>	03/365/A	28-Feb-04	0	130	87	102	0	looking at small schemes in the park for localised improvements
	Huntingdon Boatyard Improvements							
<b>Office Accommodation</b>								
	03/300/A	31-Mar-06	104	0	90	23825	0	Council decided in December 2005 to carry on negotiations with lowest tenderer.
	Pathfinder House Imps and One Stop Shop							

## Active Schemes 2005/06

	Approved Date	COMPLETION Deferral (weeks)	Slippage (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS
				Approved 2005/06	Approved Total	Projected Variance	
01/128/A	30-Mar-04	0	104	-10	80	-17	DDA access issues identified at Pathfinder House being addressed, taking account of limited life of building. Projects on external issues ongoing as reported to COMT. Priority Centre access to DC Offices
<b>Planning Policy and Conservation</b>							
>> 03/358/A	31-Mar-05	0	0	50	40	-30	Rural Renewal NE Hunts - Pump Priming (04/05)
<b>Total for Portfolio</b>				188	24047	-47	
<b>PORTFOLIO: Leisure</b>							
<b>Community Initiatives</b>							
03/423.01	31-Mar-06	0	-26 **	0	10	0	Community Information Project (05/06)
<b>Leisure Events and Facilities</b>							
02/058/A	31-Mar-05	0	0	10	20	0	Grafham Water Centre Partnership Contribution
>> 00/999.02	31-Mar-05	0	0	111	111	0	Local Leisure Project Grants (04/05)
00/999.03	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	61	0	Local Leisure Project Grants (05/06)
<b>Leisure Policy and Development</b>							
00/001/B	01-Mar-02	0	212	0	30	0	St Neots Tennis Initiative Partnership NOF bid accepted Awaiting confirmation of plans for entire site
<b>Parks and Open Spaces</b>							
>> 446	31-Mar-07	0	52	205	210	0	Football Improvements St Neots - Priory Park Agreed in principle with Local Football Partnership, application for funding being prepared. Architect gained Planning Permission. St Ives - Outdoor Centre On hold pending Planning Applications by Developers. Submissions to Football Foundation in March 06
>> 01/121/A	30-Nov-03	0	121	1	120	0	Pilot Linear Park Development O. Installation of street lighting awaited commenced scheme complete
03/369.01	31-Mar-04	0	60 **	0	46	0	Play Equipment (03/04)
03/369.02	31-Mar-05	0	17 **	49	49	0	Play Equipment (04/05)
03/369.03	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	52	0	Play Equipment (05/06) Schemes being designed



MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

10 February 2006

Active Schemes 2005/06

	Approved Date	COMPLETION Deferral (weeks)	Slippage (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS
				Approved 2005/06	Approved Total	Projected Variance	
467	31-Mar-05	0	17	100	100	0	All works completed. Skate Park opened officially on 17th September 2005. Vert Ramp is now to be built following receipt of further external grant. Omitted from original tender list of equipment.
01/107/A	30-Dec-03	0	82	0	40	0	Order placed. Fabrication completed and galvanised, awaiting painting.
02/004.03	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	64	0	Schemes dependant on Partnership Funding.
<b>Recreation Centres</b>							
01/135.01	31-Mar-04	0	78	0	30	0	£19k carried forward from 03/04 pending return of Disabled provision reports on all Centres. Any unused funds to be carried forward.
>> 02/134.01	31-Mar-05	0	0 **	803	803	0	Tenders out in stages. RLC/SLC returns 9/7, HLC/SNLC returns 23/7, SILC returns 10/8 (late arrived 27/8) RLC/SLC under way. HLC under way. SILC under way. Substantial completion March05. Carry forward any unused funds to 05/06.
02/134.02	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	423	0	Delivery of year 3 programme (05/06) to be between Centre Management, Internal HDC teams, and external providers Full implementation of scheme delayed till all invoices received from year 2. Any residue to be carried fwd to

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

10 February 2006

Active Schemes 2005/06

	Approved Date	COMPLETION		Slippage (weeks)	NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS	
		Deferral (weeks)	Approved Date		Approved 2005/06	Approved Total	Projected Variance		
03/424/A	31-Jan-05	0	13	**	200	339	0	Modifications to original plan now incorporated. Scheme now projected at £308k combining both schemes (L260 and L261) and increasing resultant revenue. Lowest tender 50k over budget. Re-tendering. Returned 30 Sep 04. Renegotiated with lowest tender. Report to Cabinet for 14/10/04 requesting total of 328k - extra 20k required. Cabinet approval given - as long as funding is taken from elsewhere in Leisure Capital programme. Involves reduction and rephasing of Condition Survey. Work commenced 29/11 - completion by 07 May 05 Currently on schedule Apr 05 - still on schedule. Expected completion 05/05/05. Official opening 07/05/05	
02/262/B	01-Apr-05	0	56		614	1389	0	Tenders complete Commenced 12th Sept 05. 40 week contract. Starts with replacement hard play area, then moves to building works. Still issues on car/coach park with no progress on College grant application. Progress as at 26 Jan 06 excellent Tenders came in 100K over expected.	
03/333/A	30-Nov-03	0	69		0	588	0	Work deferred. No decision on whether to proceed with re-tendering or packaging with	
<b>PORTFOLIO: Operations &amp; Information Technology</b>					<b>Total for Portfolio</b>	<b>1944</b>	<b>4485</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Information Technology</b>									
495	Corporate Electronic Document Management System	0	0	0	0	637	0		
03/301.00	Customer First - Programme Wide	0	0	0	-191	197	0		
03/301.20	Customer First - People and Facilities	0	0	0	165	325	0		
03/301.30	Customer First - Technical Infrastructure	0	0	0	806	1816	0		

MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT

10 February 2006

Active Schemes 2005/06

	Approved Date	COMPLETION			NET EXPENDITURE £000's			COMMENTS
		Approved Date	Deferral (weeks)	Slippage (weeks)	Approved 2005/06	Approved Total	Projected Variance	
03/301.10	31-Mar-07	0	0	0	161	473	0	Key date 2 = release 2 into call centre
03/375/A	31-Mar-04	104	0	0	37	100	0	Rollout delayed due to other staff commitments
03/301.04	31-Mar-06	52	0	0	38	20	-58	Review cancelled
01/082.02	31-Mar-05	0	8	**	45	45	0	Project complete
03/301.11	31-Mar-05	52	0	0	48	128	0	Financial interface and internal kiosk delayed due to staff availability
>>	31-Mar-05	52	0	0	95	101	0	Procurement delayed - change of PM
	31-Oct-05	0	21	0	162	210	0	Delayed due to staff changes in Personnel
>>	31-Mar-04	104	0	0	29	35	0	Awaiting software enhancements to Uniform for listed buildings and conservation group
	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	0	20	0	New bid approved by DoCT
03/301.04	31-Mar-04	74	0	**	23	23	0	Project complete
494	31-Mar-07	0	0	0	6	216	0	Delayed pending specification of requirements for new HQ building
<b>Operations Services</b>								
462	31-Mar-05	0	52	0	13	13	0	
02/192.03	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	0	1241	-166	
<b>Total for Portfolio</b>					2067	5600	-224	
<b>PORTFOLIO: Planning Strategy</b>								
<b>Planning Policy and Conservation</b>								
>>	01/077/A	0	0	0	110	1128	0	Completion date quoted relates only to activity in 2003/04. The scheme runs to 2005/06.
>>	03/358.01	0	0	0	0	52	-28	Completion date quoted relates only to activity funded in 2003/04. The scheme runs to 2006/07.
	02/224/A	0	4	0	0	275	0	
<b>Total for Portfolio</b>					117	1455	-28	
<b>PORTFOLIO: Public Health &amp; Community Safety</b>								
<b>Crime Reduction</b>								
>>	00/036.02	0	0	**	22	22	0	All work committed and bills awaited

Active Schemes 2005/06

	Approved Date	COMPLETION		Slippage (weeks)	Approved 2005/06	NET EXPENDITURE £000's		COMMENTS	
		Deferral (weeks)	Approved			Approved Total	Projected Variance		
<b>Environmental Improvements</b>									
>>	01/053/A	Yaxley - Broadway	01-Mar-03	0	52 **	0	130	0	CCC responsible for delivery of scheme.
<b>Total for Portfolio</b>						0	152	0	
<b>PORTFOLIO: Resources &amp; Policy</b>									
<b>Information Technology</b>									
>>	03/301.04	Land Charges Application Review (03/04)	31-Mar-04	117	0	1	68	0	Revised bid approved by DoCT
	450	Photocopiers Replacement	31-Mar-06	0	0	0	27	0	
>>	01/124/A	Replacement of Printing Equipment/Systems	31-Mar-03	34	0 **	0	303	0	
<b>Total for Portfolio</b>						60	398	0	
<b>Total all Portfolio</b>						16778	53522	-299	

## ANNEX: MTP - CAPITAL SCHEMES MONITORING REPORT - DEFINITIONS

**Active Schemes 2005/06** All schemes with approved funding (gross or net) in the year to which the report relates or which have a predicted 'current' or 'actual' completion date within the year.

PORTFOLIO:	ENVIRONMENT	COMPLETION				NET EXPENDITURE £000's				COMMENTS	
		Approved Date	Deferral (weeks)	Slippage (weeks)	Approved 2005/06	Approved Total	Projected Variance				
CCTV											
019	CCTV - Alarm Actuated Camera	Position	31-Dec-02	0	0	40	40	0			
<i>Project appraisal reference</i>	<i>Name of scheme</i>	<i>The date given for the completion of the project in the original project appraisal or in a subsequently approved revised project appraisal.</i>	<i>The currently predicted or actual (for completed schemes) time in weeks by which completion will vary from the approved date.</i>	<i>The currently predicted or actual time in weeks by which completion will vary from the approved date or extend beyond the period for which a 'deferral' has been authorised.</i>	<i>Net amount included in MTP for the current year together any approved slippage from the previous year.</i>	<i>The overall net cost of the scheme based on historic actuals and future approved.</i>	<i>The projected difference between the total net cost of the scheme and the actual net expenditure to deliver the scheme.</i>	<i>Brief narrative describing any deferral, slippage or financial variance.</i>			
<i>Projects are allocated to portfolio holders and then grouped by function.</i>		<i>For appraisals that relate to an annually recurring sum the approved date is assumed as the end of March for the year being reported on.</i>	<i>To qualify as a 'deferral' the delay/acceleration must have been approved in advance by a project board (which includes a Chief Officer).</i>	<i>Schemes where deferral/slippage is based on an 'actual' completion date are distinguished in the report by **.</i>		<i>For annually recurring sums this is the current year funding only. These are indicated in the report by #.</i>					



CABINET

23 FEBRUARY 2006

## TREASURY MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE (Report by the Head of Financial Services)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

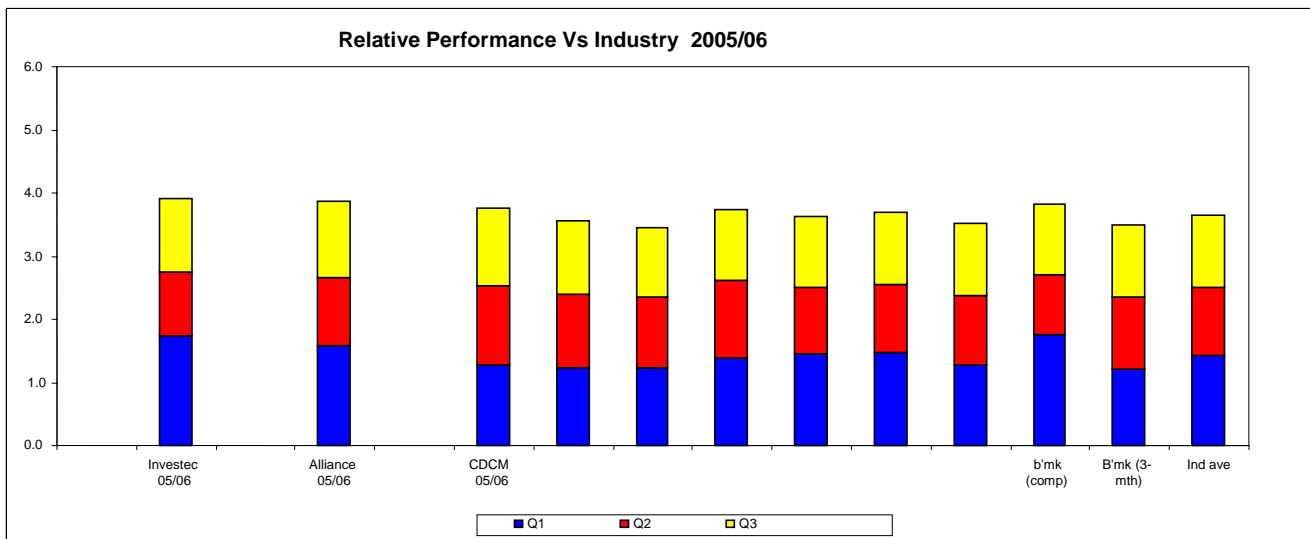
- 1.1. This report comments on the performance of the fund from October to December 2005. Since April 2005 the Fund Managers have managed £73m of the Council's funds: £26.5m with Investec, £26.5m with Alliance Capital and £20m with CDCM.
- 1.2. The Monetary Policy Committee has held the base rate at 4.5% since August 2005.

### 2. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Annex A provides comparative tables showing investment returns over various periods.

#### 2.2 October to December 2005

The Council's three Fund Managers all achieved a satisfactory, although uninspiring performance during the quarter. However they have all either reached or out-performed their benchmark, the industry average (see chart below) and the 7-day rate during the quarter and in the 9 months from April 2005.



Investec continues to trade mostly in gilts, whereas Alliance Capital prefers to invest in corporate bonds and floating rate notes. CDCM succeeded in committing £8m for periods in excess of 1 year on attractive rates that will achieve 5.1% during 2006/7.

### **2.3 Since start of new mandates (July/August 2000)**

The Authority appointed the three Fund Managers and gave them new mandates in 2000. Since that time they have again exceeded their benchmarks, the industry average and the 7 day rate. Overall returns are very similar but as at December 2005, CDCM was the best performing of the three Managers.

### **3. PERFORMANCE AGAINST BUDGET IN 2005/6**

3.1 The estimated outturn of investment interest is £572k more than in the budget mainly due to the deferral of capital schemes. All the funds are expected to achieve the 5% return assumed in the budget.

### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet note this report.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Working papers in Financial Services

### **CONTACT OFFICER**

Steve Couper – Head of Financial Services Tel. 01480 388103



## ANNEX A

<b>PERFORMANCE FOR THE QUARTER OCTOBER 2005 - DECEMBER 2005</b>					
	Performance %	HDC Benchmark %	Industry Average %	Variation from	
				HDC Benchmark %	Industry average %
<b>Investec</b>	<b>1.16</b>	1.13	1.13	<b>+0.03</b>	<b>+0.03</b>
<b>Alliance</b>	<b>1.20</b>	1.13	1.13	<b>+0.07</b>	<b>+0.07</b>
<b>CDCM</b>	<b>1.23</b>	1.14	1.13	<b>+0.09</b>	<b>+0.10</b>

<b>PERFORMANCE FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 2005 – DECEMBER 2005</b>					
	Performance %	HDC Benchmark %	Industry Average %	Variation from	
				HDC Benchmark %	Industry average %
<b>Investec</b>	<b>3.96</b>	3.88*	3.68	<b>+0.08</b>	<b>+0.28</b>
<b>Alliance</b>	<b>3.88</b>	3.88*	3.68	<b>0.0</b>	<b>+0.20</b>
<b>CDCM</b>	<b>3.75</b>	3.49**	3.68	<b>+0.26</b>	<b>+0.07</b>

<b>CUMULATIVE PERFORMANCE SINCE JULY 2000</b>					
	Performance %	HDC Benchmark %	Industry Average %	Variation from	
				HDC Benchmark %	Industry average %
<b>Investec</b>	<b>30.74</b>	30.19	28.57	<b>+0.55</b>	<b>+2.17</b>
<b>Alliance #</b>	<b>30.63</b>	29.58	27.92	<b>+1.05</b>	<b>+2.71</b>
<b>CDCM</b>	<b>30.83</b>	27.48	28.57	<b>+3.35</b>	<b>+2.26</b>

# The mandate with Alliance Capital started in August 2000

\* Composite of 60% Merrill Lynch 3 month LIBID (London Inter-Bank Bid Rate) and 40% ML 0-5yr Gilt Index.

\*\* 3 month LIBID

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**CABINET**

**23 FEBRUARY 2006**

## **HIGHWAYS AGENCY 2006**

**(Report by Head of Environment & Transport)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Council undertook certain highways maintenance functions, on behalf of the Cambridgeshire County Council, from 1974 until 31 March 2005. These functions were performed under the terms of an agency agreement (the 'Highways Agency') as provided for in the Local Government Act 1972.
- 1.2 The full Highways Agency terminated in March 2005 and the employees involved in the running of the highways maintenance contract were transferred to the County Council.
- 1.3 Other work carried out under the Highways Agency was performed by the Operations Division and included grass cutting on Highway verge and weed control on kerbed roads. Environment & Transport's engineering team undertook design work on jointly funded schemes.
- 1.4 The County Council paid for the equivalent of the cutting of highway verges 4 times each year in the town areas included in the Highways Agency. This Council cuts its own grass areas about 10-11 times each year and so the Council agreed to enhance the standard of service by funding the extra frequency of highway verge grass cutting so that it was harmonised with that of adjoining public open spaces. Since these areas generally abut each other, differing standards will appear very obvious and complaints would have been received.
- 1.5 This Council also puts extra funds into weed spraying. The County Council pays for the cleansing of kerbed channels on all roads in the district. However since there are problems from weeds growing in the kerblines and across the pavement which gives the impression of uncleansed roads, this Council agreed to enhance this to give better treatment to the whole paved and kerbed area. This policy has been developed over the last 4-5 years.

### **2. FUTURE AGENCY WORK**

- 2.1 At their meeting on 14 July 2004, Cabinet agreed to the termination of the existing highway agency agreement and also resolved to:
  - (e) "support the proposal to develop a co-ordinated 'street-scene' approach to the management of complementary services affecting public areas; and
  - (f) authorise the Director of Operational Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor responsible for Planning Strategy, to seek to secure a new agreement with the County Council for the discharge of the functions listed at paragraph 6.2 of the report and

to report the outcome of the negotiations to a future meeting of the Cabinet.”

2.2 Paragraph 6.2 of the previous report stated:

“There are, however, a range of highways related activities that could be undertaken by the District Council that would benefit local communities and contribute to the development of a co-ordinated ‘street-scene’ service. These are –

- design of environmental improvements within the highway
- design of jointly funded transport schemes, such as cycleways
- management of on-street parking
- verge maintenance
- weed spraying
- bus shelters
- licensing of pavement cafes
- sign washing
- removal of fly posting and A-boards”

2.3 It was not possible before the termination of the agreement in April 2005 to conclude a comprehensive agreement for 2005/06 and it was agreed therefore, that the Council would continue to deliver all of the items listed in 2.2, except sign washing and removal of fly posters and A boards, which had not been carried out previously, until an alternative agreement was made. The budget for the services provided by the County Council was as the previous year with the agreed inflation increase.

2.4 Negotiations have been taking place with the County Council regarding the provision of the above services for future years.

### **3. PROGRESS ON THE NEGOTIATIONS**

3.1 The County Council is presently out to tender for a comprehensive county-wide Highway Services contract which will include all highway maintenance, design of schemes and their construction. This contract is due to start in September 2006. The County Council, however, is still prepared to enter into a separate agency with this Council for the majority of the work listed in paragraph 2.2 above.

3.2 The County Council has a very small budget for the washing of signs and has not resolved its policy on A Boards in town centres. It is therefore not proposed to take on this work. The removal of illegal signs and graffiti is currently funded by the district and undertaken by the Operations Division.

3.3 The County Council has been paying the District Council for maintaining their verges on the basis of 4 cuts per year. Where this Council has been cutting more frequently to match the frequency given to our own land, the District Council has been paying for the difference.

3.4 The District Council has only been cutting the highway verges in the old Highways Agency areas, i.e. the five town areas. The Council has

the option of taking on the responsibility for the grass cutting of the remainder of the district. At present this is carried out by Parish Councils, the County Council or contractors. However to take on the management of this work will mean running a mixture of contracts with different contractors and agents and with the reduction to four cuts a year in these non-agency areas could result in complaints for a reduction in service. The majority of our public open space is within the town areas. It is not considered that it is beneficial to take on this extra work.

3.5 The County are prepared for the District to continue with the other items as the previous agreement.

#### 4.0 PROPOSED FUTURE AGENCY

4.1 It is proposed that the following work be included in the future agency agreement:

- the right to design and construct environmental improvements within the highway
- design of jointly funded transport schemes, such as cycleways
- management of on-street parking
- verge maintenance
- weed spraying
- bus shelters and other street furniture
- licensing of pavement cafes

4.2 It is proposed that this agency should run for an initial for an initial period of three years with the option to renew.

#### 5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications of the above proposals are:

5.2

Design	This is funded direct from the capital schemes and has no extra revenue implication
On-street parking	This is covered by the income from the parking. Any excess income has to be spent on car parking matters.
Verge maintenance in original agency district	At present we receive £42k contribution from the County Council for this work. There is an existing budget to cover the costs of meeting our higher standards of extra cuts.
Weed spraying	At present we receive £35k contribution from the County Council for spraying the channels. There is an existing budget to cover the extra costs of meeting our higher standards by spraying and cleansing the whole footpath areas.
Bus shelters and	This is covered by existing budgets

other street furniture	
Licensing of pavement cafes	This is covered by existing budgets

## 6. CONCLUSION

6.1 The Highways Agency for the road maintenance in the town areas was terminated on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005. The Cabinet in July 2004 agreed to continue certain highways related services after this date subject to a new agreement being negotiated.

6.2 As these negotiations were not concluded, the Council has been carrying out these services on the basis of the previous agreement. There is now an understanding with the County Council regarding the work that could be included in a new agreement.

This is –

- design of environmental improvements within the highway
- design of jointly funded transport schemes, such as cycleways
- management of on-street parking
- verge maintenance of the original highways agency area
- weed spraying and cleansing of kerbed footways.
- bus shelters
- licensing of pavement cafes

6.3 If Cabinet approve the principle of the agreement, the new contract will be entered into for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 for an initial period of three years with the option to renew.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 It is recommended that Cabinet –

(a) **authorise the Director of Operational Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Environment & Transport to secure a new three year agreement with the County Council for the discharge of the functions listed at paragraph 6.2 of this report**

(b) **agree that the existing budgets remain for the work presently carried out on Highways Agency matters.**

### Background Papers

Highways Agency Agreement

**Contact Officer: Mr C Allen, Project and Assets Manager**  
 **01480 388380**

CABINET

23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2006

## **CONCESSIONARY FARES (Report by Head of Environment & Transport)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on current discussions relating to the introduction of the new Concessionary Fares regime on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006.
- 1.2 This follows the Cabinet resolution on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005 that a statutory minimum concessionary fare scheme for an interim 12-month period be adopted by the Council

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The previous report to Cabinet outlined the Government plans to move to a free travel scheme from April 2006. Towards the end of November the Department for Transport (DfT) finally published guidance and timescales for the implementation of the new scheme. This outlines the statutory obligations that concessionary fares authorities have to meet. The first timescale was to announce by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005, that the statutory minimum requirement would be met, which was approved by Cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005.
- 2.2 The previous report also outlined a range of issues that would need to be resolved to meet the new statutory requirements by April 2006, which included;
  - The scope of the free scheme i.e. district or countywide scheme
  - Funding levels likely to be forthcoming from Government
  - Scheme administration
  - New generation factor
  - Operator reimbursement
  - Widening of the eligibility criteria as part of Council's accessibility agenda

### **3. THE NEW SCHEME**

- 3.1 The Transport Act 2000 placed the statutory duty on District/City authorities to administer the half-fare regime currently in operation on all single and return journeys. The national minimum scheme applies to anyone over 60 years of age and for those with qualifying disabilities and operates between 09.30 and 23.00. However the current countywide scheme exceeds the statutory minimum by providing (a) the additional benefit of free travel for those who are

registered blind or partially sighted and (b) no time restriction on the use of the scheme.

- 3.2 The statutory minimum requirements of new scheme will permit free travel for those eligible within district boundaries only on all registered bus services outside the morning peak i.e. after 09.30. Legislation also allows the scheme use to be restricted to Mondays to Fridays.
- 3.3 Legislation also allows Operators to claim additional costs arising from operating the new scheme. This would almost certainly be by any need to provide extra capacity as a result of any demand created. It is possible that this could probably be avoided by introducing the time restriction.
- 3.4 Authorities will be permitted to consider additions to the statutory minimum i.e. to operate a scheme over a wider area, extending eligibility and permitting use before 09.30.
- 3.5 Following agreement to run the minimum statutory requirement during 2006/07, meetings have been held with Operators since December last year and it has been agreed that reimbursement during 2006/07 will begin to be made on based on actual journeys undertaken. From April 2007, in line with Central Government guidance, a complete revenue-forgone system will be introduced where payment will be fully based on actual journeys undertaken. This will allow authorities to collect data throughout 2006/07 to enable them to budget accordingly based on how much the scheme actually costs.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Consultant working on behalf of the partners in the scheme, together with the County Council, has produced an estimate of potential costs of the various options available based on current available data. It must be accepted that the figures are based on a number of assumptions that mean the figures are only illustrative. Table 1 below outlines the impact on Huntingdonshire:

**Table 1**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Possible cost range £000</b>
<b>1) Statutory scheme</b> Travel after 9.30am No subsidy outside District boundary	<b>450 to 490</b>
<b>2) Statutory scheme plus part subsidy for travel within other Cambridgeshire Districts</b> Travel after 9.30am Traveller pays flat fare of £1.75 for travel going outside District No subsidy on Cambridge Park and Ride	<b>560 to 600</b>



<b>3) Free Countywide Scheme</b> Travel after 9.30am No payments for travel within County No subsidy on Cambridge Park and Ride	<b>645 to 690</b>
--	-------------------

4.2 Without additional funding the budget for 2006/07 would have been £213k. The current MTP proposes an increase of £232k giving a total available sum of £445k.

4.3 The Government consider that we have received £503k in extra grant relating to Concessionary Fares which if added to our previous spending would give £716k. Based on the Council's financial strategy any increase over £445k will require additional savings during the strategy period.

**5. THE COUNTYWIDE POSITION**

5.1 Discussions have been on-going between all the authorities within Cambridgeshire to try to agree a common position on what is likely to be the most favourable scheme and one that each Authority can afford to fund. The current indicative position is outlined in Table 2 as follows;

**TABLE 2**

<b>Statutory scheme plus part subsidy for travel within other Cambridgeshire Districts</b>	Huntingdonshire South Cambridgeshire East Cambridgeshire
<b>Free Countywide Scheme</b>	Peterborough City Cambridge City (City costs do not vary significantly between options as they have much less out of district travel)

Fenland have indicated that they are prepared to go with the majority view.

5.2 These discussions have included issues such as the need for individual Council's to have the ability to offer special (lower) flat fare rates where they have a town close to a neighbouring City. e.g. Yaxley to Peterborough or are close to a District boundary e.g. Fenstanton to Cambridge. Lower rates would need to be set so that travel in these circumstances would be no more than under present scheme.

5.3 The figures exclude subsidy to towns outside Cambridgeshire e.g. if subsidy were to be continued between St. Neots and Bedford there would be an increased cost to be funded. Table 3 below indicates some typical scenarios;

**TABLE 3**

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Destination</b>	<b>Current Fare</b>	<b>Half- Fare</b>	<b>Net. Position (£1.75 flat fare)</b>
Fenstanton	Cambridge	£3.15 return	£1.57	£0.18 worse-off
St. Ives	Cambridge	£3.50 return	£1.75	No difference
Huntingdon	Cambridge	£4.85	£2.43	£0.68 better-off
Yaxley	Peterborough	£2.70 day rider	£1.35	£0.40 worse-off

- 5.4 All options exclude subsidy on Cambridge Park and Ride. If subsidy were to be continued there would be a further increased cost. Exceptions can be made to the after 9.30am limit for villages where this would have a major impact due to infrequent services, such as one service per day before the qualifying period.
- 5.5 It would be extremely difficult to have a mixed scheme countywide in the first year so if some Council's are currently unable to support a free County-wide scheme during 2006/07, then it is likely that a Statutory scheme, plus part subsidy outside the District, would have to be recommended.
- 5.6 For the subsequent year(s) 2007/08 and beyond, the level of funding is more difficult to assess at this time, particularly when moving to a revenue-forgone based system. This will need to be based on detailed patronage and monitoring data from Operators during 2006/07 on which to base future budgets. The financial implications of widening the eligibility criteria based on research associated with the current Rural Access Study and Accessibility Action Plans would also need to be considered.

## **5. COMMUNITY TRANSPORT**

- 5.1 Certain community transport journeys, primarily day-to-day service journeys to Market Towns, are currently reimbursed at half-fare level directly to operators. There is no statutory duty to include these schemes for either free travel or the current half-fare level, but there is some concern that to exclude them may undermine the operations in terms of people switching to registered bus services.
- 5.2 There is also the possibility that the Councils within Cambridgeshire may be vulnerable to legal challenge on the grounds of discrimination from pass holders who do not have access to conventional bus services because of their age, disability or remoteness from the bus network.

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

**It is**

**(i) recommended that Cabinet approve the provision of Option 2, Table 1 for a Statutory scheme plus part subsidy for travel within other Cambridgeshire City/District areas provided that all City & District Council's within Cambridgeshire make the same undertaking ; and**

**(ii) that free travel on Community Transport services is made available to pass holders for services which access Market Towns within Huntingdonshire**

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Concessionary Fares Study – Briefing Paper August 2005

Concessionary Fares – Improving Rural Access Study (Steer Davies Gleave. Final Report August 2005

Report to Cabinet, 15<sup>th</sup> September 2005 – Consultation on Changes to the way the Government provides financial support to Local Authorities

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Concessionary Fares Scheme – Consultant's Initial Reports

Report to Cabinet 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005 – Concessionary Fares

**Contact  
Officer:**

**Stuart Bell – Team Leader Transportation**

**☎ 01480 388387**

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**CABINET**

**23rd FEBRUARY 2006**

**CAR PARKING ORDER – OAK DRIVE, HUNTINGDON  
(Report by the Head of Environment & Transport)**

**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The redevelopment of Sapley Square has provided a new health centre / PCT offices and new shops with a community centre above. This council owns all the buildings and the associated public parking between the buildings.
- 1.2 To control the parking on this site a car parking order needs to be made. This will be the same as those in force in respect of the council's other free off-street car parks e.g. Riverside, Huntingdon. The process for this is prescribed by statute and requires draft orders to be advertised and any objections to be considered by the relevant Council. This report requests authority to advertise for this order.

**2. CAR PARKING ORDER**

- 2.1 The proposal is that there will be free parking for a maximum of two hours in the car park between the two buildings, with no return within one hour. This will be controlled by the issuing of excess charge notices as necessary. The other car parks provided for the health centre are for staff parking and cannot be covered by a parking order.
- 2.2 The order will also set requirements and restrictions for the use of the car park, such as safe parking, no selling from cars and no sleeping in cars. This will be controlled by the issuing of penalty notices.

**3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Cabinet are recommended to
  - (a) approve the advertisement of new car parking orders in respect of Oak Drive off-street car park

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:-**

- 1. Environment and Transport files.

**Contact Officer: Chris Allen, Project and Assets Manager**  
**☎ 01480 388380**

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CABINET

24 FEBRUARY 2006

## SMALL SCALE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS (Report by Head of Environment & Transport)

### 1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This paper reports on the small scale environmental improvement schemes to be completed by March 2006, and proposes a programme of schemes for 2006/07.

### 2. SELECTION OF SCHEMES

- 2.1 A budget of £92k (gross) is included in 2006/07 for "Small Scale Environmental Improvements". To qualify for funding from this budget a scheme must also attract a minimum of 25% funding from an outside source, such as Parish or Town Council, or Landfill Tax Credit.
- 2.2 Cabinet agreed the criteria for the prioritisation of the schemes in 2002/03 and this has been applied to the selection of schemes for 2006/07.
- 2.3 Town and Parish Councils were asked in October to submit schemes for consideration in this year's programme.

### 3. 2005/06 SCHEMES

- 3.1 The schemes approved in the 2005/6 programme were as follows:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Position</u>
Huntingdon – Town Boundary signs	Complete
Huntingdon, High Street – Railings	Awaiting tenders
Bluntisham – Rebuild church wall	Complete
Somersham – Rebuild wall leading to Church	Complete
Offord D'Arcy – New Conservation bus shelter	Complete
St Neots, Berkeley Road – Upgrade area	Complete
Medway Centre – Footpath	Complete

### 4. FUTURE SCHEMES

- 4.1 Following submissions from Town and Parish Councils schemes have been assessed (Annex 1) and the highest scoring schemes up to the approved budget (based on preliminary estimates) for 2006/07 are listed below:-

	<b>Net £k</b>	<b>Gross £k</b>
1) Ramsey TC – Railings around war memorial	15	19
2) Ramsey TC – Repairs to church wall	20	25
3) St Ives TC – Improvements area of land to Bridge St	18	23
4) Holme PC – Repairs to church wall	3	4
5) Warboys PC – Repairs to Jubilee Clock	2	3
6) Catworth PCC – Church wall repairs	14	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>92</b>

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**


- 5.1 The small scale environmental improvement funding has enabled minor improvements to be carried out in many villages and locations.
- 5.2 There is great interest from town and parish councils in promoting future schemes and the appraisal process has now been shown to work satisfactorily.
- 5.3 Approval is sought for those schemes with shown in paragraph 4.1 above. In the event that these cannot proceed for any reason during 2006/07 the next schemes in the order of priority will be carried out. Annex 2 identifies the budget allocated for these schemes and is the Release of Funds form.

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- i) note the schemes committed/completed to date
  - ii) approve, for completion during 2006/07, the schemes at paragraph 4.1 above and the release of funds from the MTP to facilitate this.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Environment & Transport File T7

**Contact Officer: C J Allen, Project and Assets Manager**  
 **(01480) 388380**





## ANNEX 2 – RELEASE OF FUNDS REQUEST

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact							Net Capital						
	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2004/ 2005 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000		
Approved Budget	12	15	20	24	28	31	84	86	72	73	73	73		
Already Committed	12	15	15	15	15	15	82	82						
<b>Amount for which release now requested</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>			<b>72</b>					

### Justification

The Small Scale Scheme is made up of several different projects throughout the district. These are partnership schemes with Town or Parish Councils. The parish councils have committed funding in the coming year and early approval by Cabinet would enable this work to be completed this financial year.

A report is being submitted to Cabinet for the approval of next years programme based on schemes submitted by Parish Councils. Early approval is needed to commit this money so that the Parish and Town Councils are aware of their commitments..

Release of funding up to the £72k is sought so that the process of replacement and improvement can start now and be complete by the end of the year.

**CABINET**

**23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2006**

## **PLANNING-GAIN SUPPLEMENT: A CONSULTATION**

### **Report by Planning Policy Manager**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Government in 2003 commissioned Kate Barker of the Bank of England to produce an independent review of housing supply. In response HM Treasury have produced this consultation and are seeking views upon it by the 27<sup>th</sup> February. The Cabinet is asked to note the report and endorse the comments made.

#### **2. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Planning Gain Supplement (PGS) is a proposed new tax, to be levied by central government on land that has the benefit of planning permission. It builds on Kate Parker's original recommendation that Government should capture a portion of land value uplift arising from the planning process. The new tax would be used in order to fund a range of infrastructure that is needed to support her independent review of ways to increase the housing supply.
- 2.2 Planning Gain Supplement would largely replace the S106 contributions for infrastructure funding currently secured by local authorities. The Government wishes the new tax to be seen as a 'fair, efficient and transparent levy' (foreword of consultation document).

#### **3.0 FEATURES OF THE PROPOSED PGS**

##### **Calculation and Payment**

- 3.1 The basis for calculating PGS would be the 'planning gain' i.e. the difference (the uplift) between the land value with full planning permission and the land value in its undeveloped or existing use. The value with planning permission would be determined by the nature of the development (residential, commercial or mixed use), location, density and market conditions. A chargeable person is identified, who will be liable for the PGS, through a new statutory Development Start Notice.
- 3.2 The PGS would be calculated at the time that full planning permission is granted or at determination of each stage of reserved matters (of

which there can be many), although it is proposed that PGS would not be collected until commencement of each stage of development. This would make for a very fragmented payment system.

- 3.3 The percentage likely to be payable is not given in the document, although it is suggested that a lower rate may be introduced for brown field land, and that there could be a threshold below which PGS would not be payable, but this would be very low. There is no intention to levy PGS on home improvements.
- 3.4 Payment of PGS it is proposed, would be at the commencement of development by the developer, who would then be most likely to pass the charge onto the landowner.

**Implications for S106 Planning Obligations**

- 3.5 The introduction of a PGS would be accompanied by a scaled down planning obligations system, limiting planning obligations to ‘those matters that need to be addressed in order for the environment of the development site itself to be sustainable, safe, of high quality and accessible, and the provision of affordable housing.’ The analysis provided by Government is as follows;

<b>Included in new scope of Planning Obligations</b>	<b>Outside scope of new Planning Obligations</b>
Affordable housing	Education provision
On-site landscaping	Health provision
On-site roads & traffic calming	Community centre
Access road	Bus service
Open space	Fire station
Mix of uses	Employment & training
Mix of housing types	Labour initiatives
Flood defence	Town centre management
Street lighting	Cultural facilities
Phasing & timing of development	Leisure facilities
Landscaping	
Design coding	
Environmental improvements	
Operational effectiveness	

- 3.6 The Government proposes to make this range a defined statutory list.

**Allocations of PGS Revenues**

- 3.7 If PGS is implemented then the Government will commit to the following key principles;
  - A significant majority of PGS revenues will be recycled to the local level for local priorities, and will ensure that local government overall will receive more funding through PGS than was raised through S106.

- PGS revenues will be dedicated to financing additional investment in the local and strategic infrastructure necessary to support growth. The government anticipates that an overwhelming majority of PGS funds will be recycled within the region from which they derived.
- 3.8 The first bullet point is of significant concern. The level of certainty that the funding will be greater than that already coming through S106 needs to be further explained.
- 3.9 The government is consulting on the mechanisms for allocating PGS revenues to the local level. The 2 options are as follows;
 

**Option 1.** To distribute PGS revenues to the local level as grants in direct proportion to the revenues raised.

**Option 2.** To recycle revenues back to the local level as grants on the basis of a formula specifically connected to PGS revenues, which acted as a proxy for need. This would inevitably be more complicated and less transparent to local developers and communities, but would benefit communities delivering housing in areas of low land values.
- 3.10 The consultation paper then goes on to add that a significant proportion of PGS revenue would be used to deliver strategic regional infrastructure. The government proposes this could be done through an expanded and revised Community Infrastructure Fund (CIF), and is seeking views on the appropriate geographic coverage and eligibility criteria. Additional CIF funds are required in any case to assist in making good the existing shortfall and the PGS funds should be spent only on the services where planning obligations were previously applicable. What is not clear from the PGS consultation document is how CIF will provide funding for the strategic infrastructure requirements.
- 3.11 Finally as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review, a crosscutting review to determine the social, transport and environmental infrastructure implications of housing growth will take place.

#### **4. IMPLICATIONS FOR HDC**

- 4.1 There are concerns regarding the issue of how and what level of funding will be returned to the local area. How much will end up in a 'central pot' and be re-distributed nationally? Funding for specific purposes should be ringed fenced and not put into a 'central pot'.
- 4.2 What is meant by the local area as there is a contradiction in the text when in the same paragraph it states that an overwhelming majority of PGS funds will be recycled within the region from which they derive.
- 4.3 There is also a need for further explanation as to how the funds earmarked for strategic infrastructure will be handed back to local authorities. A development in our district may well end up in paying for infrastructure in Cambridge.

4.4 Local Authorities may have to make bids for the money taken for strategic purposes. Will we be any more successful than in the past when we have applied for resources through the Community Infrastructure Fund?

4.5 There is a concern that the ability to negotiate for affordable housing will be curtailed as the levy will top slice the development gain from a site leaving a smaller amount to pay for items on the more local list.

## **5. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

5.1 That members note the contents of the report and endorse the comments in section 4 above.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Planning-gain Supplement: a consultation December 2005 ( HM Treasury)

**Contact Officer: Richard Probyn**  
**☎ 01480 388430**

CABINET

23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2006

## CONSULTATION ON PLANNING POLICY STATEMENTS (PPS)

Report by  
Planning Policy Manager

### 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 As part of the ongoing process of reviewing national policy guidance the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has published two consultation papers on Housing (PPS3) and Development and Flood Risk (PPS25). Comments are sought by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2006. The cabinet is being asked to endorse the comments as set in the report.

### 2. PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 3: Housing

- 2.1 This follows earlier consultations which proposed changes to the existing national guidance for housing PPG3 (published in 2000). The government's key objective is 'to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of living in a decent home, which they can afford, in a community where they want to live.' To achieve this government is seeking a number of objectives:-
- A) ensure that a wide range of housing types is available for both affordable and market housing to meet the needs of all members of the community
  - B) deliver a better balance between housing demand and supply in every housing market and to improve affordability where necessary and
  - C) create sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities in all areas. Developments should be attractive safe and designed and built to a high quality. They should be located in areas with good access to jobs, key services and infrastructure.
- 2.2 Draft PPS3 requires Regional Planning Bodies through the Regional Spatial Strategy to determine the level and distribution of housing, including affordable housing in the Region. In addition there is a requirement to identify sub-regional housing market areas for which the release of land may be varied, dependant upon demand for housing.

- 2.3 In determining the level of housing provision and its distribution, Regional Planning Bodies will need to consider a range of factors including:-
- sub-regional housing market assessments
  - sub-regional land availability assessments
  - advice from the proposed National Advice Unit on the impact of the proposals for affordability in the region
  - environmental, social and economic implications of development
  - the implications of development for existing and proposed infrastructure
- 2.4 There is a clear steer from Government regarding the need to consider market considerations in setting the level of housing provision. For example housing market assessments will need to assess both the need and demand for housing within an area. The Government has proposed in accompanying Draft Guidance that housing market assessments should be prepared by a Partnership, which would include the Regional Planning Body, Local Authorities, Registered Social Landlords and County Councils. Housing land availability assessments will need to determine both the level of land available for housing and the level of housing provision. The assessments are expected to examine all land that might potentially be made available for house building.
- 2.5 Draft PPS3 identifies the need to increase the level of housing supply in areas where demand is high, by exploring opportunities for development including, new freestanding settlements and major urban extensions. Cambridgeshire is located within one of the Government's Growth Areas as identified in the Sustainable Communities Plan (published in 2003) in which Government is seeking an increase in the level of house building.
- 2.6 The draft PPS3 then identifies what role the LDFs have in allocating land. The framework must contain a housing trajectory that provides for a 5 year supply of land that is available, suitable and viable. The development on brownfield land in preference to greenfield land is still considered to be a priority in the new statement. Guidance is given on densities appropriate to various locations and car parking standards should reflect local circumstances, recognising that people still want to own cars. The PPS suggests that we should have regard to studies that form part of the sub regional market assessment to determine mix of households. The Statement provides guidance on affordable housing thresholds and the approach to affordable housing and private housing in rural areas. Designing for quality and greening the residential environment are contained in further sections of the document. Finally the section on managing delivery and development identifies some circumstances where sites not allocated for development can be brought forward.



### 3. COMMENTS ON PPS 3

3.1 These are based on the questions posed by ODPM at the back of the document.

#### **Question 1 Do the policies set out in draft deliver the Government's housing objectives?**

- Yes, with reservations. There is a general lack of detail in the draft PPS3 and the publication of companion guides may have helped in understanding the document. The document is confusing, contains contradictions and its message is not as strong as in previous draft material e.g. Sustainable Communities leading up to this publication.
- It appears to be too market driven and in some statements contradicts the procedures that are necessary to carry out for the statutory planning process. The reference to the sequential test contained in PPG3 has disappeared and with the drive for more houses the market appears to be influential in determining where houses are built. This could result in development in unsustainable locations and scarce infrastructure diverted away from where it is most needed.
- Reducing affordable housing thresholds is welcomed and will assist but it is questionable whether an increase in housing supply will help to solve affordability. There is still no certainty from Government about where the money will come from to fund the affordable element.
- PPS3 doesn't address the fundamental problem of infrastructure deficit. There needs to be a radical Government review so that planning and infrastructure funding come hand in hand. PPS3 is to be implemented now whilst the guidance in the draft Planning Gain Supplement will not be implemented until at least 2008.

#### **Question 2 Are the arrangements for delivering PPS3 clearly set out in relation to:**

- a) Working in sub regional housing market**
- b) Determining the regional level of housing provision and its distribution**
- c) Allocating and releasing land for housing**
- d) making the efficient use of land**
- e) planning for mixed communities**
- f) planning for rural housing**
- g) designing for quality**
- h) greening the residential environmental**
- i) managing delivery and development**

a) There are many different definitions of sub-regions, how are they to be reconciled and market areas defined? Sub-regional housing market areas are likely to create complications where they cross Local Authority boundaries (e.g. Peterborough/E. Midlands & EOE). How is this going to work? Further guidance is needed on defining relationships between areas as each are defined for different purposes eg. housing/planning/economic.

b) PPS3 does not show how development industry and local authorities can have a constructive dialogue to influence affordability at the regional level. It is not clear how the National Advice Unit will help in this debate.

c) The 5-year allocation of supply of housing is very prescriptive and may result in over supply in areas such as Huntingdonshire. A 15-year plan provision is a good idea.

d) It is not clear whether Local Planning Authorities can count windfalls in their housing trajectories but it is important to build them into the assumptions as they are a valid source. If you cannot count brownfield land or windfalls the implication is that most of this 5 year supply will be greenfield. Will not this contradict the encouragement of development onto brownfield land? The guidance on different densities in various locations is helpful but there are concerns that it should not be seen as prescriptive. In some circumstances there is a need for lower density.

e) There is a continued emphasis on housing delivery in settlements, but the need for other uses e.g. employment must not be forgotten.

f) The suggestion of lowering the thresholds for affordable housing is welcomed as it will provide more scope to provide that housing in market towns where the need is greatest. More developments will make contributions but there is a concern with the encouragement of development in unsustainable rural locations. It is unlikely that allocating land solely for affordable housing in the market towns or anywhere else will bring forward that land.

g) There is a need to have a stronger lever to make sure developers deliver higher quality design. It would help if there was some clear guidance on measuring design quality and some evidence of the impact of quality design on housing costs. Stronger guidance/legislation is needed but the ability to raise quality through PPS3 is limited by the principle in PPS1 that the planning system should not go beyond other legislation. The promotion of design codes is welcomed but there is a resource and time implication.

h) The commitment to sustainable dwellings is too weak but this could be strengthened by statute through building regulations.

i) This section is of concern. It suggests that planning applications for development could be approved in certain circumstances in advance of a review of a development plan. It is not appropriate to have a plan led approach delivering sustainable communities with an opt out to release sites outside of the planning process.

**Questions 3 and 4 have not been answered.**

#### **4. PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT PPS25: Development and Flood Risk**

4.1 This consultation document together with an accompanying Practice Guide should in due course replace PPG 25 on flood risk. The PPS proposes a Risk Based Approach to flood risk. Central to this

approach is the sequential test. This test requires that when either local authorities or developers wish to allocate land or develop land for housing or other uses in areas at risk from flooding they should demonstrate that there are no alternative sites available which have a lower risk of flooding. If there are no reasonable alternatives available in the areas of lowest flood risk and the benefits of development outweigh the risk then other areas of flood risk can be considered. The guidance also proposes to introduce an exceptions test which sets out four tests which, if all are satisfied, can allow departures from the sequential test. The four tests are:-

the development makes a positive contribution to sustainable communities

the development is on developable brownfield land

the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) demonstrates that the residual risks of flooding are acceptable and can be managed

the development makes a positive contribution to reducing or managing flood risk

4.2 The PPS seeks views on the introduction of a Flood Direction. This direction would require that when a Local Authority is minded to approve a planning application to which the Environment Agency has a sustained objection on flood risk grounds, the application should be referred to the Government Office to decide whether the application should be called in by the Secretary of State.

4.3 The PPS also proposes to extend the Environment Agencies role as a statutory consultee in relation to flood risk on certain developments. This would mean the Environment Agency would be consulted on non-householder development in flood zones 2 and 3, non-householder development on areas identified as having critical drainage problems outside zones 2 and 3 and on any development exceeding 1 ha.

4.4 The Statement also suggests that Local Authorities should consider whether the making of Article 4, Directions taking away permitted development rights to householders for extensions and alterations where such development is likely to have a direct and adverse affect on a flood risk area or its flood defences and their access, or permeability and management of surface water, or flood risk to occupants.

## 5. COMMENTS ON PPS25

5.1 These are based on the questions posed at the back of the document

**Question 1. We consider positive planning has an important role to play in delivering policies which will avoid, reduce and manage flood risk. We will provide a Practice Guide to help implement the planning policies set out in PPS25. Will the new policy and the proposed Practice Guide as outlined in the consultation package secure planning strategies that direct new development to suitable locations taking flood risk and type of development into account? If not, what alterations in approach do you suggest?**

- Agree that the risk-based approach set out in the PPS should ensure that development is directed to areas that have a lower risk of flooding. The requirement to carry out Strategic Flood Risk Assessments will allow a more strategic approach to be taken in relation to flood risk and will give more certainty to developers when they are submitting planning applications.

**Question 2 The draft PPS25 sets out a ‘plan led’ approach to take flood risk into account in helping to deliver sustainable development. We are proposing that flood risk should be taken into account at all levels of the planning process i.e. regional, local and at site specific levels. Do you agree with this approach and the key planning objectives set out in para.5?**

- Agree with this approach and the objectives contained in paragraph 5. It is essential that the issue of flooding is fully taken into account at both the plan-making stages and the planning application stage as this will provide more certainty to residents, local businesses and developers.

**Question 3 We have set out in PPS25 the decision-making principles which regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should adhere to in relation to development and flood risk. Are the principles clear and sufficient or should they be modified and if so, how?**

- Agree the principles are clear and sufficient.

**Question 4 It is suggested that flood risk assessments should be carried out at the regional, local and site-specific levels (see paras. 9-12 and Annex E). Is the guidance clear on how the Regional Flood Risk Assessments (RFRAs) and Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRAs) are used to inform Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks as a basis for preparing policies for flood risk management? Is the relationship of RFRA and SFRA to Sustainability Appraisal also clear?**

- The PPS makes it clear that RFRAs should inform Regional Spatial Strategies and that SFRA should inform Local Development Frameworks in the preparation of flood risk management policies and in the allocation of land. It is not clear how RFRAs and SFRAs should be used in relation to Sustainability Appraisal but it is proposed that this detail is provided in the accompanying Practice Guide.

**Question 5 An appropriate site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is required to accompany planning applications for development in flood risk areas. Are the criteria for determining the need for FRA correct? If not, what should they be?**

- Agree the criteria for determining the need for FRA are correct.

**Question 6 The central part of the risk-based approach is the Sequential Test (see paras 13-15) and Annex D. We have clarified this approach by amalgamating the PPG25 3a and 3b Flood Zones and making explicit the consideration of flood risk**

**vulnerability. Is this clear and do you agree with this approach. If not, what amendments do you propose that would serve better?**

- Agree with the approach set out in the Sequential Test, this will reduce the risk of potential damage which can be caused by flooding and will help direct development to areas with a lower risk of flooding. The approach clarifies the sequential test contained in PPG25 as it provides a clear connection between types of development and degrees of flood risk.

**Question 7 It is proposed to add a new Exceptions Test to complement the Sequential Test in Flood Zones 2 and 3 where development is necessary for wider sustainability reasons (see paras. 16-19 and Annex D). Do you agree with this principle and the approach described or do you have an alternative proposal?**

- Agree with the principle of the Exceptions Test as this will allow development in locations which may be more sustainable in other terms but are in a higher risk flood zones. The criteria set out ensure that this can only take place when the risks of flooding are acceptable and can be satisfactorily managed.

**Question 8 The responsibilities of key stakeholder are given in paras. 20-30 and Annex H. Do you agree that the responsibilities are clearly stated or do you have amendments and alternatives to propose?**

- Agree with the responsibilities set out for Local Authorities provided the resource implications of the Flood Direction have been assessed.

**Question 9 We consider effective monitoring and review is essential to secure sustainable development of flood risk areas. Do you agree that the expected annual monitoring should include the HLT5 indicators listed in para. 32? If not, what alternatives would serve better while being practicable and delivered at no extra cost?**

- Agree this indicator is appropriate to use as this data is already collected.

**Question 10 Do you consider the proposed scope of the Practice Guide (see section 3) covers all the relevant topics?**

- Agree the proposed Practice Guide covers all relevant topics.

**Question 11 Does the proposed scope of the Practice Guide include topics which do not need to be covered? If so which topic and give reasons why?**

No

**Question 12 It is proposed to make a standing Flood Direction (see section 4) in respect of major development for which a planning authority proposes to grant permission, despite there being a sustained objection from the Environment Agency on flood risk grounds, after being re-consulted following an initial**

**objection. Do you agree with this proposal? If not, have you any relevant alternative to this approach within the present ambit of the Planning Acts?**

- The resource implications for implementing this direction need to be assessed in detail. The direction will require an increase in time spent by Local Authorities, the Environment Agency and the Government Office in determining applications and may be contrary to planning handling advice. In Huntingdonshire in the period 2004/05 two applications were approved contrary to Environment Agency advice.

**Question 13 As part of this consultation, we are proposing that the Environment Agency be made a statutory consultee under the Town and Country Planning Act Order (GDPO) 1995 on:**

- i) non-householder development proposed in Flood Zones 2 and 3;**
- ii) non-householder development outside Flood Zones 2 and 3 which are identified by the Environment Agency as having ‘critical drainage problems’; and**
- iii) any development exceeding 1 Ha.**

**There is also a proposal to amend Article 10 (1) para. (p) of the GDPO (see section 5). Do you agree with this approach?**

- The resource implications of this need to be fully assessed to ensure that the Environment Agency has additional capacity to cope with extra consultations.

**Question 14 The partial RIA sets out the likely benefits and costs of the draft PPS25. Do you agree with the assumptions made? If not, or if you think it is incomplete, please tell us why and provide any quantifiable evidence available to you on benefits and costs.**

- Agree that the RIA is complete.

**Question 15 Is the policy set out in PPS25 likely to effect small businesses? If so, please tell us how, and if appropriate, how any disproportionate impact on small businesses could be eased while ensuring they, and neighbouring users of land, retain the benefit of protective planning policies on flood risk.**

- The requirement to provide Flood Risk Assessments may have a more significant effect on smaller firms than large businesses due to the cost involved but this is likely to be a smaller impact than the damage that could potentially be caused by flooding.

**Question 16 Planning Policy Guidance Note 25 contained a commitment to review after 3 years. Do you think that PPS25 should contain a similar commitment for review? If ‘yes’, please give reasons why and include an appropriate review period.**

- The PPS should include a statement to monitor the effectiveness of the policy approach, if the policy approach fails or further information is received about climate change and flood risk then the PPS should be reviewed.

## **6. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 6.1 That Cabinet note the contents of the report and:- a) endorse the responses in section 3 relating to PPS3 and b) endorse the responses in section 5 relating to PPS25

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has published two consultation papers on Housing (PPS3) and Development and Flood Risk (PPS25)

**Contact Officer: Richard Probyn**  
**☎ 01480 388430**

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**CABINET**

**23<sup>RD</sup> FEBRUARY 2006**

**DEVELOPMENT BRIEF  
OLD FIRE STATION / HOUSHOLD WASTE DISPOSAL SITE, ST NEOTS  
(Report by HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This Development Brief examines the redevelopment opportunities on land in and around the old Fire Station and Household Waste Disposal sites. It presents the planning policy context for the redevelopment of this area, which may involve the creation of a new Health Centre for this part of St Neots, together with improved car parking and pedestrian linkages.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to consider the draft Development Brief 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 old Fire Station site has been derelict for a number of years. It is adjacent to an attractive listed building at number 12 Huntingdon Street, and should be redeveloped.
- 2.2 The Household Waste Disposal site has been in operation for a number of years in this town centre site. It is not an attractive use for such a town centre location and it blocks off people who park in the District Council car park behind Lidl supermarket, from walking the most direct route into town.
- 2.3 The Cedar House surgery is adjacent and may move off site, as part of redevelopment opportunities associated with the former swimming pool land. As another option, it may stay on site, becoming larger and redeveloping into a more suitable building.
- 2.4 The District Council is also keen to increase the number of car parking spaces within St Neots as outlined in the Market Town Strategy. The opportunity exists to extend the existing car park onto part of the Household Waste Disposal site and also onto part of the existing recreation ground.
- 2.5 The Household Waste Disposal site was investigated by the District Council as a potential housing site as part of an Urban Capacity Study produced in January 2003.

**3.0 THE DEVELOPMENT BRIEF**

- 3.1 The purpose of this Development Brief is to ensure that all of these aspirations can be brought together to create a well planned and

appropriate development on site, something which contributes to improving the built environment of the town.

3.2 Particularly important is redeveloping the old Fire Station site and relocating the Household Waste Disposal site to a more suitable location on the edge of the town.

3.3 The Development Brief sets design parameters for the successful development of the site, ensuring that future proposals achieve imaginative and distinctive solutions. Indicative layouts are shown that illustrate what could be achieved, although the implementation of any individual element would be dependent on appropriate resources being identified.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

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

#### **5. RECOMMENDATION**

5.1 That the Cabinet approves the Brief as a basis for further discussion and consultation before adoption as Interim Planning Guidance.

#### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alterations June 2002

Huntingdonshire Design Guide SPG Sept 2004

Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment SPG Sept 2004

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EMPLOYMENT PANEL  
ELAG  
CABINET

8TH FEBRUARY 2006  
8TH FEBRUARY 2006  
23RD FEBRUARY 2006

## THE DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME (Report by Head of Policy)

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 From December 2006 the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 will be amended to place a **duty** on all public bodies to promote disability equality. This will require the Council to actively promote disability equality, in the same way the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 places a duty to promote race equality. A similar duty for Gender Equality will be introduced in April 2007
- 1.2 This is intended to bring about a shift in the legal framework which relies on individual disabled people complaining about discrimination to one in which the public services are required to actively promote change.
- 1.3 Adopting the draft scheme now will allow time to carry out consultation in advance of the scheme becoming a statutory requirement; it will also allow integration with other equality work e.g. race assessments and equality impact assessments.

### 2. OPERATION OF THE SCHEME

- 2.1 The Act sets out a general duty, to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equal opportunities for disabled people. The Council will also need to consider the elimination of harassment of disabled people, promotion of positive attitudes and the need to encourage the participation of disabled people in public life.
- 2.2 The regulations also give Huntingdonshire District Council a specific duty which defines a framework to use to meet the general duty. The main element of this is a requirement to produce a Disability Equality Scheme, in a similar way to the Race Equality Scheme.
- 2.3 The process of producing a Disability Equality Scheme involves -
  - ◆ Involving disabled people in producing the scheme and developing the action plan.
  - ◆ Identifying how we will gather and analyse evidence to inform our actions.
  - ◆ Setting out how we will assess the impact of our existing and proposed activities on disabled people.
  - ◆ Producing an action plan for the next three years.
  - ◆ Reporting on our progress every year and review the scheme every three years.

### **3. ENFORCEMENT OF THE SCHEME**

- 3.1 The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) will have the power to issue compliance notices where it is satisfied that a public body has failed to comply with its specific duties. Disability equality will also become part of the audit and inspection process. User focus and diversity are very likely to feature strongly as key lines of enquiry in the next CPA.
- 3.2 The Government and the DRC have produced a revised Code of Practice for this; a final version of this will be available during summer 2006. The Code does not impose legal obligations, nor is it an authoritative statement of the law – that is a matter for the courts and tribunals - it is, however, a “statutory” code and it is admissible as evidence in legal proceedings.
- 3.3 The attached draft Disability Equality Scheme is similar in format and content to our current Race Equality Scheme and is compatible with the current draft Code of Practice on Disability Equality in the public sector.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 The Cabinet is invited to endorse this scheme

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Disability Equality Scheme

**Contact Officers:** Louise Clewes, Policy Officer and  
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## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### DRAFT DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

#### Introduction

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) has been amended; it now places a duty on all public authorities to promote disability equality. The DDA defines a disabled person as someone with ‘a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. The Council recognises that disabilities can be wide ranging and will include sensory and mental impairment as well as mobility difficulties.

We are committed to eliminating discrimination and harassment and promoting equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons. In some instances giving due regard to disability equality may require additional, dedicated services to enable disabled people to access services on equitable terms. This scheme describes how we intend to fulfil this positive commitment and to meet our duty.

#### Functions and Policies

We have identified our functions and formal policies and given them a priority depending on their relevance to disability equality. We will use this review (appended) as a programme to assess all our functions over the next three years, as follows –

<b>Year</b>	<b>Priority</b>
2006/07	1
2007/08	2
2008/09	3

By functions we mean the full range of the Council’s activities and services provided in accordance with our duties and powers.

By policies we mean formal and informal decisions, procedures, plans, strategies and objectives about how we carry out our duties and use our powers.

## **Strategic Aims for Disability Equality**

Our Corporate plan – Growing Success - recognises that:

- ◆ Huntingdonshire is made up of many different communities;
- ◆ some communities have greater or different needs than others;
- ◆ equality doesn't mean doing the same for everyone;
- ◆ to make progress we must put more resources to meet the greatest needs;
- ◆ we can't afford to ignore communities with fewer needs; and
- ◆ everyone needs to feel involved.

Our Equality & Inclusion Strategy formalises our commitment to disability equality in providing high quality services and effective community leadership.

We intend to do this, through –

- ◆ planning and delivering services;
- ◆ monitoring and evaluation;
- ◆ consultation and engagement;
- ◆ developing & supporting employees;
- ◆ supporting our communities.

## **Planning and delivering our services**

We will ensure that information about the Council and our services is available to all sections of our communities and that services are accessible to everyone. To do this we will –

- ◆ consider access to information and services when assessing and monitoring services;
- ◆ make sure our staff have the necessary skills, information and understanding to provide services and information equally and fairly;
- ◆ involve local communities in enhancing services and information they need and how they want them provided.

## Monitoring and evaluation

In a three year cycle we will make a detailed assessment of all our functions and policies, both formal and informal, to ensure that, where relevant, the way that we carry out those functions –

- ◆ eliminates disability discrimination and harassment;
- ◆ promotes equality of opportunity.

Specifically, we will continue to examine each function and policy according to the priority given to it to identify whether there is evidence that people with a disability are affected differently. To do this we will –

- ◆ use disability monitoring to collect and analyse information about people's disability to assess fair access to and use of services;
- ◆ use national guidance and definitions to inform our assessments;
- ◆ use historical data, including any available evidence, complaints or public concerns, survey and research findings, ethnic data and census results or general or specific research to assess the effectiveness of our services in promoting disability equality;
- ◆ compare our policies and the way we carry out our functions with other local authorities and public bodies.

We will monitor and analyse our policies and functions for any adverse impact on the promotion of disability equality. We will use a range of methods to do this –

- ◆ statistical analysis of disability data;
- ◆ satisfaction surveys analysed by disability;
- ◆ random or targeted surveys;
- ◆ qualitative research.

We will use the same disability classification system as that used in the 2001 Census, except where research is targeted at specific communities where more detailed information might be required.

We will incorporate consideration of the duty into review programmes, including service reviews and performance management systems.

We will use the results of assessment, consultation and monitoring to ensure we avoid or minimise adverse impacts on disability equality. The information will be used to understand and meet the needs of different groups and to make new arrangements or change arrangements so that our policies and the way we carry out our functions promote disability equality. Any new arrangements or changes we make will be relevant to the nature of the policy or function and its possible effect on the public.

### **Consultation and engagement**

We will undertake clear, representative and proportionate consultation, using a range of appropriate methods. Specifically we will try to engage disabled people to ensure that any new policy does not discriminate and promotes equality of opportunity for disabled people.

### **Developing and supporting our employees**

To help us achieve our commitments and duty we will carry out monitoring of our employees throughout their employment cycle – from application to leaving. This monitoring will enable us to measure the progress in promoting equality of opportunity and achieving a representative workforce.

Specifically, we will –

- ◆ collect disability monitoring data for existing employees, applicants for employment, for training, promotion, performance assessment, for staff involved in grievance or disciplinary procedures and for employees who leave;
- ◆ analyse the data to look for any patterns of inequality;
- ◆ take any reasonable action necessary to remove barriers or discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity;
- ◆ publish the results of our monitoring each year.

The disability monitoring of employees will be combined with the monitoring of other data in our information systems to build on current practices to promote equal opportunity.



## Policy Division

The disability monitoring of employees will be reported annually to the Council's Employment Panel.

The Council has commissioned a training and development programme for its employees to promote an understanding of equality and its implications for meeting the Council's goals and objectives. The programme will incorporate the requirements and benefits of meeting the duty and our commitment to promoting disability equality.

Senior management and employees who will be directly responsible for this Scheme will receive additional specific training.

The Council's induction programme for new employees will include initial training on the importance of equality and specifically promoting disability equality to meeting the Council's objectives.

## Supporting our Communities

To ensure that we promote disability equality within our communities we will:

- ◆ Support Council Members to represent and support communities and individuals.
- ◆ Identify the needs of different communities.
- ◆ Promote activity in community based organisations.
- ◆ Identify socially excluded groups and develop measures to promote inclusion.
- ◆ Ensure that community and welfare rights information is easily available.
- ◆ Engage and support voluntary, community, charitable organisations and social enterprises.

## Publishing Results

The results of our assessments, consultation and monitoring and reviews of this scheme will be made available in a way that is appropriate, accessible and proportionate.

Policy Division

A copy of the report compiled after each assessment will be available in full on our Website ([www.huntsdc.gov.uk](http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk)) or on request from the Policy Division, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN 01480 388032.

Where appropriate the Council will consider using or commissioning new methods of publication that are proportionate to achieving disability equality.

### **Complaints**

Complaints about how we are meeting our duties or other complaints about disability equality will be dealt with through our established complaints procedure, which is available to all members of the public.

**CABINET**

**23 FEBRUARY 2006**

## **DELEGATED POWERS (Report by Head of Environmental Health Services)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The scheme of delegation which sets out the powers given to the Environmental Health Services Division in relation to enforcement of housing standards has been reviewed and revealed a number of additions that are necessary in order to enable the Division's work to be carried out and reduce the chance of legal challenge.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report seeks to make available all of the enforcement powers under the Housing Act 1985 and requests the approval of Members.

### **2. THE HOUSING ACT 1985**

- 2.1 The Housing Act 1985 empowers officers to enforce housing standards in properties including houses in multiple occupation.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that:

- (a) The Head of Environmental Health Services and the Director of Operational Services be authorised to appoint suitably qualified, experienced and trained officers to carry out these duties under the Housing Act 1985 and any Regulations or Orders made there under.
- (b) The Head of Environmental Health Services and the Director of Operational Services be authorised to institute legal proceedings after consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Housing Act 1985

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