

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 29 JUNE 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 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2006.

**Mrs H Taylor
388008**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive 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. CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ENTERPRISE CENTRE - ST NEOTS (ECONOMIC APPRAISAL AND RELEASE OF MEDIUM TERM PLAN ALLOCATION) (Pages 5 - 14)

By way of a report by the Head of Policy to consider a request for the release of funding from the Medium Term Plan.

**I Leatherbarrow
388005**

4. MOBILE HOME PARK, EYNESBURY - CONTAMINATED LAND REMEDIATION STRATEGY (Pages 15 - 22)

To consider a report by the Head of Housing Services regarding the Contaminated Land Remediation Strategy for the Mobile Home Park in Eynesbury.

**S Plant
388240**

5. AMENDMENTS TO THE HOUSING RENEWAL ASSISTANCE POLICY (Pages 23 - 26)

By way of a report by the Head of Housing Services to consider amendments to the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy.

**J Barrett
388203**

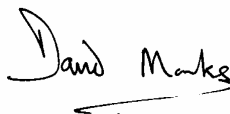
6. ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM REGIONAL HOUSING BOARD FOR DECENT HOMES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR (Pages 27 - 32)

To consider a report by the Head of Housing Services, Technical Services and Environmental Health on the award of a grant from the Regional Housing Board for improving non-decent homes in the private sector.

**J Barratt
388203**

7. **CAMBRIDGESHIRE SUB-REGION GYPSY/TRAVELLER NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2005** (Pages 33 - 44)
- To consider a report by the Heads of Housing Services and of Planning Services regarding the key findings of the Cambridgeshire Sub-Region Gypsy/Traveller Needs Assessment.
- S Plant
388240**
8. **LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME REVISIONS DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING** (Pages 45 - 108)
- By way of a report by the Head of Planning Services to consider changes to the Local Development Scheme for submission to the Secretary of State and the contents of the draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document for consultation.
- R Probyn
388430**
9. **HUNTINGDON TOWN CENTRE VISION** (Pages 109 - 112)
- By way of a report by the Head of Planning Services to consider the Strategy and Action Plan for Huntingdon Town Centre.
- R Probyn
388430**
10. **POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS** (Pages 113 - 124)
- To consider a report by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) on the funding of the Police Community Support Officers.
- C Bulman
388234**
11. **LOCAL JUSTICE AREA BOUNDARIES CONSULTATION PAPER** (Pages 125 - 126)
- To consider a report by the Head of Legal and Estates on proposals to change the boundaries of the Peterborough, Huntingdonshire & Cambridge Local Justice areas
- V Stevens
388023**
12. **SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP** (Pages 127 - 130)
- To consider the report of the meeting of the Safety Advisory Group held on 14 June 2006
- D Francis
388006**
13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**
- To resolve:
- that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to terms proposed in the course of negotiations for the sale of the freehold for the land.
14. **UNIT 10, GLEBE ROAD, ST PETERS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, HUNTINGDON** (Pages 131 - 136)
- With the assistance of a report by the Head of Legal and Estates to consider the terms for the proposed sale of the freehold for this site to the occupier.
- K Phillips
388260**

Dated this 21 day of June 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 (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.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 8 June 2006.

PRESENT: Councillor I C Bates – Chairman.

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

14. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 18th May 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

15. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

16. "GROWING SUCCESS" - CORPORATE PLAN AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) setting out a draft timetable for a detailed review of the Council's Corporate Plan – Growing Success, local performance indicators and targets, the Improvement Plan and objectives for supporting the achievement of the Council's priorities.

Having been advised of the results of performance data for 2005/06 and the series of revised targets for 2006/07, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the suggested process for reviewing and updating the Council's Corporate Plan – Growing Success be approved; and
- (b) that the performance data for 2005/06 and the revised targets for 2006/07 be noted.

17. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

By way of a report by the Heads of Policy and of Human Resources and Payroll Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were invited to consider the content of the first draft policy document on safeguarding children, young people and adults in Huntingdonshire produced on behalf of the Council in accordance with the Children's Act 2004. Having been reminded of the background to the policy, Executive Councillors were acquainted with the contents of an associated action plan outlining key activities aimed at implementing the policy. Comment was made on the

procedure, portability and cost of Criminal Record Bureau checks for Members, the process for which was to be the subject of a separate report to a forthcoming meeting of the Corporate Governance Panel.

Having noted that the document had been endorsed by the Employees' Liaison Advisory Group and Employment Panel, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the contents of the Council's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy be approved.

18. MEDIUM TERM PLAN: REQUEST FOR THE RELEASE OF FUNDS

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the relevant funding as outlined in the annex to the report now submitted be released from the Medium Term Plan (scheme ref 443) in respect of the Common Housing Register/Choice Based Lettings scheme; and
- (b) that a further report, including links with Customer First, be submitted once final costs from the procurement of the IT software for the project are known.

19. TREASURY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2005/06

A report by the Head of Financial Services was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which reviewed the respective levels of performance in the year ending 31st March 2006 by three External Fund Managers in the matter of investment of the Council's Capital Receipts.

RESOLVED

that the content of the report be noted.

20. A14 ELLINGTON - FEN DITTON IMPROVEMENT - HUNTINGDON VIADUCT TECHNICAL STUDY

With the aid of a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the findings of a study into the retention or removal of the existing Huntingdon viaduct in conjunction with the Highways Agency's proposals for upgrading the A14 between Ellington and Fen Ditton.

The study had concluded that the original CHUMMS option would be viable and that the highway network in Huntingdon could be modified to accommodate the removal of the A14 Viaduct and the construction of new highway links and junctions designed to improve the local road network. In that respect, Members recognised the benefits of the

proposals, inter alia, in terms of separating local and through traffic, improving traffic movements between and around Huntingdon, Godmanchester and Hinchingsbrooke and presenting regeneration and development opportunities in the locality.

In receiving a letter from Buckden Parish Council expressing concerns over the study's content and findings, Executive Members noted that the proposals would be the subject of an extensive consultation exercise. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the findings of the Atkins A14 Huntingdon Viaduct Study be noted and welcomed;
- (b) that the study be commended to the Secretary of State for consideration as part of the decisions of the options for the development of the A14 Improvements Scheme; and
- (c) that the principles of the CHUMMS Options Strategy presented at the Highway Agency's Public Consultation in 2005 be supported and the Director of Operational Services authorised to urge the Secretary of State: -
 - ◆ to develop further details of the new highway links and junctions in Huntingdon as part of the A14 Scheme in consultation with the Cambridgeshire County Council and the District Council; and
 - ◆ to promote the necessary statutory orders for such links along with those that will be required for the wider A14 scheme and its associated local access roads.

21. WARBOYS CONSERVATION AREA: CHARACTER STATEMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

Having considered a report by the Planning Policy Manager to which was attached a Character Statement and Management Plan for the Warboys Conservation Area (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Character Statement and Management Plan for the Warboys Conservation Area be approved for consultation.

22. REPRESENTATION ON ORGANISATIONS

Having received and considered a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) in relation to the appointment/nomination of representatives to serve on a variety of organisations, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that, with the exception of the following, nominations be made to the organisations as set out in the Appendix to the report now submitted;

Organisation Representative(s)

Arts Forum for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – Councillor Mrs Reynolds and the Head of Environmental & Community Health (substitute – Councillor Mrs Chandler);

Huntingdonshire Citizens' Advice Bureaux – Councillor Rogers (Trustee – Mr Mugglestone);

Ramsey Area Partnership Board – Councillor Bucknell;

Alconbury and Ellington Internal Drainage Board – Councillors M Baker and K Baker, Messrs Allen, E K Heads and Mrs Vanbergen;

Strategic Aviation Special Interest Group – Councillor Bucknell

St Ives Area Road Safety Committee – Councillors Mrs Chandler, Newman and Rogers; and

- (b) that, in the event that changes are required to the Council's representatives during the course of the year, the Director of Central Services after consultation with the Deputy Leader of the Council be authorised to nominate alternative representatives as necessary.

Chairman

CREATIVE ENTERPRISE (Report by the Head of Policy)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is three-fold —

- to propose the adoption of a Creative Enterprise Strategy, supplemental to the Local Economy Strategy;
- to seek the release of funding in the Medium Term Plan as the Council's "matching" contribution for the development of a Creative Enterprise Centre in conjunction with the Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG - formerly the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) and Longsands College; and
- to seek authority for the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources & Policy, to approve terms for the lease of land from the Governors of Longsands College and management arrangements for the Creative Enterprise Centre on the College campus.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 Set out at Appendix A is a draft Strategy, which has the purpose of promoting two key aims –

- the increase in the sustainability, growth and productivity of creative industries in the District, and
- to maximise the potential whereby creative industries can contribute towards broader social, economic and cultural regeneration.

2.2 The Strategy sets out the national, regional and local context for the promotion of creative industries, defines such industries, and makes both the distinction and the link between such enterprise and broader cultural and artistic activities. It summarises the key issues faced by the sector and proposes a six point partnership programme of activity. In particular, the Strategy focuses on St Neots as having the potential for the development of a creative industries hub to ensure that the economic benefits from the Regional Centres in Norwich, Cambridge and Hertfordshire can be linked with opportunities for job and business creation and economic regeneration through the Cambridge Sub-Region generally and in Huntingdonshire specifically.

2.3 The Strategy has been developed in consultation with partners, particularly those within the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership. It is proposed that the Strategy should be adopted and published as a supplement to the Local Economy Strategy.

3. SPACE FOR CREATIVITY

- 3.1 One of the six main activities identified in the Strategy is to ensure appropriate physical infrastructure to promote job and business creation. Given the nature of creative industries, it is suggested that this infrastructure – both physical space and facilities – should be multi-phased and located throughout St Neots, both as an incentive to the creation and development of small enterprises and also to minimise risks associated with new developments of this nature.
- 3.2 The Council's policy on commercial property recognises that such investment has produced long-term benefits both in supporting economic activity, which would not otherwise be supported by the market, and in producing net surplus, which have been used to fund new or existing expenditure that otherwise would be met from Council Tax.
- 3.3 Included in the Medium Term Plan is a contribution of £300k, conditional on Government funding and the availability of land, to establish a Creative Industries Enterprise Centre in conjunction with Longsands College and the overall redevelopment of adjoining land – the Longsands Quarter, which is the subject of an urban design framework prepared by the Council. The Enterprise Centre, based on the Longsands College campus, will provide workspace and business support for new and developing creative businesses as well as meeting community needs and providing opportunities to link activities at the College with business development.
- 3.4 Recently the Department for Communities & Local Government announced that it had allocated funding of up to £730k to support the development of the Centre. The grant is being made available from the Growth Area Fund and recognises the need to support job and business creation in areas subject to significant housing growth to help ensure the sustainability of communities. The Governors of Longsands College, subject to agreement of terms, have agreed in principle to make land available on a long lease at a peppercorn rent to facilitate the building of the Centre.
- 3.7 As part of the requirements of the initial funding application, the Council, with the support of Cambridgeshire Horizons, was required to produce an economic appraisal in accordance with HM Treasury guidance. The Council's appraisal concluded that the project fits with local, regional and national strategies, identifies the local need and recommends that the proposal should proceed. The Business Plan predicts that after the first year the income from the Centre will cover all running costs and thereafter produce small surpluses.
- 3.8 The expenditure profile for the construction of the Centre anticipates that the Council's contribution will not be required until late 2007 or early 2008, but in order to enter the funding agreement with the DCLG, the Council is required at this stage to commit to the formal release of the funding. The standard template for the release of funding for MTP schemes (Appendix B) assumes the release of the Council's contribution in 2007/08: the phasing of the expenditure will be dealt with under the Council's Code of Financial Management.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The adoption of a Creative Enterprise Strategy will provide an additional focus for economic and regeneration activity across the District and specifically in St Neots. It will help in pursuing external funding and the development of partnership approaches to meeting future economic and social needs.
- 4.2 The development of a Creative Industries Enterprise Centre on the campus of Longsands College will be a significant step towards implementation of the overall Strategy and provide significant impetus for other developments. The linking of an enterprise facility, bringing business enterprise onto the campus of a secondary school, is an exciting and innovative collaboration which has been recognised by the Government.
- 4.3 St Neots sits squarely in one of the Government's growth areas (London-Stansted-Cambridge-Peterborough growth area). The provision of workspace and business support will help to promote a balance between housing growth and local opportunities for employment in a way that is both forward-looking and innovative.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Cabinet are requested to –
- approve the Creative Enterprise Strategy for Huntingdonshire and publish it as a supplement to the Local Economy Strategy;
 - authorise the release of £300k in the Medium Term Plan as the Council's "matching" contribution towards the development of a Creative Industries Enterprise Centre at Longsands College, St Neots; and
 - authorise the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Resources & Policy, to enter into a lease for land for the Enterprise Centre and to enter into the funding agreement with the Department for Communities & Local Government.

Background Papers:

Space for Creativity, St Neots, Project Appraisal, Atkins
Space for Creativity, St Neots, Business Plan, Atkins.

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

This page is intentionally left blank

CREATIVE ENTERPRISE: A STRATEGY FOR HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Introduction

Creative enterprise offers the potential to be a major key to sustained economic growth in the UK. Creative businesses depend on individual creativity and skill to generate prosperity. They extend from music through marketing and advertising, architecture, furniture-making and software design. Such industries account for about 7% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) and are growing at 10% per annum. In Britain, with rapid advances in digital technology and continuing development of information and communication technologies, the importance of cultural products and creative industries continues to grow. Creative businesses are important in their own right and support the development of existing and new businesses.

The National, Regional and Local Context

The **United Kingdom** has great creative strengths: around 2 million people are employed in creative industries, which have helped to transform many urban areas (Glasgow, Manchester, Newcastle/Gateshead). The Government has set out clearly the links between creativity and business performance and argues that creativity is a key ingredient in the success of business across the UK economy. The UK has a world-leading creative sector directly contributing 8% to UK GDP. Recent trends show that culture is a powerful economic driver, as well making an acknowledged contribution to social, environmental, educational and health well-being.

The Government's aim is to make the UK the world's creative hub, but faces major challenges from India, China, Korea and elsewhere. The Government has invested in education through specialist schools, universities and business schools, and is seeking to provide schoolchildren with opportunities to develop creativity and take part in cultural activities. It is strongly linked to changes in the curriculum to support enterprise.

In the **Eastern Region** there are some 17,000 creative businesses employing 145,000 people – about 5.5% of the Regional workforce. The average business size is 4 and about 35% are freelance. The East of England Creative Industries Strategy identifies three regional hubs – Cambridge (new technology and innovation), Norwich (animation, TV production, writing and visual arts) and Hertfordshire (film and media).

In **Huntingdonshire** 2,000 people are employed in creative industries – about 3.2% of the workforce – the 8th largest in the Eastern Region. The number of people employed in this sector has grown by 23% in the last ten years – although this is below the regional and national average growth rate. The Community Strategy for Huntingdonshire and the Local Economy Strategy both identify creativity in our businesses as a key issue to maintaining economic success. They specifically identify St Neots as having the potential to support and benefit from a growth in creative industries.

What are Creative Industries?

The generally accepted definition of creative industries is –

“Those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the exploitation of intellectual property.”

They include — advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, photography, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio.

The definition makes a distinction between cultural and artistic activity and that which seeks to be commercially viable, but there is a close economic relationship with the cultural sector such as arts and entertainment, heritage, hospitality, museums and galleries and sport.

Creative enterprise exist where creativity and ideas can be turned into businesses and marketed, and as such have a direct link to economic and cultural development, regeneration and social inclusion. The environment in which creative industries are likely to grow will be one where cultural well-being is likely to flourish. This presents an opportunity to promote broader cultural and social objectives through the promotion of creative industries.

Strategic Aims

The purpose of this strategy is to promote two main aims —

- to increase the sustainability, growth and productivity of creative industries;
- to maximise the potential for creative industries to contribute towards broader social, economic and cultural regeneration.

Issues

Drawing on national, regional and local research, a number of key issues facing the creative sector have been identified —

- the sector is “hard to see”, its strength hasn’t been generally realised and it needs a higher profile;
- the sector is very fragmented or disconnected. The benefits for cross-fertilisation, collaboration and the transfer of knowledge between businesses is not well advanced;
- limited networks reduce both business and individual awareness of activities and opportunities;
- poor local and regional supply chains are stifling potential;
- there is a need for space in city and town centres including incubation units, where businesses can join together to share overheads and provide a focus for activity;
- in common with all businesses, creative industries need excellent management, marketing, leadership but often lack specialist business support such as help with the protection, exploitation and sharing of intellectual property;

- finance is hard to obtain from many traditional sources as creative businesses have few fixed or tangible assets.

Actions to deal with the issues

To achieve the strategic aims, a 6 point partnership programme of activity is proposed along the themes of —

- appropriate physical **infrastructure** – ‘**Spaces for Creativity**’ to nurture and harness creative industries;
- **skills and education** – in particular to help foster creativity in places of learning and in communities;
- **business support**, access to finance and protection of intellectual property - nurturing new businesses and helping them thrive;
- **competition and collaboration** - to support competitive and collaborative business environment;
- **technology** - to maximise the opportunities offered by the Internet, digitalisation and the application of new technologies;
- **removing the barriers** – minimising barriers for innovative creators and enterprise.

Detailed activities include –

- to improve business-to-business networks and information and contacts for creative businesses;
- to promote the profile and strength of creative industries in Huntingdonshire;
- to work with partners to coordinate business support, promote training and professional development programmes for individuals and businesses within creative industries;
- to improve employment creation in the sector;
- to help develop collaboration, supply chains and new markets;
- to seek to promote available funding to maximise the sustainability, productivity and establishment of creative industries.
- to develop St Neots as a district centre for creative industries;
- to work with partners to provide the physical infrastructure – “Spaces for Creativity” – in St Neots, particularly the establishment of a creative industries centre on the Longsands College campus and workspace in St Mary’s Urban Village and as part of the redevelopment of the Priory Centre;
- to promote skills initiatives to support creative industries in the Eynesbury and Eaton Socon Ward; and
- to monitor the size, economic value and social impact of creative industries in Huntingdonshire to provide an evidence base for future initiatives.

Why St Neots?

The development of a district-based creative industries hub in St Neots will help to ensure that the economic benefits from the regional centre in Cambridge can be linked with opportunities for job creation and economic regeneration throughout the Cambridge Sub-Region generally and Huntingdonshire specifically.

St Neots is the largest town in Cambridgeshire (with a population of 27,000 which is set to rise to 30,000 by 2011) and is located in the London – Stansted – Cambridge – Peterborough growth area. It is 15 miles from the regional hub of Cambridge. It also has convenient links with Hertfordshire and London.

Each day 6,000 residents leave the St Neots area to work in Cambridge, London and elsewhere, many of whom will be employed in creative industries.

Both the secondary schools in the town have been awarded Specialist Status for creativity – St Neots Community College is a Performing Arts School, while Longsands College is a specialist in Media, IT and English. Huntingdonshire Regional College has an Annexe in St Neots and has acknowledged excellence in photography. The link between secondary and further education and business is seen as an important driver in promoting creative industries.

The “Vision for St Neots – A Town of the Future” prepared by the Civic Trust in association with DTZ/Pieda, identified the opportunity to grow and diversify the local economy through creative industries. Creative industries are seen as complementary to other aspects of the re-development of the town, such as the ‘St Mary’s Urban Village’ and the Priory Centre. They would also provide a focus for skill development and employment generation particularly (but not exclusively) for young people and for other areas of the regeneration of the town, such as Eynesbury and Eaton Socon wards which have relatively high levels of deprivation.

The development of jobs and businesses in creative industries will provide employment opportunities to balance the growth in population resulting from new housing growth and the decline in employment opportunities in older established industries.

A steering group has been established in the town to promote creative industries, which is helping to build support and impetus and identify approaches to achieving the actions identified to deliver the strategic aims.

References

Department of Culture, Media and Science website:
www.culture.gov.uk/creative_industries

The East of England Creative & Cultural Industries Development Strategy

657 – Creative Enterprise Centre, St Neots

Ian Leatherbarrow

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact						Capital							
	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000	2005/ 2006 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000
Approved Gross Budget				0	0	0	0		1,000					
Approved Net Budget				0	0	0	0		300					
Already released				0	0	0	0		0					
Amount for which release now requested				3	0	-1	-2		0	300				

Justification for release and other information -

The justification for the release of the council's contribution is set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.8 in the covering report.

The bid to the Department of Communities and Local Government (formerly the office of the Deputy Prime Minister) anticipated that in future years the Centre would help to –

- Create 40 new jobs
- Establish 2 new businesses each year; and
- Attract 500 people each year into employment skill learning.

The bid and subsequent project management plan identifies and evaluates the main risks affecting the project.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

29 JUNE 2006

**MOBILE HOME SITE, EYNESBURY CONTAMINATED LAND
REMEDICATION STRATEGY
(Report by the Head of Housing Services)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members on: the outcome of the additional soil sampling; the approved approach to remediation of the contaminated land; and the next steps to progress the required works.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This mobile home park was in operation prior to the 1974 reorganisation of local government. Previously it was owned by St Neots Urban District Council. At LSVT (2000) management of the site was passed to Huntingdonshire Housing Partnership (HHP).
- 2.2 There are 50 pitches on the site and residents own their own mobile/park home paying a ground rent to the Council. The site covers about 1.25 hectares. The mobile home park has been partly developed on the site of an old clay pit and brick and tile works.
- 2.3 A site survey was commissioned, in June 2005, both to investigate the land in accordance with the Council's contaminated land strategy and to inform a review of the mobile home site as an asset.
- 2.4 The Council acts as both land owner via its Housing Services section and 'Regulator' via its Environmental Health section.
- 2.5 The Regulator has determined the site to be "contaminated land". The next step was to prepare a remediation strategy for the approval of the Regulator. Additional soil samples were taken from the open spaces and each of the 50 plots to determine the extent of the required remediation works.

3. RESULTS OF THE ADDITIONAL SAMPLING

- 3.1 The Regulator has determined that 46 of the 50 plots require remedial works to be carried out. The results of the samples from the open spaces were not at an unacceptable level, so remediation works are not required.

4. REMEDIATION STRATEGY

- 4.1 The Regulator has agreed the remediation strategy proposed by the consultant on behalf of the land owner. The strategy consists of a combination of three methods:
- **Voluntary agreements** – Residents will be asked to sign an agreement to retain and maintain any existing concrete on the plot, and not to dig soil, or permit others to dig soil, deeper than 600mm (2 feet) or to break through the underground membrane

without permission of the council. The granting of permission would be conditional on the proper health and safety process being carried out by the resident.

- **Retention of existing concrete** - Where concrete is substantial and is in good repair eg the concrete below the mobile homes, driveways and under most sheds the concrete may remain in place. Periodic inspections will be required to ensure that the concrete continues to be in good repair. The ground beneath paving slabs will need to be replaced.
- **Soil replacement.** Areas currently laid to lawn, flower beds, vegetable plots, paving or gravel will be excavated to a depth of 600mm (2 feet) and the soil taken away. The bottom and sides of the excavation will be lined with a membrane and clean soil provided. This membrane inhibits soil below mixing with the clean soil and acts as a physical indicator to mark the limit of the new soil, to deter deeper digging.

- 4.2 The consultant has advised that for health and safety reasons residents would need to vacate their mobile home during the works to their plot. This is to protect them from any dust and machinery such as diggers during the work. Also the digging will expose service cables and pipes and could make access in and out of their home difficult for a time, with a 600mm (2 foot) excavation.
- 4.3 The consultant has estimated that the time needed for residents to be out of their home would be 5 working days. This assumes no problems and that works would continue for a while once residents return to their home. Residents have been advised that it would be safer to assume that they would be out of their home for 2 weeks and hopefully it will be less.
- 4.4 The number of temporary homes available will determine the speed at which the works can progress and therefore the overall contract period. Contractors would be unable to commit to a work programme until the weekly availability of vacant properties for them to work on is known. Five temporary properties are considered to be the minimum requirement to allow the contractor to work on at least two properties at the same time and give continuity of work.
- 4.5 Temporary accommodation would need to be fully furnished because mobile homes and park homes have integral white goods and bedroom fittings which could not be removed from homes.
- 4.6 Housing association homes are in short supply in that location and are not furnished. Private rented furnished property is also in short supply.
- 4.7 A favoured solution is to decant residents to another mobile home on the same site. This would avoid furnishing arrangements because they are normally sold as self-sufficient. This would give the added benefits of residents living in the same location compared to a wider displacement leading to additional inconvenience and disruption which could result in higher claims for disbursements. To avoid having to re-open a Housing Revenue Account Government

agreement would be required but it is not anticipated that this would be withheld.

4.8 Mobile homes have been marketed at various prices but based on circa £80k each a budget of £400k would be required to secure 5 homes, assuming willing sellers.

4.9 A letter has been sent to residents (2 June 2006) detailing the current position and the next steps including a questions and answer sheet. The letter also mentioned that some residents may want to stay with friends or relatives during the works in which case we would give them a lodging allowance. The letter also requested those considering selling their mobile home to contact the council. This will be followed up with each resident and Cabinet will be updated on the latest position at the Cabinet meeting.

5. THE NEXT STEPS

5.1 A brief outline of the tasks and approximate timescales are included at Annex A.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 As previously reported to Cabinet the government via DEFRA has a Contaminated Land Capital Projects Programme (CLCPP) available which can grant Supplementary Credit Approvals in support of work which is undertaken to remediate contaminated land. The support is based on increasing a Council's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) sufficiently to allow the repayments on a loan of the accepted sum. **All things being equal** there would be no net cost to the Council in relation to the amount accepted by the government over a period of years.

6.2 Each claim from the Council will have a technical and value for money appraisal carried out by the Environment Agency, on behalf of DEFRA. The first claim has been submitted (£19k) and payment has been recommended by the Environment Agency to DEFRA. DEFRA have standard conditions when granting money, which means that they would make an 'offer' of payment which needs to be accepted by the council along with the funding conditions. DEFRA has advised that they expect to make us an offer of the full amount claimed by the end of June 2006. A second claim is about to be submitted for circa £33k. The Council is also entitled to recover certain administrative costs relating to the project which would otherwise be charged to the Council's revenue accounts. This will create some headroom for funding items that are not recoverable through the extra RSG.

6.3 Cabinet approved a supplementary estimate of £35k for consultancy work on the 12 January 2006. Consultants were invited to quote to draft a remediation strategy and to give costing for future technical assistance based upon the approved method of remediating the land. This was to ensure that the same consultant would advise throughout the project and that future consultancy cost would be within a framework of known costs.

6.4 The lowest priced consultant was above the supplementary estimate for the cost of the work. To avoid delay, and following discussion with

the leader of the council and the executive member for housing, the first part of the work, to draft a remediation strategy, was commissioned which, at £22k, was within the total amount approved by Cabinet.

- 6.5 The second stage of technical assistance will be based on submitted hourly rates. It is estimated that £25k will be required for this stage. These costs are 100% eligible for government grant support.
- 6.6 The cost of employing a surveying consultant to carry out a measured survey of the plots, which is required to inform the specification of works and in support of planning permission is £4k. This cost is anticipated to be 100% grant funded.
- 6.7 The cost of employing a horticulturist to plot the vegetation on individual plots (on the plans from the surveying firm) and to provide cost estimates for replacement of plants to compensate residents is £2k. It is unlikely that this will be grant funded.
- 6.8 The cost of employing a quantity surveyor to estimate the total cost for budget and tendering purposes is £3k. This cost is anticipated to be 100% grant funded.
- 6.9 The mobile homes proposed to be purchased as temporary accommodation would be resold on completion of the works. Mobile homes would be subject to the same market inflation risks and advantages as other homes although there is likely to be continued demand at this lower end of the housing market. There have been a number of sales during the last year indicating willing buyers despite the site being known to be suspected of and latterly known to be contaminated. At the time of sale of the temporary accommodation the land to the plots would have been remediated and publicised. The conveyancing costs for purchase and sale is estimated at £800 for each mobile home. There is a risk that full costs of buying and selling the temporary accommodation would not be recovered. This cost is not eligible for grant funding.
- 6.10 There will be ongoing costs associated with the provision of any form of temporary accommodation whether it be mobile homes or houses for instance safety checks and cleaning between tenancies. These costs will be included in a future report to Cabinet when other costs associated with the carrying out of remedial works are known. These costs are unlikely to be eligible for grant funding.
- 6.11 Residents will not be required to pay rent and council tax on the temporary accommodation in addition to continuing to pay ground rent and council tax on their own plot as this would be inequitable. The cost of Council Tax would be circa £6k. Whilst it would be possible to recharge electricity and other fuel charges for the short period each tenant would be in the temporary accommodation this would have a high administration overhead and the sums involved (circa £30 per tenant) should be covered by the Council as a gesture of goodwill.

6.12 Financial summary

It is not possible to accurately forecast the full financial impact of the scheme at this stage as various tasks are required to be completed before even the detailed specification for the main contract can be finalised. However, subject to the following assumptions, it is likely that the net cost to the Council of the whole project will not be too significant:

- The mobile homes for temporary accommodation can be sold for around the purchase price.
- Government Supplementary Credit Approvals are issued for those elements of the cost that are anticipated above together with the main contract for remedial works and relevant administrative costs.
- The Government Revenue Support Grant scheme is not amended to the Council's disadvantage.

Approval is required to the following costs to allow the next stage of the project to proceed:

CAPITAL COSTS	2006/07
	£,000
Acquisition of mobile homes	400
Conveyancing costs	4
Scientific consultancy stage 2	25
Surveying Consultancy	4
Quantity Surveyor	3
Planning Permission	1
TOTAL	437

REVENUE	2006/07
	£,000
Horticulturalist	2
Temporary accommodation council tax, electricity and other fuel costs.	8
TOTAL	10

7. SUMMARY

- 7.1 The Regulator has determined that 46 of the 50 plots require contaminated land remediation works. The open space does not require remediation works.
- 7.2 The Regulator has agreed the land owner's proposed remediation strategy. The specialist scientific consultant has advised that residents need to be moved out of the homes, for health and safety reasons, during the works to individual plots.
- 7.3 The ground works now need to be specified and tendered. There are additional costs that now need to be incurred to progress planning

permission and to tender the works. Grant claims will be made to Government as appropriate.

- 7.4 The estimated cost of the ground works is not yet available and will flow for the next stage of consultancy support and in-house specification.
- 7.5 Based on the assumptions in paragraph 6.12 above it is expected that there will not be a significant net cost to the Council resulting from this unavoidable project.
- 7.6 This report deals with the remediation strategy and pre-tender preparations for the main remedial works. A future report will deal with the budget requirements for the remedial ground works.
- 7.7 Cabinet are asked to approve the additional finance to progress the required unavoidable works.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1 That the report be noted.
- 8.2 That Cabinet approve a supplementary capital estimate of £437k and supplementary revenue estimate of £10k to fund the works necessary to progress the next stage of the project of seeking tenders.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Section 78A)


DETR Circular 02/2000 [Chapter A of Annex 3 and Part 4 of Chapter B of Annex 3]

Cabinet Reports, 3 November 2005 and 12 January 2006

Contaminated Land Survey

Notification of contaminated land

Contact Officer: Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services

 01480 388240

BRIEF PROGRAMME AND APPROXIMATE DATES

Consultants to survey plots	June 2006
Specification of the works	June/July 2006
Seek Planning Permission	July/August 2006
Select contractors and tender the works	July/August 2006
Cabinet approvals. Select successful contractor and enter into contract	September 2006
Contractor commences works	October 2006
Contractor completes works	April 2007

Notes:

- a) The programme is an indication of the steps to be taken and is not comprehensive.
- b) The timing of activities is indicative and will be subject to change. The duration of site works is dependent on the amount of temporary accommodation being available and the cooperation of residents.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

29 JUNE 2006

AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S HOUSING RENEWAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

(Report by the Head of Housing Services)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend amendments to the Council's Housing Renewal Assistance Policy.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Council thoroughly revised its approach to housing renewal in light of changes introduced under the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order (England and Wales) 2002 (RRO). The effect of the Order was to repeal the powers authorities had to make renovation and home repair assistance grants and to introduce new permissive powers "to provide assistance" to acquire, repair, adapt or demolish living accommodation.
- 2.2 The Council adopted the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy which aims to help people to repair, improve or adapt their homes to meet their needs. The new policy entitles people to apply for interest free loans. Since the policy has been introduced, only one grant has been awarded¹ demonstrating the shift in policy from grants to loans.
- 2.3 The Policy is working well. This report recommends seven changes.

3. IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The seven recommended changes to the Policy are detailed on Annex 1. The changes can be met within the existing budget. In summary, it is recommended that:
 1. The Council provide small grants of up to £800 per case to help people on low incomes to pay for their contribution to Warm Front grants². This should be called 'Warm Front Top-Up Grant';
 2. approval levels for DFG Top-Up³ Assistance are increased to £15k to reflect in the increase in building costs and the decision on whether to award DFG Top Up Assistance over £15k is delegated to the Head of Housing Services instead of the Head of Housing Services together with the Director of Operational Services;
 3. the decision on whether to increase officer approval levels in 1. and 2. above in the future is delegated to the Head of Housing Services instead of Cabinet;
 4. Top-Up Assistance for children's DFGs is subject to a means test because the means test on the mandatory element has recently been abolished by Government;

¹ Grants are only awarded to people where there is insufficient equity of 25% or less in their property to support a loan.

² Warm Front is the Government's scheme to install energy efficiency measures in people's homes. It is awarded to those who are in fuel poverty.

³ DFG Top-Up is available for owner occupiers only. If the cost of a DFG exceeds £25k mandatory limit, the Council can offer Top-Up. This is a loan and a charge is placed on the property.

5. the means test for Disabled Persons Relocation Grant⁴ for children's cases is abolished;
6. to qualify for assistance applicants should not owe money to Huntingdonshire District Council and if they do, should demonstrate a reasonable period of repayment; and
7. the policy should be amended to reflect that the Housing Fitness Standard (Section 189 & 190 of the Housing Act 1985) has been replaced by the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) (Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004).

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Cabinet approve the recommendations set out in paragraph 3.1 and detailed on Annex 1 and authorise officers to make the corresponding changes to the Housing Renewal Assistance Policy document.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) Order (England and Wales) 2002
- Housing Renewal Assistance Policy, April 2003
- Housing Act 2004

Contact Officer:	Jo Barrett, Housing Strategy Manager
	☎ (01480) 388203

⁴ The cost of moving to a more suitable property is a viable option, the Council will pay for some of the removal costs instead of adapting the current home. This is only available where it would save the Council money.

Annex 1

	Existing Policy Stance	Proposed New Policy Stance	Justification and Implications
1	Applications for assistance with funding an applicant's contribution to Warm Front Grants are processed in the same way as other Repairs Assistance applications. This means that applicants are means tested and a charge is placed on their property before any funding is released.	The Council provide small grants of up to £800 per case to help people on low incomes to pay for their contribution to Warm Front Grants. People on means tested benefits should be passported into this grant regime but those on non-means tested benefits should be subject to the Councils means test. This should be called 'Warm Front Top-Up Grant'.	It takes an average of four months to complete an application for Repairs Assistance. Placing the legal charge on the property accounts for a significant period of this time. Warm Front can fund heating repairs / improvements to vulnerable people's homes. If the applicant cannot afford their contribution to Warm Front, the work will not proceed. In 2005/6 Warm Front received approximately 200 eligible applications and of these, 20 customers had a contribution of approximately £470. If the recommendations are approved the Councils liability based on this information would be £470 x 20 = £9.5k. However, only a proportion would be eligible for Council assistance towards their contribution as some will be on non-means tested benefits.
2	Top Up Assistance below £10k is approved at officer level. Top Up Assistance over £10k has to be endorsed by the Head of Housing Services and the Director of Operational Services.	Top Up Assistance is approved at officer level up to £15k. Top Up Assistance over £15k is endorsed by the Head of Housing Services.	The cost of extensions has increased over recent months. This means that extensions frequently exceed the DFG maximum of £25k. It therefore seems appropriate that the levels of permission are increased.
3	Top-Up Assistance is not means tested.	Top-Up Assistance loans for children's DFGs are subject to a means test because the means test on the mandatory element has recently been abolished by Government.	Top-Up Assistance was never means tested on the basis that the means test was already done on the mandatory £25k element. The Government abolished the means test for children's DFGs in December 2005 so it is prudent and more equitable to means test the Top-Up Assistance loan for children's DFGs.
4	Changes to grant approval levels set out in the Policy can only be made by Cabinet.	The decision on whether to increase grant approval levels for Warm Front Top Up Grant and DFG Top Up Assistance are delegated to the Head of Housing Services in future.	More flexible approach may be needed to reflect changes in build costs.

5	Disabled Persons Relocation Grant is means tested.	That the means test for Disabled Persons Relocation Grant for children's cases is abolished	Relocation grant can help pay for the cost of moving where it is more cost effective to help an applicant move to a more suitable property than to adapt their existing home. As the Government abolished the means test for children's DFGs, the means test for children's Relocation Grant should also be abolished. If it is not abolished, there is a perverse incentive for people to remain in their current home which could be a less suitable and more expensive solution.
6	Policy is silent on whether or not grants / loans should be awarded to people that owe money to the Council.	To qualify for assistance, applicants should not owe money to Huntingdonshire District Council and if they do, should demonstrate a reasonable period of repayment. This decision should be made by the Private Sector Housing Officer.	That public funds should not be awarded to people with outstanding debts to the Council unless they can demonstrate a repayment history.
7	The policy refers to sections 189 & 190 of the Housing Act 1985 (Fitness standards).	The policy needs to be updated and based upon the new Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 following its introduction.	A new way to assess the condition of homes in England & Wales came into force on 6 April 2006. The Housing Fitness Standard (Section 189 & 190 Housing Act 1985) has been replaced with the Housing Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS) Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004.

CABINET

29 JUNE 2006

**ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM REGIONAL HOUSING BOARD FOR
DECENT HOMES IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR
(Report by the Head of Housing Services; Technical Services; and
Environmental Health)**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet that a £327,925 capital grant has been awarded to the Council from the Regional Housing Board, administered by GO-East, to help improve the non-decent homes in the private sector.
- 1.2 To invite Cabinet to consider the how this grant should be used.

2. BACKGROUND TO THE CAPITAL GRANT

- 2.1 This grant has come from the Regional Housing Pot. The decisions on how to spend the Pot are made by the Regional Housing Board and are guided by the Regional Housing Strategy which we are consulted on and contribute to.
- 2.2 The Regional Housing Board decided to top slice the Regional Housing Pot for improving non-decent homes in the private sector occupied by vulnerable people. Previous funding to support Decent Homes in the private sector have been allocated as supplementary credit approvals (SCA), of no use to the Council as it is a debt free authority.
- 2.3 Officers have discussed this allocation with the Government Office who has confirmed that it is a 'housing' capital grant, not intended as substitute funding and although legally the grant carries no conditions, the Regional Housing Board hope that councils will use the funds for the purpose it was intended. The Government Office will monitor our expenditure.
- 2.4 The Regional Housing Board's investment plan recommends that authorities receive a further grant in 2007/8 although it is not yet clear how much this will be.

3. BACKGROUND TO DECENT HOMES

- 3.1 A Decent Home is one which:
 - Does not contain a category 1 hazard (The new Housing Act introduced the Housing Health & Safety Rating System and a category 1 Hazard requires that action is taken);
 - is in a reasonable state of repair;
 - has reasonably modern facilities and services; and
 - provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.
- 3.2 Government has set a target that by 2010, all social housing provided by Councils and housing associations must meet the Decent Homes

standard. Public Service Agreement 7 states that by 2010, 70% of private sector homes occupied by vulnerable people¹ must also meet the Decent Homes standard. They also expect a year on year improvement in achievement.

- 3.3 The Council commissioned a stock condition survey in 2005 to establish the local baseline of Decent Homes. In Huntingdonshire at present there are 11,500 dwellings occupied by residents in receipt of a means tested benefit (excluding housing association dwellings). Of these 2,000 are classified non decent, which represents 17% of dwellings occupied by a vulnerable residents. This means that 83% are decent. Therefore, Huntingdonshire is already above the Government's 2010 target for decent homes occupied by vulnerable people in the private sector.
- 3.4 The majority of dwellings (50%) that fail the standard in Huntingdonshire do so because of poor thermal efficiency. This falls into three main categories:
1. those dwellings that have only room heaters as the primary heating source – these would require central heating and adequate insulation to comply;
 2. those dwellings with electric storage and some other heating systems – dwellings that fail will require more insulation in order to pass; and
 3. those dwellings that have central heating but not enough insulation to pass and require more insulation as a result.
- 3.5 Non-decent dwellings are associated with the private sector and with occupiers on low incomes either below 30 years of age or over 65 years of age. The St Ives and St Neots sub-areas have the highest rates of non decent dwellings.
- 3.6 Improving the thermal efficiency of people's homes is one way to tackle Decent Homes in Huntingdonshire. This will also help to achieve the Council's fuel poverty² target to ensure that no vulnerable households are at risk of ill health due to excess cold by 2010³.
- 3.7 There are already schemes that provide energy efficiency measures when the householder or partner is in receipt of a qualifying income or disablement related benefit. However these schemes are more restrictive to households where the children are in receipt of the disablement benefit, when the property was built after 1975, or for low income pensioners who have to pay a contribution.

¹ Vulnerable households have been defined as those in receipt of at least one of the principal means tested or disability related benefits. For the purpose of establishing the national 2001 baseline from the English House Condition Survey the benefits taken into account were: income support, housing benefit, council tax benefit, disabled persons tax credit, income based job seekers allowance, working families tax credit, attendance allowance, disability living allowance, industrial injuries disablement benefit, war disablement pension.

² Households in 'fuel poverty' spend over 10% of their income on heating.

³ DEFRA and DTI, (November 2001), UK Fuel Poverty Strategy

- 3.8 It is therefore suggested that the capital grant is used to pay for the installation of cavity wall and/or loft insulation for vulnerable people and those on a low income. Where properties are in need of central heating, Warm Front referrals will be made. Existing staff resources from Warm Front and National Energy Action (NEA) will be brought in to support the programme including leaflet drops, road shows, welfare benefit advice and energy efficiency assessments and advice.
- 3.9 It is estimated that 1,000 insulation measures could be installed through this grant, achieving a reduction in the number of vulnerable people occupying non-decent homes and contributing to the Council's fuel poverty and domestic energy and CO₂ reduction targets. In addition all householders contacted through the scheme would receive energy efficiency advice and low energy lamps.
- 3.10 This programme would be administered by the Environment Team within Technical Services and would support the work already underway accessing other Government grants such as Warm Front.

4. OPTIONS

- 4.1 Cabinet have three options:

Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. To use the grant to fund existing approved capital expenditure.	Reduces the revenue impact (£16k interest per year ongoing) and delays the point at which borrowing is needed to fund the MTP.	Use will not comply with the purposes for which the grant was given. Does not contribute to an improvement in Decent Homes or even spending on housing. Substitute funding was not the intended purpose of this allocation. No additionality is achieved from other agencies. Risk future year's allocations.
2. To use the grant to fund approved capital expenditure for Repairs Assistance.	Will support the improvement of people's homes which could be argued to be expenditure for which this grant was intended. Reduces the revenue impact (£16k interest per year ongoing) and delays the point at	No additionality is achieved from other agencies. Risk future year's allocations. Substitute funding was not the intended purpose of this allocation.

	which borrowing is needed to fund the MTP.	
3. To use this capital grant to provide additional initiatives towards Decent Homes for vulnerable people in the private sector as set out in paragraphs 3.3-3.10.	<p>This would help the Council to achieve other targets on fuel poverty, and domestic energy and CO2 reduction targets</p> <p>Expenditure fully complies with the purposes for which the grant is given.</p> <p>Additionally can be demonstrated to the Regional Housing Board.</p> <p>Does not risk future year's allocations.</p>	Although this would improve the energy efficiency of non-decent homes, it may not bring them up to the decent homes standard because they may fail on other elements.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The Regional Housing Board has awarded £327,925 to the Council to improve Decent Homes for vulnerable people in the private sector. This is a capital grant that is intended to be spent on this purpose although it carries no legal obligation.
- 4.2 Although the Government's current target for Decent Homes has been achieved in Huntingdonshire, the Government require a year on year improvement. Half of homes fail the standards as a result of poor thermal efficiency. This grant programme would reduce the number of homes that fail on that element of the Decent Homes standard. It contributes to the Council's energy efficiency targets under the Home Energy Conservation Act and the Governments targets to end fuel poverty, where practicable, for vulnerable households by 2010.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 That Cabinet approve a supplementary capital estimate to provide thermal efficiency improvements to private sector homes occupied by vulnerable people to be funded by the £327,925 capital grant that has been allocated to the Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Sustainable Communities Plan: Building for the Future, ODPM, 2003
- A Decent Homes: The Definition and Guidance, ODPM, February 2004
- Regional Housing Strategy for the East of England 2005-2010, EERA, 2005
- Letter dated 23 March 2006 from the Head of Housing at Government Office

Contact Officers: Housing Strategy / Funding:
Jo Barrett, Housing Strategy Manager
☎ 01480 388203

Energy Efficiency:
Julia Blackwell, Energy Efficiency Officer
☎ 01480 388288

This page is intentionally left blank

CAMBRIDGE SUB-REGION GYPSY/TRAVELLER NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2005

(Report by the Heads of Housing Services and Planning Services)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the key findings of the Cambridge Sub-Region Gypsy/Traveller Needs Assessment.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Housing Act 2004 places a duty on each local housing authorities to carry out a "Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment" (GTAA), in line with the duty to carry out a general Housing Market Assessment every three years.

- 2.2 Nine housing authorities and Cambridgeshire County Council agreed to carry out a joint study across the following administrative areas:

- The Cambridge Sub-region (Cambridgeshire districts plus Forest Heath and St Edmundsbury)
- Police and Health boundaries (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough)
- Rural Pathfinder work areas (Fenland and King's Lynn and West Norfolk)

- 2.3 This approach allowed a larger survey to be carried out than would otherwise be possible and to explore education and health issues. It is the largest survey to date with Gypsies/Travellers in the UK and is recognised by the ODPM as an example of best practice.

- 2.4 A summary of the needs assessment is appended to this report.

- 2.5 A full copy of the needs assessment is available on the council's website and in the members' room.

3. THE STUDY

- 3.1 The study was carried out by Anglia Ruskin University and Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College using the following approach, again seen as best practice:

- Working with a Reference Group of nationally known Gypsies/Travellers to ensure that the survey gathered the most accurate data possible
- Training nine Gypsies/Travellers as interviewers. The academics also interviewed to increase the number of interviews and for quality testing.
- Completing 313 interviews with one or more members of each family – similar to the Census approach. Interviews were carried out with Gypsies/Travellers on all kinds of sites as well as those in housing and some on the roadside.

- Analysing existing data - the ODPM 6-month caravan counts from 1980 to 2004 and school role data (also used to identify Gypsies/Travellers living in houses).
- Providing each housing authority in the study area with a GTAA in line with the Housing Act 2004 and ODPM guidelines.

4. KEY FINDINGS

- 4.1 There are an estimated 6,500 to 7,000 Gypsies/Travellers in the study area, including those living in houses. Three districts have over 1,000 (Fenland, South Cambs, East Cambs); three have between 200 and 600 (King's Lynn & West Norfolk, Peterborough, Forest Heath); three have under 200 (Huntingdonshire, Cambridge, St Edmundsbury).
- 4.2 Gypsies/Travellers together constitute one of the largest minority ethnic groups in the study area. Two main groups are: English Gypsies - around 72% of respondents to the survey - tend to be 'born and bred' in the region; Irish Travellers - around 23% of respondents to the survey - some of these are recent in-migrants.
- 4.3 Family size may be decreasing, although *this tentative conclusion is not based on robust demographic methods*. Three generations can be identified in the survey responses and the number of siblings appears to decrease in each generation. However, the Gypsy/Traveller population is young and is increasing, partly by increasing life expectancy.
- 4.4 The total number of caravans in the study area almost doubled between 1980 and 2004 from around 900 to around 1,600¹. This reflects natural population growth as well as in-migration. The distribution of caravans is not even across the districts. Since 1980 the total numbers have risen in five districts and fallen in four. There was a particularly large in-migration to unauthorised encampments in South Cambridgeshire between 2002 and 2004.
- 4.5 The proportion of the Gypsy/Traveller population living in housing varies considerably between districts - between 12% and 52% of the district Gypsy/Traveller population.
- 4.6 Following the ODPM methodology for the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, the estimated additional pitches required by district to 2010 are:

¹ Source ODPM Caravan Counts

District	Pitches
Fenland	160-205
South Cambs	110-130
East Cambs	25-45
Kings Lynn & W. Norfolk	45-60
Forest Heath	15-20
Huntingdonshire	15-25
Peterborough	10-15
St Edmundsbury	10-20
Cambridge (City)	15
Total	405-535

- 4.7 Many Gypsies/Travellers prefer to provide their own sites, but may be deterred by cost. Transit sites are unpopular because of not knowing who else will stop there. Asked where sites were needed, Travellers were flexible, e.g.: "*More sites anywhere around here*".
- 4.8 The area is attractive to Gypsies/Travellers for work and travel. Family networks are important for economic activity and many families have lived in the area for a considerable time. They find it increasingly difficult to find work in traditional occupations, e.g. farm labour. The A14, M1, and routes to London are key routes. Some use these routinely for business.
- 4.9 Like the settled population, accommodation is a major factor in health. Those on authorised private sites reported the best health compared to those on council sites or unauthorised sites. Life expectancy for English Gypsies is unusually high in the study area, with 17% being over 65. The major health conditions experienced by at least one member of a family were: asthma or other chest problems (50% of families); back problems; 'nerves'; cardio-vascular problems. Health visitors were considered the most helpful of all services.
- 4.10 The survey confirms educational issues which Traveller Education Services are already addressing. Some parents lack motivation to send children to secondary school, preferring to concentrate on equipping their children for the modern Gypsy/Traveller world. There is low educational achievement - rapidly increasing in some cases. Gypsy/Traveller children feel alienated at school and are often bullied. There is considerable interest in vocational training for young people and adults.
- 4.11 Working in partnership on a planned approach to providing the extra pitches is a key element in easing tension between the Gypsy/Traveller and the settled populations.
- 4.12 Accommodation is a key element in improving health and educational opportunities.

5. Planning Perspective - Regional

- 5.1 Government guidance requires that all Needs Assessments be considered by Regional Housing Boards.
- 5.2 In the Eastern region a single-issue review of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has just commenced concerning the provision of gypsy and traveller caravan sites. The Regional Planning Board has set up a Gypsy and Travellers Steering Group, which met for the first time in May. A part of its remit is to advise the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) on the development of the RSS revision and to make recommendations for an adequate level and spatial distribution of pitch provisions in meeting the needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in the East of England. The RSS will, therefore, ultimately specify pitch numbers for each planning authority but not their locations.

6. Planning Perspective - HDC

- 6.1 The Council will be drafting a Gypsy and Travellers Sites Development Plan Document (DPD), which is a statutory plan. The purpose of a DPD is to contain site specific proposals for gypsy and travellers sites to meet the identified needs up to 2021, including, if necessary, allocating new sites, as required by government policies. The Needs Assessment will be an important part of the evidence base for this plan and, as this sub region is more advanced than the rest of the region, the needs assessment will allow the DPD to proceed without having to wait for the adoption of the RSS policy review.
- 6.2 The Council has set out the programme for the preparation of its plans, including the Gypsy and Travellers DPD, in its Local Development Scheme and will be consulting on the issues and options raised by the DPD and Needs Assessment later this year.

7. RECOMMENDATION

That members note the key findings of the Needs Assessment.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

'Planning for Gypsy and Travellers Sites – Circular 01/2006, ODPM, February 2006 –available from www.odpm.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services
☎ (01480) 388240

Cambridge Sub-Region Gypsy/Traveller Needs Assessment 2005 Summary

Trevor Baker, Research group, Cambridgeshire County Council
May 2006

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This summary brings together some key points from the Cambridgeshire sub-Region Gypsy/Traveller Needs Assessment. It is intended to be for a general audience and to present the main findings and messages that can be distilled from those findings. The Assessment centred on running 313 interviews - the largest survey of Gypsies/Travellers undertaken in the UK to date - and worked with Gypsies/Travellers to make that survey a success.
- 1.2 The assessment was carried out by academics from Anglia Ruskin University and Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College for a consortium of local authorities - Cambridgeshire County Council and nine councils with housing responsibilities: Cambridge City Council; East Cambridgeshire District Council; Fenland DC; Forest Heath DC; Huntingdonshire DC; King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council; Peterborough City Council; South Cambridgeshire DC; St Edmundsbury BC. Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust also contributed.
- 1.3 The full report has over 90 pages of detailed information. That detail is necessary to do justice to the study. Facts about Gypsies/Travellers often need to be understood in the context of a detailed picture of facts about the modern travelling lifestyle and the interaction with the settled communities.
- 1.4 The term 'Gypsy/Traveller' is used in this report to distinguish between the main two different ethnic groups in the study area.

2 Background

- 2.1 A considerable amount of work has been carried out in the Cambridgeshire area relating to Travellers. Examples In Cambridgeshire include:
 - The Cambridgeshire Travellers Review, 1998
 - Crime Audits – 2004 fear and experience of crime
 - Work by the Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service Traveller Team (Traveller Education)
 - Work by the Ormiston Children and Families Trust Travellers Initiative
- 2.2 Most research or consultation with Gypsies/Travellers is essentially qualitative. This survey attempted to be more quantitative. Gathering information to put planning for Gypsies/Travellers more on a par with planning for the settled communities should allow planning for Gypsies/Travellers to be improved. And that should be to the benefit of everyone in the study area – the settled community as well as Gypsies/Travellers.

3 Aims

3.1 The aims of the study were:

- To assess the current and potential future need within the Travelling communities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for learning, health services and other services provided by local authorities and their partner organizations.
- To understand the demographic profile of the Travelling Community, household formation within it, accommodation and housing needs and routes into accommodation and housing.
- To increase understanding of how services might best be provided to meet Gypsies/Travellers' needs, such as how to make services and accommodation accessible to Gypsies/Travellers.
- To meet the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 - assessing housing needs

3.2 The second of these is the most important in this study.

4 The Approach

4.1 The following approach was taken to the Assessment:

- A Reference Group of nationally known Gypsies/Travellers was recruited.
- The statutory bodies devised a list of questions (councils, Health and Police). This was passed to the Reference Group to ensure that the form of the questions was relevant to Gypsies/Travellers so as to gather the most accurate responses possible.
- Nine Gypsies/Travellers were trained as interviewers. Not all were literate and tapes and transcriptions were used successfully. The academics also interviewed, both to increase the number of interviews and as part of the quality testing.
- 313 interviews were completed. Each interview was with one or more members of each family. This has much in common with the Census approach. Interviews were run with Gypsies/Travellers on all kinds of sites as well as those in housing and some on the roadside.
- Existing data was analysed, particularly the ODPM 6-month caravan counts from 1980 to 2004. School role data was also analysed and used to identify Gypsies/Travellers living in houses.
- Some focus groups were run to explore more detailed issues.
- Each housing authority in the study area had a "Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment" in line with the Housing Act 2004 and ODPM guidelines. Importantly, the Act requires an assessment of the accommodation needs of "Gypsies and Travellers residing in or resorting to their district".

5 Key Findings

The Gypsy Traveller Population

5.1 There are significant numbers of Gypsies/Travellers in the study area.

- There are an estimated 6,500 to 7,000 Gypsies/Travellers in the study area, including those living in houses.
 - Around 5,000 to 5,500 of these are in Cambridgeshire.
 - Of those in Cambridgeshire, around 2,800 are in Fenland, 1,300 in South Cambs and 1,000 in East Cambs.
- 5.2 When counted as a single group, Gypsies/Travellers constitute one of the largest minority ethnic groups in the study area. However, it is important to realise that there are different ethnicities within the travelling communities. The two major groups identified here are:
- English Gypsies formed around 72% of respondents to the survey. These tend to be 'born and bred' in the region
 - Irish Travellers formed around 23% of respondents to the survey. Some of these are recent in-migrants.
- 5.3 The Irish Traveller population appears to be younger than the English Gypsy population.
- 5.4 The size of families may be decreasing, although *this tentative conclusion is not based on robust demographic methods*. Three generations can be broadly identified in the survey responses and the number of siblings appears to decrease in each generation:
- Older respondents (aged over 50) averaged 6.2 siblings.
 - Younger respondents (aged around 20 - 50) averaged 5.2 siblings.
 - The average number of children born to respondents averaged 3.6, or each child having around 3 siblings. This is probably lower than the final figure for siblings in this generation as some of these families will grow.
- 5.5 Despite the evidence of smaller families, the Gypsy/Traveller population is young and increasing. This conclusion from the survey is in line with other research and presumably the growth is partly due to increasing life expectancy along with the in-migration.

Accommodation and the Changing Numbers of Caravans

- 5.6 The total number of caravans in the study area almost doubled between 1980 and 2004 from around 900 to around 1,600. In the eight years 1996 to 2004 there was an increase of 600 caravans². This reflects natural population growth as well as in-migration.
- 5.7 The distribution of caravans is not even across the districts:
- Since 1980 the total numbers have risen in five districts and fallen in four.
 - South Cambridgeshire and Fenland each have over 400 caravans.
 - East Cambridgeshire, King's Lynn and Peterborough each have 100 to 200 caravans.
 - Cambridge City, Forest Heath, Huntingdonshire and St Edmundsbury each have under 100 caravans

² Source: ODPM caravan counts

- 5.8 There was a particularly large in-migration to South Cambridgeshire between 2002 and 2004, increasing the number of caravans on unauthorised encampments in that district.
- 5.9 Other work has estimated that as many as 50% of Gypsies/Travellers live in houses³. The survey and local education data suggest a smaller percentage in this area, with figures varying considerably between districts from around 12% to 52% of the district Gypsy/Traveller population.

Existing and Future Sites

- 5.10 Gypsies/Travellers in the survey expressed a preference for providing their own site. Forty-nine percent of those who do not currently own their site said they wanted to own their own site, although the other 41% of this group said they did not want to own their site. Transit sites were not popular for reasons such as not knowing who else will be on the site. Instead, Gypsies/Travellers would prefer visiting pitches on permanent sites.
- 5.11 When asked where they needed sites, Travellers tended to be flexible, such as: *"More sites anywhere around here"*.
- 5.12 A number of Gypsies/Travellers reported that they lacked services – including on some existing council sites. The most important of these are: 20% lacked toilets; 53% lacked fire prevention; 78% lacked play space; 28% lacked a reliable postal service; 87% lacked mains gas. On the positive side, only 7% lacked mains electricity and 4% lacked running water (probably explainable by unauthorised encampments).

Work and Travel

- 5.13 Work and travel are major reasons why Cambridgeshire is attractive to Gypsies/Travellers. Family networks are important for economic activity and many families have lived in the area for a considerable time. However, it is increasingly difficult for Gypsies/Travellers to find work in traditional occupations. A good example is agricultural work, where the increased use of migrant workers from Eastern Europe has cut the number of jobs available to Gypsies/Travellers.
- 5.14 The A14, M1, and routes to London such as the M11 are key routes. Some Gypsies/Travellers use them routinely for business, one notable example being a family using the A14 to access trade on the continent.

Health

- 5.15 Life expectancy for English Gypsies appears to be comparatively high in the study area. The situation regarding Irish Travellers is less clear. The survey estimates that over 17% of English Gypsies in the study area are over 65. The proportion of Irish Travellers over 65 was considerably lower (under 4%). The difference between the two populations is partly explained by English Gypsies being based in the area for many years while the Irish Travellers include a number of in-migrants who tend to be younger. Other studies have

³ Niner, P. (2003). *Local Authority Gypsy/Traveller Sites in England*, Centre for Urban and Regional Studies, University of Birmingham. This was a major national study for the ODPM

shown a much lower proportion of Gypsies being over 65 – typically between two and three percent. This higher life expectancy in the Cambridgeshire area probably reflects better access to health services and living with other family members, particularly those living on council sites. However, a considerable number of Gypsies/Travellers in the 55 and over age group reported having poor health.

5.17 Obviously, like the settled population, accommodation is a major factor in health:

- Authorised sites – 55% report good health, 28% poor health
- Council sites - 39% reported good health, 48% poor health (possibly because they moved there because of poor health)
- Unauthorised sites – 37% reported good health, 49% poor health

5.18 The major health conditions experiences by at least one member of a family were:

- Asthma or other chest problems – 50% of families
- Back problems – 38% of families
- 'Nerves' – 30% of families
- Cardio-vascular problems – 18% of families

These are just some of the common conditions found by other surveys⁴.

5.19 Health visitors were considered the most helpful service of any mentioned (54% said they found them helpful) with GP surgeries the second most helpful (14% found them helpful).

Education

5.20 There is considerable information available on education from the Traveller Education services. This survey confirms generally known problems which the Traveller Education services are already addressing such as:

- Lack of motivation in some parents to send children to secondary school, preferring to concentrate on preparing to equip their children for the modern Gypsy/Traveller world.
- Low (but rapidly increasing in some cases) educational achievement.
- Gypsy/Traveller children feeling alienated at school and sometimes being bullied.
- There is considerable interest in vocational training for young people and adults.

6 Key Messages

- There are around 6,500 to 7,000 Gypsies/Travellers in the study area.
- Family sizes appear to be decreasing.
- Incoming Irish Travellers are a younger population than the English Gypsies.

⁴ e.g. Parry, G., Van Cleemput, P., Peters, J., Moore, J., Walters, S., Thomas, K., and Cooper, C. (2004) *The Health Status of Gypsies and Travellers in England*, University of Sheffield

- Cambridgeshire is attractive to Gypsies/Travellers for family, work and travel.
- There is a need for more pitches in the study area – the figures are being assessed.
- Working in partnership on a planned approach to providing these pitches is a key element in easing tension between the Gypsy/Traveller and the settled populations.
- Accommodation is a key element in improving health and educational opportunities.
- Gypsies/Travellers prefer smaller, private, family sites.
- There is a much higher proportion of older English Gypsies in the Cambridgeshire area than is usual, probably due to access to health care and living with families
- Poor health remains a problem for the 55-plus age group.
- There are some prevalent health problems such as asthma.
- Gypsy/Traveller children may still feel isolated at school.

Appendix: Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments

The Housing Act 2004 places a duty on each local housing authorities to carry out a "Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment" (GTAA), in line with their duty to carry out a general Housing Market Assessment every three years. The survey provided each district with a GTAA in line with the Housing Act and Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) guidelines. The number of extra pitches assessed as required in each district is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Assessments

District	Pitches
Fenland	160-205
South Cambs	110-130
East Cambs	25-45
Kings Lynn & W. Norfolk	45-60
Forest Heath	15-20
Huntingdonshire	15-25
Peterborough	10-15
St Edmundsbury	10-20
Cambridge (City)	15
Total	405-535

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

29TH JUNE 2006

**LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME REVISIONS
DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE ON AFFORDABLE
HOUSING**

(Report by Head of Planning Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 It is proposed to make a number of further changes to the Local Development Scheme (LDS). Key changes are in respect of the timing of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and a future revision to it and the introduction of an Area Action Plan (AAP) for West Huntingdon. There are also a number of changes to the timetable for the preparation of various documents taking the latest information available into account. Cabinet's approval is sought for the revised LDS to be submitted to GO-East for the Secretary of State.
- 1.2 Members are requested to agree for consultation a draft of the Affordable Housing SPD, taking into account a number of factors including the Government's Draft PPS3 on Housing, the issuing of a revised Statement of General Conformity with the Structure Plan by the County Council and the publication of the District Council's updating of the Housing Needs Assessment.

2. THE CURRENT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

- 2.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It sets out the range of planning documents which the Council will produce under the new system. As well as informing the community and other stakeholders of what to expect, the LDS is designed to assist with project management.
- 2.2 In March 2005, Cabinet approved the first Local Development Scheme (LDS) to be submitted to the Government. Go-East confirmed it had no objections to the scheme. A number of subsequent amendments have been agreed by Cabinet:

- September 2005 to allow the preparation and adoption of Supplementary Planning document (SPD) on Wind Power. This amendment was also agreed by GO-East
- February 2006 to include two SPDs for Affordable Housing and Planning Contributions. These SPDs would replace a Development Plan Document (DPD) originally intended to cover both aspects. This was not submitted to the Government as the timetable for the Affordable Housing needed to be revised taking into account the 2006 updating of the Housing Needs Survey.
- March 2006 to make amendments to the timetable in respect of the Core Strategy and Planning Proposals DPDs to take account of advice from the Planning Inspectorate on the programme.

3 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

- 3.1 It is inevitable that regular reviews will be required because of the many factors that can affect the need and timetable for producing planning documents (the principal risks are listed at paragraph 5.4 of the LDS). The changes recommended in this report include both changes to the programme and changes to the lists of documents to be produced.
- 3.2 A copy of the revised LDS is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.3 The current proposed amendments include:
- Priority to be given to the Affordable Housing SPD (which is the subject of the second part of this report) and the inclusion of a revision to this SPD when the Core Strategy becomes the statutory Development Plan
 - The introduction of an AAP for West Huntingdon to guide the development of an area where significant change is expected as a result of the redevelopment of land west of the town centre, the changes to road access which will flow from the improvements to the A14 and a need to establish an appropriate policy for the Hinchingsbrooke area
 - Revisions to the timetable for the Gypsy & Travellers Sites DPD
 - A number of other minor programme amendments, including rolling forward the base date of the LDS to exclude past events such as those for the Wind Power SPD which has now been completed
 - The LDS also expresses concern about the risks to the programme as a result of posts in Planning Policy remaining unfilled because of the shortage of suitably qualified and experienced applicants. In

particular, Members will note that the key post of Development Plans Team Leader remains unfilled.

- 3.4 The need to set out the Council's policies on Affordable Housing is considered the more urgent of the two SPDs and has therefore been programmed as the first to be the subject of consultation. The Planning Contributions requires more evidence gathering, including work on open space requirements which is being commissioned from consultants as required by PPG17, and therefore is programmed slightly later.

4 AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPD

- 4.1 Attached as Appendix B to this report is the Draft SPD on Developer Contributions towards Affordable Housing.
- 4.2 SPD has to be based on the existing Development Plan policies which in this case are those in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 (LPA), Policies AH1- AH4, rather than the policies which the Council has recently approved in the LDF Core Strategy because that will not become the Development Plan until it has completed its adoption process including Independent Examination.
- 4.3 The LPA states a target of 29% Affordable Housing to be achieved through developer contributions. However, the County Council issued in February 2006 a Statement of General Conformity in respect of the LPA which states that it is NOT in conformity with the Structure Plan as the Structure Plan policy P9/1 requires a target of 40% or more in the Cambridge Sub-Region. In these circumstances the Structure Plan policy prevails over the LPA and this is the policy approach which should now be applied to negotiations on Affordable Housing. The SPD includes a policy, SAH/1, which sets out this position i.e. that 40% or more will be sought in that part of the District in the Cambridge Sub-Region whilst 29% will be sought in the remainder of the District which lies in the Peterborough and North Cambridgeshire Sub-Region.
- 4.4 The SPD cannot introduce new thresholds establishing the scale of developments at which Affordable Housing contributions will be sought and therefore the thresholds set out in the LPA will continue to be applied. The Government's draft PPS3 on Housing reduces the indicative national minimum threshold from a site size of 25 dwellings to 15 dwellings. The LPA threshold is 25 dwellings in settlements larger than 3,000 population, but the requirement applies to all sites in settlements of 3,000 or less which is consistent with current Government policy. It is understood that the PPS3 revised threshold could be applied in Huntingdonshire once PPS3 has been approved in its final form by the Government.
- 4.5 The SPD also includes a policy, SAH/4, which indicates that, in the circumstances where no grant is available from the Housing Corporation or other body, the Council may negotiate a capital contribution so that the developer can meet the obligation of meeting the required target of Affordable Housing.

- 4.6 The Housing Needs Survey has been updated very recently (April 2006) and this is summarized in the SPD. It confirms that the priority Affordable Housing need is for social rented accommodation rather than intermediate (i.e. other forms of subsidised housing including key Worker and shared equity) housing and so the SPD sets the required split as being 70% social rented and 30% intermediate. A cascade mechanism explains the priorities the Council will apply in negotiations with developers. The first priority is to secure grant to provide Affordable Housing to the required target with the 70%/30% split. Where grant is not available, the next option is for the developer to provide the housing in this proportion for transfer to a RSL or, failing that, for the developer to provide a capital contribution to provide the required housing. The next stages in the cascade apply where the developer has clearly demonstrated that the site would not be viable if these provisions were applied. In these circumstances the first option will be to provide a different tenure mix, then fewer Affordable Homes than the target and finally, and only in exceptional circumstances, a financial contribution in lieu of provision on site.
- 4.7 The SPD will need to be published for public participation for a six week period consistent with the principles established in Statement of Community Involvement which has been recently approved by the Council. The SPD will need to be revised in the light of comments which have been made during the consultation period before the document can be formally adopted. It will then become a material planning consideration in determining planning applications.
- 4.8 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the SPD is required, to be published for consultation alongside the document. It is proposed that this be undertaken on the document as approved by Cabinet at this meeting, and that the Executive Member for Planning and Transport be given delegated authority to approve the SA.
- 4.9 As has been set out above in respect of the LDS, the Affordable Housing SPD will need to be revised when the Core Strategy has been adopted on a statutory basis so that the SPD conforms to it.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 It is recommended that Cabinet agrees:
1. The proposed amendments to the Local Development Scheme for submission to the Secretary of State
 2. The Draft SPD on Developer Contributions towards Affordable Housing be published for public participation and that the Executive member for Planning and Transport be given delegated authority to approve its Sustainability Appraisal.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Report and Minutes, Cabinet, 17th March 2005

Report and Minutes, Cabinet, 16th March 2006

Huntingdonshire Local Development Scheme, September 2005

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks, ODPM

Draft Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing, December 2005

Statement of General Conformity with the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan – Non-Conformity Respects, Cambridgeshire County Council, 21st February 2006.

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002

CONTACT OFFICER: **Richard Probyn**
  **01480 388430**

This page is intentionally left blank

Local Development Framework
Local Development Scheme for Huntingdonshire

June 2006

Huntingdonshire
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Steve Ingram B.A.(Hons), BTP, DMS, MRTPI
Head of Planning Services

Further copies of this document can be obtained from:

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

Telephone: 01480 388423 / 388424

e-mail: PlanningPolicy@huntsdc.gov.uk

It can also be viewed on our web site at:

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

CONTENTS

Part A Introduction

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

Part B Summary of framework

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

Part C Document profiles	10
---------------------------------	-------	----

Appendices

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

PART A INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose of this document

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

2. A guide to the new system

- 2.1 The **Development Plan** provides the main point of reference when planning applications are considered: decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless 'material considerations' indicate otherwise¹.
- 2.2 Under the previous system of plan production the Development Plan comprised **Structure Plans**, which set out strategic planning policies, and **Local Plans**, which contained more detailed guidance. The current Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan was adopted in October 2003. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan was adopted in December 1995, but was superseded in part by the Local Plan Alteration, adopted in December 2002.
- 2.3 Under the new system the Development Plan will instead comprise:
- The **Regional Spatial Strategy** (RSS) prepared by the East of England Regional Assembly; and
 - **Development Plan Documents** (DPDs) prepared by the local planning authority.
- 2.4 The range of Development Plan Documents to be produced must include a **Core Strategy** (setting out the spatial framework and key policies for the area) and one or more documents setting out site-specific allocations. **Action Area Plans** can be prepared for areas where more detailed guidance is needed. A **Proposals Map** illustrating the spatial

¹ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Section 38(6).

extent of policies and proposals must be produced to accompany the DPDs (to be updated as each DPD is adopted).

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

3. Transitional arrangements

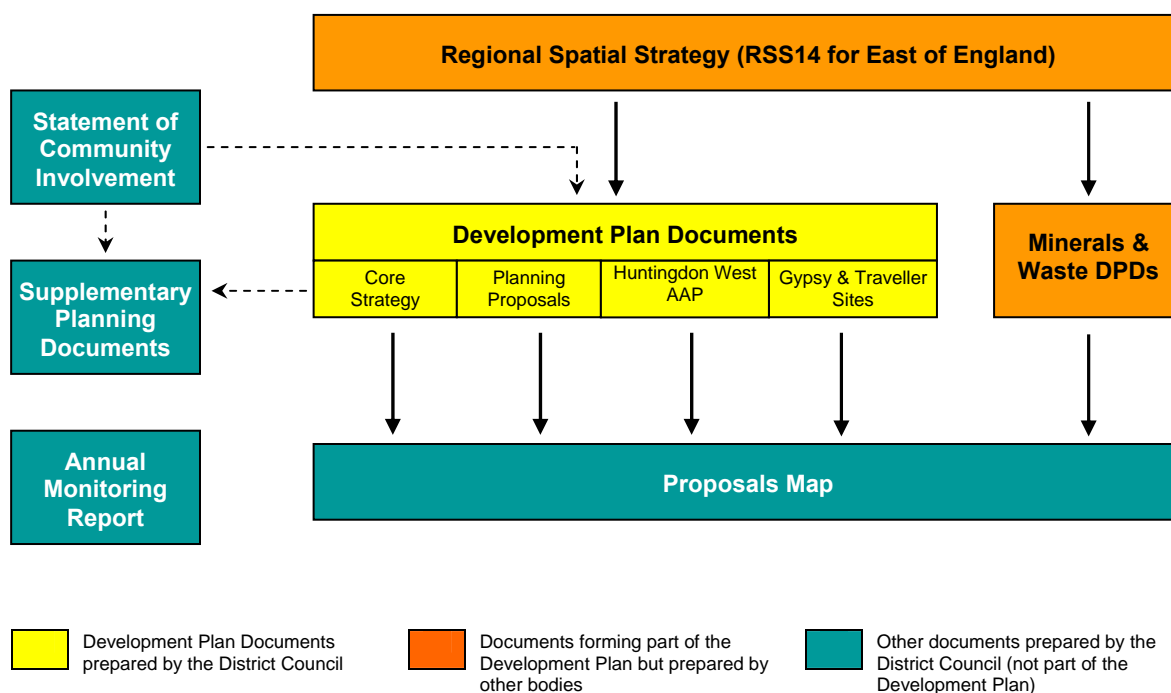
- 3.1 Most policies and proposals in the Structure Plan and Local Plan will remain in force until they are replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy or a Development Plan Document. Under the new legislation existing plans are 'saved' automatically for three years until September 2007, and the Council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

PART B SUMMARY OF FRAMEWORK

4. Structure and interrelationships

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

Figure 1 Overview of the new planning policy framework



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

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

- **Core Strategy:** This will provide the spatial framework for other DPDs produced by the Council; it will also contain policies to guide development proposals and decisions.
- **Planning Proposals:** Allocations for housing, business development and other uses.
- **Huntingdon West Area Action Plan:** to guide a wide range of land-use changes in this sector of the town.
- **Gypsy and Traveller Sites:** Allocations to meet identified needs in Huntingdonshire.

4.3 The Huntingdon West AAP will cover redevelopment proposals for the area west of the town centre, changes to the road system as a result of the A14 proposals, enhancement of

Views Common and a vision for the Hinchbrook Community Campus including an extension to the Country Park.

- 4.4 A separate DPD for gypsy and traveller sites is proposed because of the urgency with which this issue needs to be addressed, and the particular issues involved in identifying appropriate sites (relating to the requirements of the travelling community and the difficulty of securing suitable sites within existing towns and villages).
- 4.5 Separate DPDs covering minerals and waste matters will be produced by Cambridgeshire County Council (which is the local planning authority for minerals and waste matters). The spatial extent of policies and proposals contained in all DPDs (including those for minerals and waste) will be illustrated on the proposals map, which will be updated as and when individual DPDs are adopted and will itself form part of the Development Plan.
- 4.6 In terms of Supplementary Planning Documents, priority is being given to guidance on the provision of developer contributions towards affordable housing and on planning contributions. The affordable housing SPD will need to be revised at an early stage in order for it to be compatible with the Core Strategy when that DPD becomes the Development Plan. The planning contributions document is likely to be complemented by a further document detailing strategic needs (such as strategic open space). This is intended to be produced on a joint basis with other councils in Cambridgeshire, but the approach requires further discussion and agreement between the authorities concerned and the Government's regional office. For this reason details of the proposed document will be included in a future review of this Local Development Scheme.
- 4.7 In due course some existing guidance on other topics will be updated and re-issued as SPDs, as detailed in Appendix 3.

5. Production programme

- 5.1 Work to produce the documents making up the LDF will be phased over several years. This will make best use of resources, and also ensure that policies and proposals conform with principles established in the RSS and the Core Strategy DPD.
- 5.2 Table 1 lists the DPDs and SPDs that will be produced (together with the Statement of Community Involvement) and summarises the anticipated timetable for their production. It also shows the 'chain of conformity' for each document (i.e. the relationship with higher levels of policy-making). The information is presented graphically in Figure 2. More detailed profiles of each document are contained in Part C.
- 5.3 The first DPD to be produced is the Core Strategy, due to its role in providing an overarching framework for other documents and the need to replace outdated development control policies in the existing Local Plan. The timetable for the Planning Proposals DPD is dictated by the preparation of the Regional Spatial Strategy – specifically, the need for certainty about the number of dwellings that Huntingdonshire is expected to accommodate in the period to 2021. A reasonable degree of certainty on this issue is not expected until the Government publishes proposed changes to the draft RSS, expected in late 2006 (consultation on the Council's preferred options is timed to follow this).

5.4 The timetable takes into account the procedures required by law, the time required for research and public involvement, the resources available to the District Council and the need for approval at key stages by Council Members. However the timings are indicative, as they rely upon a number of assumptions. Revisions to the LDS may be required if any of these assumptions do not hold true:

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

Table 1 Production programme

Document title	Role & content	Chain of conformity	Timetable		
			Participation on preferred options	Submission to Secretary of State	Adoption
Core Strategy DPD	Sets out the spatial vision, objectives and policies for managing development in the area	Consistent with national planning guidance and in general conformity with Regional Spatial Strategy	June-July 2005	April 2006	July 2007
Statement of Community Involvement	Sets out the Council's approach to involving the community in preparing DPDs and SPDs, and in determining significant planning applications	Consistent with statutory requirements for involvement in DPD/SPD production	October-November 2005 (draft SCI)	April 2006	November 2006
Planning Proposals DPD	Contains site-specific proposals for different forms of development up to 2021, plus policies relating to the overall scale and timing of growth	Consistent with spatial framework set out in the Core Strategy	February-March 2007	January 2008	January 2009
Huntingdon West AAP	Contains site-specific proposals for different forms of development and redevelopment in a mixed area where significant changes in land-use are proposed	Consistent with spatial framework set out in the Core Strategy	February-March 2007	January 2008	January 2009
Gypsy & Traveller Sites DPD	Contains site-specific proposals for gypsy and traveller sites to meet identified needs up to 2021, plus policies relating to the overall scale of site provision	Consistent with spatial framework set out in the Core Strategy	February 2007	June 2007	April 2008
Developer Contributions Towards Affordable Housing SPD	Provides detailed guidance on the Council's requirements for developer contributions on affordable housing based on the existing Development Plan	Consistent with policies in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 and Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 2003	June 2006 (Draft SPD)	Not required	November 2006
Developer Contributions Towards Affordable Housing (Revised) SPD	Provides detailed guidance on the Council's requirements for developer contributions on affordable housing	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy	June 2007 (Draft SPD)	Not required	November 2007
Planning Contributions SPD	Details the district-specific standards for social and physical infrastructure that may be required in association with new development, including open space.	Consistent with policies in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002	November-December 2006	Not required	April 2007
Design Guide SPD	Provides guidance on the design process and key design principles for different forms of development	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy	November-December 2006 (draft SPD)	Not required	May 2007
Landscape & Townscape SPD	Provides guidance on the distinctive qualities of Huntingdonshire's landscape character areas and market towns	Consistent with policies in the Core Strategy	November-December 2006 (draft SPD)	Not required	May 2007

6. The evidence base

- 6.1 To ensure that the policies and proposals in the documents forming the LDF are sound, a number of studies and data sources will be drawn upon during their preparation. The main studies include:
- Huntingdonshire Retail Study (September 2005)
 - Housing Land Availability Assessment (to be published 4th quarter 2006)
 - 2002 Housing Needs Survey (April 2003)
 - 2006 Housing Needs Survey Update (May 2006)
 - Huntingdonshire Landscape & Townscape Assessment (July 2003)
 - Huntingdonshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (October 2004)
 - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Traveller Needs Assessment (April 2006)
 - Huntingdonshire Local Economy Study (forthcoming – 4th quarter 2006)
 - Huntingdonshire Integrated Open Space Assessment (forthcoming – 3rd quarter 2006)
- 6.2 In addition relevant research and analysis appears in the sustainability appraisal Scoping Report (see below) and a background paper on settlement hierarchy issues (produced to accompany the initial consultation on Core Strategy options).

7. Sustainability Appraisal and SEA

- 7.1 All DPDs and SPDs will need to undergo sustainability appraisal (SA). This is a systematic process carried out during plan production; its purpose is to assess the extent to which emerging policies and proposals will help to achieve relevant environmental, social and economic objectives. The SA process incorporates the 'strategic environmental assessment' (SEA) required for plans and programmes that are likely to have a significant effect upon the environment².
- 7.2 At each stage of DPD or SPD production a sustainability appraisal will be carried out to inform the consultation process, assist in refining policies and proposals and support submitted DPDs during the examination stage. The Council has produced a Scoping Report (January 2005) which identifies appropriate high-level objectives for appraising policies against, and examines 'baseline' conditions in the district. The Scoping Report has been designed to provide a foundation for the range of DPDs and SPDs that the Council intends to produce, but will if necessary be updated during the early stages of DPD or SPD production to ensure that the information and analysis it contains remain relevant.
- 7.3 Although sustainability appraisal is required for all DPDs and SPDs, they are not subject to the legal requirements associated with SEA if their content or geographical scope means that they are unlikely to have a significant effect upon the environment. The document profiles in Part C indicate whether the SEA requirements are considered to apply.

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

8. Resources, monitoring and review

- 8.1 The District Council's Development Plans Section (part of Planning Services) will take the lead in preparing all DPDs, some SPDs, the Statement of Community Involvement and the Annual Monitoring Report. The section can draw upon specialist skills elsewhere in the Council:
- The Implementation Section of Planning Services (see below)
 - Policy Division (which carries out corporate monitoring and research, and undertakes economic development work)
 - Housing Services Division (for inputs regarding housing policy)
 - Environment & Transport Division (specialist advice on traffic and highways matters)
 - Environmental Health Division (advice on air quality, noise and contaminated land)
- 8.2 Advice is also obtained from Cambridgeshire County Council in relation to socio-economic research, transport, countryside, biodiversity and archaeology. Where expertise is not available from these sources, other agencies may become involved (e.g. the Environment Agency) or consultants are employed. The budget for Planning Services makes allowance for anticipated consultancy costs, as well as for the other costs involved in plan production (such as consultation and holding examinations).
- 8.3 The Implementation Section in Planning Services offers professional advice in relation to urban design, conservation, landscape architecture, arboriculture and graphic design. Officers from that section will lead the preparation of any SPDs concerning these matters.
- 8.4 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) will provide a regular review of progress in preparing and implementing the documents proposed in this Local Development Scheme and will relate to each financial year. The first AMR (for 2004-05) was published at the end of 2005. Document production will be assessed against the milestones set out in Part C of the LDS, while information on the implementation of policies will relate to key targets and contextual indicators. In the light of this review the AMR will indicate whether any revisions to the Local Development Scheme are necessary.

PART C DOCUMENT PROFILES

CORE STRATEGY DPD

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

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

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

Monitoring & review	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

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

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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

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

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

Monitoring & review	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

PLANNING PROPOSALS DPD

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

Proposed timetable	
Survey work commences	April 2003
Public participation on Preferred Options	June 2007
Submission to Secretary of State	January 2008
Pre-examination meeting	May 2008
Independent examination	July 2008
Receipt of Inspector's report	November 2008
Modify submitted plan & adoption	January 2009

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

Monitoring & review	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

HUNTINGDON WEST AAP

Overview	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	Yes
What is it for?	Contains site-specific proposals for a mixed area where significant changes in land-use are proposed, including redevelopment proposals for the area west of the town centre, changes to the road system as a result of the A14 proposals, and a vision for the Hinchingsbrooke Community Campus including an extension to the Country Park.
What area will it cover?	Land in Huntingdon and Brampton, including west of the town centre, Views Common and Hinchingsbrooke
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with spatial framework set out in the Core Strategy.
Is SEA required?	Yes

Proposed timetable	
Survey work commences	April 2003
Public participation on Preferred Options	June 2007
Submission to Secretary of State	January 2008
Pre-examination meeting	May 2008
Independent examination	July 2008
Receipt of Inspector's report	November 2008
Modify submitted plan & adoption	January 2009

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

Monitoring & review	
--------------------------------	--

Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.

GYPSY & TRAVELLER SITES DPD

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

Proposed timetable	
Survey work commences	January 2005
Public participation on Preferred Options	February-March 2007
Submission to Secretary of State	September 2007
Pre-examination meeting	January 2008
Independent examination	March 2008
Receipt of Inspector's report	July 2008
Modify submitted plan & adoption	August 2008

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

Monitoring & review	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPD

Overview	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	No
What is it for?	Provides detailed guidance on the Council's requirements for developer contributions to affordable and social housing in association with development.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with saved policies in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan alteration 2002 and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003.
Is SEA required?	Yes

Proposed timetable	
Survey work commences	November 2005
Public participation on draft SPD	June 2006
Adoption	November 2006

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

Monitoring & review	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

(REVISED) DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS AFFORDABLE HOUSING SPD

Overview	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	No
What is it for?	Provides detailed guidance on the Council's requirements for developer contributions to affordable and social housing in association with development.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with the policies in the Core Strategy
Is SEA required?	Yes

Proposed timetable	
Survey work commences	November 2006
Public participation on draft SPD	June 2007
Adoption	November 2007

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

Monitoring & review	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

PLANNING CONTRIBUTIONS SPD

Overview	
Is this a Development Plan Document?	No
What is it for?	Details the district-specific standards for social and physical infrastructure that may be required in association with development, including open space.
What area will it cover?	All of Huntingdonshire
What documents will it conform with?	Consistent with policies in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002.
Is SEA required?	Yes

Proposed timetable	
Survey work commences	January 2004
Public participation on Draft SPD	November-December 2006
Adoption	April 2007

How will it be produced?	
Organisational lead	Head of Planning Services / Executive Member for Planning Strategy.
Who will produce the document?	The Development Plans Section of the District Council.
Who will approve it?	The Council's Cabinet.
How will the community be involved?	Opportunities to comment on the draft SPD in accordance with the Regulations, and the emerging Statement of Community Involvement.

Monitoring & review	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

DESIGN GUIDE SPD

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

LANDSCAPE & TOWNSCAPE SPD

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

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

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

Monitoring & review	
Document production and implementation (once adopted) to be reviewed annually, and reported in the Annual Monitoring Report.	

APPENDIX 1 TERMINOLOGY

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX 2 REPLACEMENT OF 'SAVED' POLICIES

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

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

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

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

APPENDIX 3 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE

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

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

Notes

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

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Local Development Framework

Supplementary Planning Document:

**Developer Contributions Towards
Affordable Housing**

Consultation Draft

June 2006

1. Purpose of this document

- 1.1. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) further explain and clarify policies contained in the Development Plan for the area.
- 1.2. For Huntingdonshire the relevant Development Plans are:
 - The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
 - The Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995
 - The Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002
- 1.3. The objectives of this SPD are to:
 - Set out additional guidance on how Affordable Housing will be delivered by applying planning policy in the context of Policies AH1 – 4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002; and Policies P5/4 and P9/1 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003; and to
 - Assist the Council in meeting Affordable Housing needs in accordance with its corporate objectives.
- 1.4. The additional guidance set out in this SPD is in conformity with the relevant policies in the Development Plan. Once adopted, it will form a “material consideration” in determining planning applications.
- 1.5. The SPD will need to be reviewed to take account of any policy changes arising from the adoption of policies in the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework which has been submitted to the Secretary of State and any changes which arise in Government policy and guidance.
- 1.6. The policies and guidance set out in this SPD cover the whole of the District of Huntingdonshire.

2. Corporate Approach

- 2.1. The Council's vision and priorities can be found in its corporate plan, 'Growing Success', which identifies as a high priority:

“housing that meets local needs:

- sufficient affordable housing;
- well-maintained housing stock;
- opportunities for the vulnerable to live independently;
- a low level of homelessness;
- appropriate new housing.”

3. Sustainability Appraisal

- 3.1. As required by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been undertaken on the policies and guidance set out in this SPD. This means that the social, environmental and economic effects of the SPD have been taken into account. The SA is published alongside this document.

4. Policy Background

- 4.1. Planning policies at all levels, Government, Regional, County and District emphasise the importance of Affordable Housing and recognise that developer contributions are an essential component in its provision.
- 4.2. The Government recognises the importance of Affordable Housing in a number of policy documents, including Planning Policy Guidance Note No.3 on Housing (PPG3) and its updates and the draft Planning Policy Statement No.3 (PPS3). The Government's Circulars 6/98 (Planning and Affordable Housing) and 05/2005 (Planning Obligations) are also highly relevant to the delivery of Affordable Housing.
- 4.3. The Government has also recently (December 2005) published its response to the Kate Barker Review of Housing Supply and a consultation paper on the introduction of a Planning-gain Supplement.
- 4.4. Regional, County and District level planning policies, both statutorily adopted and emerging, demonstrate that Affordable Housing need in Huntingdonshire is particularly acute.
- 4.5. The policies in Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia (RPG6) and the emerging policies in the East of England Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy 14 or RSS14) point to the very high need for Affordable Housing in Cambridgeshire. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003 and the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 contain policies for the delivery of Affordable Housing through developer contributions. This is justified by the very high level of local need caused by high house prices and the scarcity of suitable accommodation.
- 4.6. More details on this planning policy background are set out in Appendix 1 of this document.

5. The Housing Needs Survey

- 5.1. The Council commissioned Fordham Research to undertake a comprehensive Housing Needs Study in 2002. This involved 500 completed personal interviews and 1,252 returned postal

questionnaires to gain an accurate understanding of housing need across the district. This survey was updated in 2006 to revise estimates of the need for Affordable Housing based on more recent information. The 2006 study used an updated methodology for assessing housing need. The main changes taken into account were:

- changes in the housing market (both prices and rents)
- changes in local incomes
- changes in the supply of affordable housing
- re-basing the household figures, drawing on the 2001 Census and the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA).

5.2. The main findings of the 2006 survey are:

- A significant increase in property prices, especially for smaller homes.
- Rents have also increased but not to the same extent as prices.
- Household incomes rising generally less than house prices and rents.
- By looking at the backlog of need and the newly arising need and taking supply into account, there is a shortfall of 585 affordable homes every year in Huntingdonshire.
- Given the income levels of these 585 households, social rented housing is the only product that can meet this need.
- The most acute need is for smaller (1 and 2 bedrooled) homes although there is a need for homes of all sizes.
- There is a further group of people who are not in 'housing need' because they can afford to access private rented housing. However, their incomes are insufficient to afford owner occupation. There are 470 households in this situation every year in Huntingdonshire. The Council could meet this need through intermediate housing options.
- There is a small need for 4 properties per year for homes for key workers who cannot afford market housing.

5.3. The 2006 study concluded that the need for affordable housing represents considerably over 100% of the estimated new build target of 559 dwellings per year and therefore, affordable housing should be maximised and any target for affordable housing on eligible sites would be justified.

A summary of the Update is attached at Appendix 3

6. The Council's Housing Strategy

- 6.1 The Housing Strategy (July 2006) is prepared by the District Council to provide direction for both private and social housing in the area. The Strategy uses a number of information sources to assess need including the Housing Needs Survey; Housing Register; Special Needs Housing Register; Stock Condition Survey; Empty Property data; and partnership work with a variety of agencies including health and social services. The Strategy sets out the Council's aims and objectives for the next five years, proposes future actions and establishes priorities.
- 6.2 The development of new affordable housing is a Corporate Priority. Given the high land prices in the district, land secured via section 106 agreements is the principal way in which new affordable housing is provided and developer's contributions are therefore extremely important.
- 6.3 The Council has investigated the private housing market in the District and the results are published in a report called "Reading the Housing Market" (2006). It concludes that the private sector is failing to provide for households on low incomes, benefit dependent households or households who are entering the housing market for the first time. Affordable housing is in short supply and high demand.
- 6.4 Evidence from the Council's Housing register also confirms high levels of housing need in the district. At 31st January 2006, there were 2,345 households on the Housing Register, of whom 220 (9.4%) required special need housing. Homelessness continues to increase in the District. In the year ending 31st January 2006, there was a duty towards 314 households to provide housing compared to the year before being 308 households, an increase of 2%.
- 6.5 The only product for households in 'housing need' is socially rented housing. This need amounts to 585 new homes per year. There is a further need for intermediate housing for households who are not in 'housing need' because they can afford private sector rents but they cannot afford owner occupation. This amounts to a further 470 homes per year.
- 6.6 In pursuit of a balanced housing market, mixed tenure developments, and to enable delivery, the Council seeks to secure affordable housing on all eligible sites to a 70% social rent and 30% intermediate tenure split. This split may vary from site to site.

7. Supplementary Affordable Housing Policies

- 7.1. The following policies give more detail on the operation of the current development plan policies in order to assist developers in understanding the Council's negotiating position.

Policy SAH/1: Affordable Housing contributions from developers will be sought on a basis consistent with Policies AH1, AH2, AH3 and AH4 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 and Policy P9/1 of the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan 2003. In the Cambridge Sub-Region within Huntingdonshire a target of 40% or more Affordable Housing will be sought. This is consistent with the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan. In the remainder of the District, which lies within the Peterborough and North Cambridgeshire Sub-Region, the Local Plan Alteration target of 29% will apply.

- 7.2. The Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002 is part of the statutory Development Plan for the District and its policies will apply until replaced by those in the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework. The Local Plan Alteration covers the period until 2006 but its provisions will prevail until the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2007. The Cambridgeshire Structure Plan is also part of the Development Plan and its plan period runs to 2016. It will remain part of the Development Plan until the adoption of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (RSS14) and the Huntingdonshire Core Strategy.
- 7.3. The local evidence base, including the latest housing needs surveys, demonstrates a high level of need across Huntingdonshire. Therefore the current target of 29% on eligible sites as defined in the Local Plan Alteration policy AH4 is justified. For that part of the District within the Cambridge Sub-Region, the requirement for Affordable Housing to be provided on eligible sites is 40% or more. This accords with Policy P9/1 of the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan which takes precedence over the Local Plan Alteration because the County Council has issued a Statement of General Conformity (January 2006) which says that the Local Plan Alteration is not in conformity on this matter. For that part of the District in the Peterborough and North Cambridgeshire Sub Region, the Local Plan Alteration target is the requirement. The latest housing needs surveys demonstrate that these targets are more than justified. A list of parishes in the two sub-regions is attached as Appendix 2.

- 7.4. Recent evidence gathered since the adoption of the Local Plan Alteration in 2002 demonstrates that a higher level should be sought across the District but this is a matter for policies in the emerging Core Strategy Development Plan Document of the Local Development Framework. The Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State in April 2006, and Policy H7 proposes that all eligible housing developments should bring forward up to 40% Affordable Housing.
- 7.5. The Local Plan Alteration 2002 Policy AH4 sets a site threshold of 25 dwellings or more (or 1 ha irrespective of the number of dwellings) in settlements larger than 3,000 population and to all sites regardless of size in settlements of 3,000 population or less applies across the District. Draft PPS3 in paragraph 26 proposes that the indicative national minimum threshold is 15 dwellings and that local authorities may set different thresholds where they can be justified. The current threshold of 25 dwellings in settlements of over 3,000 population will therefore be reduced to 15 once PPS3 is confirmed as Government policy. This may be ahead of adoption of the changes to thresholds proposed in the Core Strategy.
- 7.6. Developers may not circumvent the policy on site-size thresholds by the artificial subdivision of sites. PPS3 makes it clear that new housing should make efficient use of land and it would therefore be contrary to this aim if land is used inefficiently to avoid having to provide Affordable Housing. The District Council will refuse planning permission in such cases. This includes those circumstances where ownership boundaries are used as a means of artificially dividing a planning site.
- 7.7. In considering whether a development meets the threshold for providing Affordable Housing, the Council will consider the gross number of proposed dwellings, not the net increase which takes into account any loss through demolition or conversion.
- 7.8. On schemes where these Affordable Housing policies apply, the Council will seek to secure the provision of developer contributions to Affordable Housing through a planning contribution under Section 106 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Policy SAH/2: In delivering Affordable Housing, the Council will seek to maximise the number of social rented units (as justified by the Housing Needs Surveys) to be provided through negotiations with developers/land owners on contributions for eligible sites.

- 7.9. The demonstrated high level of housing need in Huntingdonshire provides a clear justification for all bodies and organisations delivering housing to meet this need wherever possible.
- 7.10. The latest available Housing Needs Survey Update conducted by Fordham Research confirms that the greatest need is for social rented properties. It is clear from the survey that only social rented housing can address Huntingdonshire's need.
- 7.11. The District Council wishes to address demand through other tenures for those who are not considered in need but cannot afford open market tenures. This is addressed in more detail in the text supporting policy SAH/4.
- 7.12. The size and type of housing units to be provided will be determined by analysing the latest Housing Register information available for the settlement in which the site is located.

Policy SAH/3: On eligible sites, the Council will seek the provision of free serviced plots for the development of affordable housing.

- 7.13. The mechanism to deliver Affordable Housing on eligible sites via developer contributions is for the developer/owner to make serviced plots available for free to a Registered Social Landlord at nil or nominal cost and free of all further financial or other encumbrances or stress. This is a well established approach and is set out in paragraph 3.2 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration, which refers to the transfer of serviced plots for free or at agricultural value.
- 7.14. Free land should be transferred to a Registered Social Landlord for the delivery of Affordable Housing. As advised in Circular 6/98 (paragraph 27), the use of a Registered Social Landlord can ensure that future occupancy of Affordable Housing is controlled. Such bodies are obliged to have publicly available policies and procedures for allocating tenancies that must be fair and based on housing need, and any disposal of properties will take place under Housing Corporation controls.
- 7.15. Free serviced land is defined as that which is:

- Provided with roads to the boundary of the Affordable Housing plots which shall be adopted or capable of being adopted by the local highway authority
- where all mains services of electricity, potable water, foul and surface water drainage are supplied to a convenient point or points abutting the boundary of the plots for affordable housing
- where services of gas or cable TV or other telecommunications (including optical fibre) are brought to the site boundary and are capable of connection to the affordable housing dwellings.

Policy SAH/4: In addition to free serviced land the Council may negotiate an appropriate level of capital or other contributions from the owners/developers of eligible sites to ensure the delivery of the required appropriate tenure of Affordable Housing.

- 7.16. There is an overwhelmingly high level of housing need in Huntingdonshire. Even if 100% of all new homes built in the district were affordable, there would still be an outstanding number of households in need. It is therefore important that the Council maximises all resources to deliver new Affordable Housing. Developer contributions form an important part of the Council's strategy for delivering new Affordable Housing. The Council has carefully considered the level and nature of contributions to be sought and has considered the delivery mechanisms and funding streams available.
- 7.17. Since the adoption of the Local Plan Alteration, the Government has, in April 2003, abolished Local Authority Social Housing Grant. This means that the Council is now no longer able to grant-aid RSLs to a level which can meet the need. Consequently the process of securing Affordable Housing has been jeopardised.
- 7.18. Grant funding from the Housing Corporation (HC) is now secured via a competitive bidding process which currently takes place every two years. For the Cambridge Sub-Region, the National Affordable Housing Programme for 2006-2008 was heavily over-subscribed (by a factor of almost 2.5 to 1) for Huntingdonshire bids for that two year period totalled in excess of £20m but only £7.2m was secured. It is clear that these resources alone will be insufficient to enable delivery of affordable housing in keeping with need.

- 7.19. The Council's preference is to seek free serviced land from developers and to deliver the affordable housing with grant from the Housing Corporation. However, it is appropriate to have a cascade mechanism to ensure that affordable housing can be delivered in the absence of grant.
- 7.20. The Council's policy on Affordable Housing contribution can therefore be summarised as follows in priority order:
1. Free serviced land with the benefit of grant to deliver 70% social rented housing and 30% intermediate housing.
 2. Free serviced land plus dwellings transferred to a RSL at a cost that enables them to deliver 70% social rent and 30% intermediate housing
 3. Free serviced land and (in the absence of grant) a capital contribution from the developer to deliver 70% social rented housing and 30% intermediate housing.
- 7.21. Section 106 agreements will be drafted to allow any of the three options above to be taken up in the period immediately prior to commencement of construction. Any capital contribution should be paid prior to occupation of the first open market unit.
- 7.22. In cases where the applicant has provided clear evidence that the requirements compromise site viability; the Council may consider other options in the following priority order:
1. A different tenure mix may be considered which is likely to involve providing a higher proportion of intermediate housing.
 2. Fewer units (than 40% in the Cambridge Sub-Region or 29% in the rest of the District) may be provided, requiring less land for Affordable Housing. The Affordable homes should be built and transferred to a RSL at a cost that requires no grant.
 3. In very exceptional circumstances a financial contribution in lieu of on site provision may be accepted (see SAH/8).
- 7.23. These solutions will be considered as part of a close collaboration between the Council, the developer and the RSL. In considering them, and given the overwhelming needs data, any options which result in a reduction of the total number of affordable homes are only likely to be acceptable where there is

convincing evidence of barriers to achieving the number of homes sought in the Council's adopted plans.

- 7.24. The supporting text to Policy AH1 of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration states that Affordable Housing provided through developer contributions will “normally” be secured via land values. However, the changing circumstances outlined above demonstrate that additional contributions are required in order to achieve the aims of the policy.

Policy SAH/5 – Bodies other than RSLs who wish to provide Affordable Housing should:

- **be a body which is in a position to receive grant from the Housing Corporation**
- **make all reasonable endeavours to secure grant and submit competitive bids from the Housing Corporation to deliver 70% social rented and 30% Intermediate Housing**
- **provide the housing to persons nominated by the Council**
- **Ensure that the resultant housing is managed by a Housing Corporation accredited body**

or,

if it is unable to access grant, undertake to provide housing, irrespective of the availability of subsidy, to meet the Housing Corporation's Scheme Development Standards (for social rented) and to a tenure mix of 70% social rented and 30% Intermediate or as agreed by the Council.

- 7.25. The Housing Act 2004 includes provisions to extend the Housing Corporation's grant-giving powers to unregistered bodies. This is set out in the new Section 27A introduced into the Housing Act 1996.

- 7.26. The Council recognises that in the future bodies other than RSLs, including site developers, may wish to access grant from the Housing Corporation and then build and manage the Affordable Housing. Whether this is implemented with funding from the Housing Corporation or from other sources, including private

finance or the District Council, it is important that the proposals address the identified housing needs of Huntingdonshire and meet the Development Standards set out by the Housing Corporation.

Policy SAH/6 – The Council will require Affordable Housing to be distributed throughout the site of a residential development.

- 7.27. It is essential that Affordable Housing is spread throughout a development rather than in one location within it; it is preferable to avoid large areas or pockets within the development that constitute solely market or affordable dwellings. This will be consistent with the principles outlined in PPS1 on creating mixed communities. Outwardly there should be little observable difference between market and Affordable homes; both should be consistent with the design principles for that site. This will help to with achieve a good mix of housing types and tenures within the development and assist integration and minimise the risk of social exclusion. Affordable Housing should therefore be provided either as individual units scattered throughout he development or else in small clusters of no more than 15 dwellings made up of an agreed mix of Affordable Housing types and tenures. The size of the overall development should also be taken into account. On smaller sites a cluster of 15 Affordable dwellings could be too large and a correspondingly smaller cluster size and distribution appropriate to the size of the site would be more appropriate.

Policy SAH/7 – The District Council will require the phasing of the development to ensure that the commencement of the Affordable Housing proceeds without unnecessary delay.

- 7.28. Given that Affordable Housing is to be spread throughout the site, phasing of the development will also need to ensure that the phasing of affordable housing is consistent and co-ordinated with the overall phasing of development. This is particularly important on large sites. The Council will therefore seek an element of Affordable Housing within all phases and will require the land to be transferred to the RSL at specified trigger points within each phase. Planning conditions or agreements will be used to ensure that a specified number of the market housing dwellings cannot be occupied until the Affordable Housing sites have been transferred to a RSL. For smaller sites, however, and for the first phase of larger developments, the land for the Affordable Housing should be transferred to the RSL prior to the commencement of development.

Policy SAH/8 – Only in very exceptional circumstances will it be acceptable for affordable housing to be provided off-site or financial payments to be made in lieu of on-site provision.

- 7.29. Government guidance set out in Circular 6/98 and PPG3 is that where Affordable Housing is required it should be provided as part of a development. This will ensure an integrated mix of dwelling types and tenures.
- 7.30. Off-site provision will therefore only be appropriate where there are sound planning or Affordable Housing delivery reasons why on-site provision would be unsuitable. This may relate to the location of the site or possible extraordinary financial reasons that may make the Affordable Housing more expensive to construct than might ordinarily be expected.
- 7.31. Off-site provision should preferably be on an alternative site which is suitable for the Affordable Housing requirement which is within the same local area so that it addresses the local need. There will also be a need for a financial contribution to enable the development to take place; this will be the equivalent of the cost of providing services to the plots which would normally be provided on-site. Planning permission for the development of the market-housing site will not be granted until the arrangements, including planning permission and relevant agreements, are in place for the affordable housing site. The alternative Affordable Housing site will have sufficient capacity to meet the required market housing/Affordable Housing ratio. The Council will also require the phasing of the two developments to be linked, consistent with the principles established in Policy 6.
- 7.32. Only in very exceptional circumstances will a general non-site related financial contribution be acceptable. The justification may be similar to 7.30 above. In such cases the Council would undertake to utilise the capital contribution for the purposes of providing Affordable Housing elsewhere in the District. The capital contribution will be equivalent to the market value (assuming private development) of the land that would otherwise have been provided for Affordable Housing.

APPENDIX 1

National Policy

Planning Policy Guidance Note 3

PPG3 (2000), including its two housing updates “Planning for Sustainable Communities in Rural Areas” and “Supporting the Delivery of New Housing” (January 2005) is particularly relevant.

PPG3 (as updated) aims to ensure that everybody has the opportunity of a decent home, including those in need of affordable housing and special needs housing. It confirms that the need for a mix of housing types is a material planning consideration and where there is a demonstrated lack of affordable housing, it should be sought from appropriate developments, with the amount and type of affordable housing reflecting local housing need and site suitability.

The PPG will be superseded by a new version of the guidance in the form of a Planning Policy Statement as set out below.

Planning Policy Statement 3

The Government has published a draft Planning Policy Statement on Housing (PPS3) which takes into account research into the implementation of PPG3, including:

- the two updates to PPG3 published in January 2005, Planning for Sustainable Communities in Rural Areas and Supporting the Delivery of New Housing;
- Planning Circular 6/98: Planning and Affordable Housing; and the two consultation papers Planning for Mixed Communities (published in January 2005) and Planning for Housing Provision (published in July 2005).

The draft PPS defines affordable housing as including social-rented and intermediate housing and points to Sub-regional housing market assessments to determine whether affordable housing is needed and to guide the level, size, type and location of affordable housing provision, either through new or replacement provision.

It requires local planning authorities in determining the overall target for affordable housing provision, to have regard to sub-regional housing market assessments, the Regional Spatial Strategy, Regional Housing Strategy, Regional Homelessness Strategy, Local Housing Strategy and Community Strategy. It states that the target should take account of the anticipated levels of finance available for affordable housing, including public subsidy (based on priorities set out in the Regional Housing

Strategy and discussions with the Housing Corporation), and the level of developer contribution that can realistically be sought on relevant sites.

It proposes separate targets for social-rented and intermediate housing as a sufficient supply of intermediate housing can help meet the needs of key workers and those seeking to gain a first step on the housing ladder, reduce the call on social-rented housing, free up existing social-rented homes, provide wider choice for households and ensure that sites have a balanced mix of tenures.

It emphasises the need to balance the need for affordable housing against the viability of sites, having regard to the implications of competing land uses and making informed assumptions about the levels of finance available for affordable housing

A companion guide is proposed but still awaited. It is likely to set out an approach that local planning authorities may use if the assumed level of finance available for affordable housing is not forthcoming and provide suggestions for delivering affordable housing where this is the case or to supplement the delivery of affordable housing.

The PPS states clearly that the presumption should be that affordable housing should be provided on the application site so that it contributes towards the creation of more mixed communities and avoids concentrations of deprivation. However, local development documents may set out the circumstances in which provision would not be required on an application site or in which a financial contribution would be acceptable in lieu. In such instances, any off-site provision of affordable housing, or a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision, must be of a broadly equivalent value and should contribute towards the plan objectives for mixed communities.

Circular 05/2005

Government Guidance in Circular 05/2005 on planning obligations (which has replaced Circular 1/97) makes it clear that affordable housing is a material planning consideration to be taken into account in Local Development Documents (B13). Such documents are expected to identify the need for affordable housing and set site-size related thresholds above which the provision of a specified proportion of affordable housing would be required.

The Circular states that local planning authorities should include as much information as possible in their Local Development Framework documents. It also states that general policies should be included in Development Plan Documents, including any “saved” policies under Schedule 8 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It goes on to state that more detailed policies ought to be included in SPD. Such more detailed policies might include matters such as the size and types of planning

obligations likely to be sought for specific sites, sub-plan areas or windfall sites.

The presumption in the Circular is that affordable housing should be provided on-site as part of a mixed community but that in certain circumstances provision on another site or a financial contribution may be more appropriate (paragraph B14).

It also states that planning obligations need to take into account the economic viability of a development (paragraph B10). In such cases the level of contributions should be reasonable whilst still allowing development to take place.

The Circular emphasises the need to maintain a plan-led system and that where local authorities do not have existing high level policies on planning obligations in an adopted local plan, a SPD may be used, based on the policies in the Circular, for a transitional period before policies are in place in the relevant Development Plan Document.

It also states that LDFs should identify the need for affordable housing and set size thresholds above which it would be required (paragraph B13).

Circular 6/98

Circular 6/98, Planning and Affordable Housing, supplements PPG3. It states that site size, suitability and the economics of provision together with the need to achieve a successful housing development should be taken into account when assessing a site's suitability to provide affordable housing. Circular 6/98 is due to be replaced by a further update to PPG3. The Government is considering a consultation paper called "Planning for mixed communities", the objective of which is to create mixed and inclusive communities that offer a wide range of housing and promote social inclusion. It proposes that the site size thresholds above which affordable housing should be sought can be set by a local authority where there is a high level of affordable housing need and/or the majority of housing supply is from smaller sites. The resultant changes, if approved, would replace paragraphs 9 to 17 of PPG3, Annex C would be updated with new definitions and Annex D would be updated with the details of new practice guidance.

Consultation on a Planning Gain Supplement

The Government has responded to Kate Barker's independent review of housing supply in a consultation paper suggesting the introduction of a Planning-gain Supplement (PGS).

To help finance vital infrastructure and support growing communities, Kate Barker recommended that the Government should capture a portion of the land value uplift arising from the planning process.

The proposed PGS could reduce the scope of the planning obligations to matters affecting the environment of the development site and the provision of affordable housing. It would take into account the up-lifted value of the land and the viability of development to ensure that essential housing development would not be discouraged. However, it is unlikely to be introduced before 2008.

Regional Policy

The approved regional policy is set out in Regional Planning Guidance for East Anglia (2000) (RPG 6).

It sets out a vision and planning framework which includes the requirement to “provide a high quality of life and seek to avoid social exclusion, including by addressing the issue of housing affordability in the area”.

It requires local authorities to monitor housing needs, with development plans ensuring the provision of affordable housing, including policies for securing an adequate supply of affordable housing based on local housing strategies which in turn should be based on robust local assessments of need and showing how planning obligations will be used to contribute towards affordable housing.

The supporting text states that local authorities should also make use of supplementary planning guidance and site-specific development briefs to guide developers.

Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England (RSS 14)

The East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) has produced a draft RSS, the East of England Plan, which is currently at Examination in Public. When adopted in 2007, it will replace RPG 6.

Draft RSS policy SS 13 requires at least 30% of housing to be affordable, but that 40% is required in areas where housing stress warrants a higher provision.

Building on policy in RPG 6, RSS Policy H2 requires local authorities to monitor housing needs and local development documents to:

- secure an adequate supply of affordable housing consistent with local assessments of need
- specify the proportion of housing which should be affordable
- specify the circumstances in which thresholds for the inclusion of affordable housing in new developments will be applied below those indicated in Government guidance, in particular to address the need for affordable housing in rural settlements.

It defines affordable housing as housing for households who cannot afford to rent or purchase on the open market, including subsidised social

renting, key worker housing, shared home ownership, equity sharing, sub-market renting and discounted market ownership. It also notes that housing for key workers is of strategic economic importance for the region.

Paragraph 7.16 identifies the Cambridge Sub-Region as one of those parts of the East of England as having greater need as indicated by the East of England Affordable Housing Study (Stage 1).

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan 2003

The need for a greater provision of affordable housing in its area is recognised in the Structure Plan. It notes that in the Cambridge Sub-Region, house prices have been rising faster than incomes, making it impossible for some to compete on the open market for housing, and creating serious recruitment problems for business. It expects housing development to make a contribution to affordable housing provision, with Local Plans including overall targets and individual targets for affordable provision to be negotiated on a site-by-site basis, in accordance with PPG3 and Circular 6/98 'Planning and Affordable Housing'. It acknowledges that the targets set will vary according to the local level of need.

Affordable housing is defined as housing for rent, discounted low cost market housing and shared equity housing, and that such housing provided for sale or for rent below the prevailing market level may be achieved by a contribution from the developer, landowner or other body. Local planning authorities are to assess the types of housing needed within their areas, which may include housing for people with special needs such as the elderly or disabled.

The Structure Plan recognises that a large proportion of newly formed households, forecast over the plan period, will comprise one and two persons and therefore, local planning authorities are to make every effort to provide for a higher proportion of one and two bedroom dwellings in affordable and open market categories, thus helping to securing a better mix and choice of housing types and more varied urban forms, at higher densities.

P9/1 requires 40% or more of the new housing in the Cambridge Sub-Region to be affordable with Local Plans setting site thresholds according to local circumstances. Employment developments will also be expected to contribute towards affordable housing through developer contributions.

It is proposed that the relevant policies from the Structure Plan will be saved into RSS14 when it is adopted. The policies to be saved are identified in Appendix E of the Draft East of England Plan.

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002

Policy AH1 defines affordable housing as that which is affordable to those householders who cannot either rent or purchase on the open market. The supporting text recognises that the 1997 District-wide Housing Needs Survey (HNS) identifies social rented housing (provided through Registered Social Landlords or RSLs) as being the highest priority need.

Policy AH2 provides the mechanism to ensure that affordable housing is available at a meaningful discount below the cost on the open market for equivalent properties.

Policy AH3, based on the findings of the 1997 HNS, sets the target for affordable housing of at least 1,500 affordable homes between 1997 and 2006.

Policy AH4 sets the target that 29% of all dwellings should be affordable, on sites of 25 dwellings or more (or 1 ha regardless of the number of dwellings) in settlements larger than 3,000 population, while in settlements of 3,000 or less on all sites regardless of size, subject to the financial viability of the scheme.

The Local Development Framework – Core Strategy

The District Council is in the process of preparing a Core Strategy as a fundamental part of the Local Development Framework. The proposed Core Strategy has been the subject of participation on preferred options during June-July 2005. An additional element of the Core Strategy relating to affordable housing policy was the subject of consultation on options in September/October 2005 and participation on preferred options in December 2005/January 2006. The Core Strategy is due to be submitted to the Secretary of State in April 2006 with adoption, following an independent examination into the soundness of the plan and a binding Inspector's report, in April 2007.

The emerging Core Strategy policies on affordable housing within Huntingdonshire will indicate that:

- Proposals for housing development should provide 40% or more of the total number of proposed dwellings as affordable housing on housing sites
 - Of 0.5 ha or more and all developments containing 15 dwellings or more in market towns or key centres as defined in the settlement hierarchy of the Core Strategy
 - On all developments containing 2 or more dwellings in smaller settlements as defined by the settlement hierarchy of the Core Strategy
- Account will be taken of any particular costs associated with the development and whether there are other planning objectives which need to be given priority
- The appropriate mix of housing tenures and sizes of affordable housing within a development will be determined in response to identified needs and funding priorities at the time of development.

The justification for these emerging policies is that it has become increasingly difficult for local people on low to modest incomes to gain access to suitable housing. A growing gap between average earnings and housing costs, a limited supply of new affordable properties and the loss of existing social housing through “right to buy”/“right to acquire” provisions have all contributed to this problem.

The 2002 Housing Needs Survey (HNS) estimated a total requirement for new affordable housing 2003-2007 of 5,065 dwellings coupled with government advice to meet the backlog over a 5 year period. To achieve this a very high proportion of affordable housing would be required. On this basis the HNS demonstrates that at least 40% or more is clearly justified. It also notes that the Council’s responsibility as a housing and planning authority operates at the level of the whole district. The Council has to meet need where it can best do so; it is unrealistic to expect that those parts of the district with greatest numbers of housing allocations will exactly match with the greatest levels of identified need.

Reducing the threshold from a site size of 25 dwellings to 15 dwellings is in accordance with the Government’s suggestions in “Planning for Mixed Communities” and should generate a further 50 affordable dwellings per annum than a lower threshold of 25 dwellings.

APPENDIX 2

Huntingdonshire Town and Parish Councils in the Cambridge Sub-Region.
Abbotsley
Bluntisham
Brampton
Colne
Earith
Eynesbury Hardwick (det)
Eynesbury Hardwicke
Fenstanton
Godmanchester
Great Gransden
Great Paxton
Hilton
Holywell-cum-Needingworth
Houghton and Wyton
Huntingdon
Little Paxton
Offord Cluny
Offord D'arcy
Somersham
St Ives
St Neots
St Neots Rural
Tetworth
The Hemingfords
The Stukeleys
Toseland
Waresley
Yelling

Huntingdonshire Town and Parish Councils in the Peterborough and North Cambridgeshire Sub-Region.
Abbots Ripton
Alconbury
Alconbury Weston
Alwalton
Barham & Woolley
Brington & Molesworth
Broughton
Buckden
Buckworth

Bury
Bythorn & Keyston
Catworth
Chesterton
Conington
Covington
Denton and Caldecote
Diddington
East & West Perry
Easton
Ellington
Elton
Farcet
Folksworth & Washingley
Glatton
Grafham
Great Gidding
Great Staughton
Haddon
Hail Weston
Hamerton
Holme
Kimbolton
Kings Ripton
Leighton
Little Gidding
Morborne
Old Weston
Oldhurst
Pidley-cum-Fenton
Ramsey
Sawtry
Sibson-Cum-Stibbington
Southoe & Midloe
Spaldwick
Steeple Gidding
Stilton
Stow Longa
Tilbrook
Upton & Coppingford
Upwood and the Raveleys
Warboys
Water Newton
Winwick
Wistow
Woodhurst
Woodwalton
Yaxley

APPENDIX 3

2006 HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY UPDATE SUMMARY

SUMMARY

Introduction

This report has been produced for Huntingdonshire District Council as an update to the 2002 housing needs survey. The main purpose of the update is to revise estimates of the need for affordable housing as new information has become available. The main changes made are to take account of:

1. Changes in the housing market (i.e. changes in prices/rents)
2. Changes in local incomes
3. Changes in the supply of affordable housing
4. A re-basing of household figures drawing on information from the 2001 Census and also HSSA (Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix) data

Survey and initial data

The 2002 survey achieved 500 completed personal interviews and 1,252 returned postal questionnaires to enable accurate analysis of need across the District.

The survey data was updated to a base date of January 2006 using information from a number of sources including latest ONS household projections and HSSA data. As of 2006 it was estimated that around three quarters (77.3%) of the District's households are owner-occupiers with around 12% living in the social rented sector and around 10% living in private rented accommodation.

Number of households in each tenure group				
Tenure	Total number of households	% of households	Number of returns	% of returns
Owner-occupied (no mortgage)	18,383	27.5%	570	32.5%
Owner-occupied (with mortgage) ①	33,335	49.8%	838	47.8%
RSL	8,298	12.4%	195	11.1%
Private rented	5,075	7.6%	113	6.4%
Other rented②	1,809	2.7%	36	2.1%
TOTAL	66,900	100.0%	1,752	100.0%

Source: Huntingdonshire – Housing Needs Assessment 2006 update

NOTES ① - Includes shared ownership

② - Includes 'tied' accommodation and other rented accommodation

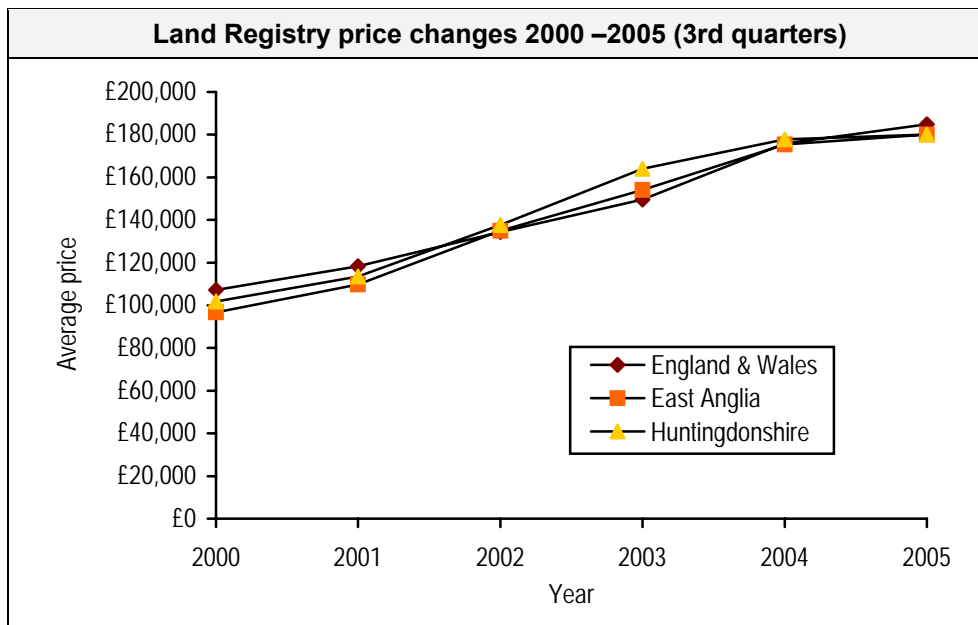
A study of the local housing market was undertaken to establish minimum (entry level) prices of housing in Huntingdonshire (both to buy and to rent). Information was collected from two sources to inform this analysis:

- Land registry
- Survey of local estate and letting agents

Land Registry data suggested that property prices in Huntingdonshire are marginally above the regional average but below the average for England and Wales. Between the 3rd quarter 2000 and the 3rd quarter 2005 average property prices in England and Wales rose by 82.3%. For the East Anglia region the increase was 86.2% whilst for Huntingdonshire the figure was 76.8%.

Land Registry average prices (3rd quarter 2005)		
Area	Average price	As % of E & W
England & Wales	£194,587	100.0%
East Anglia	£180,053	92.5%
Huntingdonshire	£180,124	92.5%

Source: HM Land Registry data



Source: HM Land Registry data

A survey of local estate and letting agents identified estimates of the minimum costs of housing to both buy and rent in the District. The minimum (entry-level) prices identified are the cheapest cost of housing that is regularly available and not needing any major repair. Due to the variety in prices across the district, prices have been split into two broad housing market areas for affordability purposes: South & East Huntingdonshire and North & West Huntingdonshire.

As the influence of Cambridge has expanded northwards, house prices in the North & West of Huntingdonshire have risen rapidly. This fast house price increase has resulted in the minimum house prices increasing quicker than the average prices in this part of the District. This has resulted in a much smaller difference in the minimum prices between the two housing market areas than the average prices.

Overall the survey suggests that entry-level property prices in South & East Huntingdonshire vary from £94,000 for a one bedroom home to £187,000 for a four

bedroom dwelling. In North & West Huntingdonshire entry-level prices vary from £90,000 (one bed) to £175,000 (four beds).

Minimum prices in Huntingdonshire 2002 and 2006						
Property size	South & East Huntingdonshire HMA			North & West Huntingdonshire HMA		
	July 2002	January 2006	% change	July 2002	January 2006	% change
1 bedroom	£58,000	£94,000	62.1%	£54,000	£90,000	66.7%
2 bedrooms	£74,500	£110,500	48.3%	£72,000	£112,000	55.6%
3 bedrooms	£99,500	£128,500	29.1%	£90,500	£130,500	44.2%
4 bedrooms	£153,500	£187,000	21.8%	£118,000	£175,000	48.3%

Source: Fordham Research - survey of estate agents 2002 and 2006

Minimum monthly rents in the South & East Huntingdonshire housing market area varied from £400 (one bed) to £750 (four beds). In the North & West Huntingdonshire housing market area minimum monthly rents varied from £380 (one bed) to £750 (four beds).

Minimum and average private rents in Huntingdonshire				
Property size	South & East Huntingdonshire HMA		North & West Huntingdonshire HMA	
	Minimum rent (monthly)	Average rent (monthly)	Minimum rent (monthly)	Average rent (monthly)
1 bedroom	£400	£475	£380	£430
2 bedrooms	£495	£590	£450	£520
3 bedrooms	£575	£660	£550	£600
4 bedrooms	£750	£1,020	£750	£750

Source: Fordham Research - survey of estate agents 2006

Comparisons with information collected from estate agents in 2002 suggest that property prices have increased significantly, although the cost of the rental market has not increased to the same extent.

The information about minimum prices and rents was used along with financial information collected in the survey to make estimates of households' ability to afford market housing (without the need for subsidy).

The survey estimates that average gross household income (including non-housing benefits) for households in the District is £34,924 per annum, up around 25% since 2002. The median income is noticeably lower at £30,525 per annum. The averages conceal wide variations among different tenure groups. The level of increase is a result of general wage inflation but also demographic changes since the time of the last survey (accounted for by the re-weighting of the data).

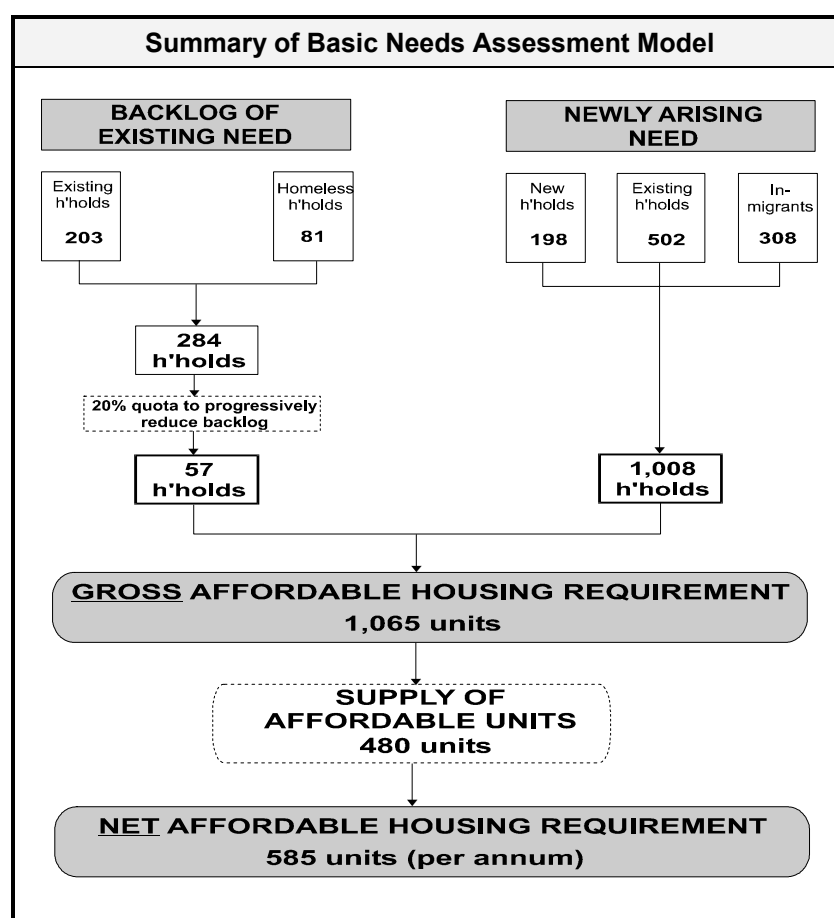
The Guide model

As part of the study, an estimate of the need for affordable housing was made based on the 'Basic Needs Assessment Model' (BNAM). The BNAM is the main method

for calculating affordable housing requirements suggested in Government guidance 'Local Housing Needs Assessment: A Guide to Good Practice' (Former DETR 2000).

The BNAM sets out 18 stages of analysis to produce an estimate of the annual requirement for additional affordable housing. The model can be summarised as three main analytical stages with a fourth stage producing the final requirement figure. The stages are:

- Backlog of existing need
- Newly arising need
- Supply of affordable units
- Overall affordable housing requirement



Source: Huntingdonshire – Housing Needs Assessment 2006 update

Overall, using the BNAM it was estimated that there is currently a shortfall of affordable housing in the District of around 585 units per annum. The data suggested that this shortfall is most acute for smaller (one and two bedroom) properties, although there is also a need for larger family sized (three and four bedroom) accommodation to meet the preferences of growing households. The figure of 585 is a substantial decrease from the 2002 survey of 1,013 per annum. This can be explained by the changes in the methodology (see Appendix A4).

The analysis suggests that any target of affordable housing would be perfectly justified (in terms of the needs) because the annual affordable housing requirement exceeds the level of supply of all new housing and it is necessary to maximise the supply of affordable housing.

All of the annual requirement of 585 new affordable homes should be met by social rented housing as a profile of the costs of potential intermediate housing options suggests that they are not affordable for households in need. Instead intermediate housing options (particularly shared ownership) could be used to meet the demand from the 470 households that are not in need, as they can afford private rented accommodation, but would like to access owner-occupation and cannot afford to do so. The decision on whether the Council wishes to meet the requirements of this group in addition to those households in housing need is a policy judgement for the District Council.

Key workers

The term intermediate housing is often used with reference to specific groups of households such as key workers. The survey therefore analysed such households (the definition being based on categories of employment identified by the Housing Corporation). Analysis of survey data indicates that there are an estimated 14,100 people in key worker occupations.

Key worker categories		
Category	Number of persons	% of key workers
Health Care	5,885	41.7%
Social Services	550	3.9%
Education	7,137	50.6%
Emergency Service	538	3.8%
TOTAL	14,110	100.0%

Source: Huntingdonshire – Housing Needs Assessment 2006 update

The survey also estimated that 8,005 households are headed by a key worker, these households were subject to additional analysis. The main findings from further analysis of this group of households can be summarised as follows:

- Key worker households are more likely to have moved in the last ten years than non-key workers and are more likely to have moved from abroad
- Key worker households are slightly more likely to move within the next three years and are more likely to want to move from the District
- Key worker households have slightly higher incomes than non-key worker households (in employment)
- All households are tested to ascertain whether they can theoretically afford different forms of housing. The majority (91.4%) of key worker households can afford market housing in the District (regardless of their intention to move), of the 690 that can't afford, intermediate housing is affordable for 21.4%

- The Basic Needs Assessment Model indicates that of the annual requirement of 585 dwellings across the District, 4 units should be for key worker households

Conclusions

The housing needs survey update in Huntingdonshire provides a detailed analysis of housing requirement issues across the whole housing market in the District. The study began by following the Basic Needs Assessment Model, which estimated a requirement to provide an additional 585 affordable dwellings per annum if all housing needs are to be met over the next five years.

Overall, the need for additional affordable housing represents considerably over 100% of the estimated newbuild in the District of 559 units per year between 1999 and 2016. It would be sensible to suggest that in the light of the affordable housing requirement shown, the Council will therefore need to maximise the availability of affordable housing from all available sources (including newbuild, acquisitions, conversions etc). Attention should also be paid to the cost (to occupants) of any additional housing to make sure that it can actually meet the needs identified in the survey.

CABINET

29TH JUNE 2006

HUNTINGDON TOWN CENTRE VISION
Vision ,Spatial Strategy and Action Plan
(Report by Head of Planning Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this final report is to seek approval of this document as interim policy guidance to inform the content of the forthcoming Planning Proposals DPD and assist in day to day decisions that have to be made affecting the future viability and vitality of the town centre.

2. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Civic Trust was commissioned at the end of 2004 to undertake a study of Huntingdon Town Centre. It was divided into a number of stages:-

1. A review of progress and improvement activity since the first report in 2000
2. Framing proposals for the key potential sites and bringing them together in an overall spatial strategy
3. Devising an indicative programme for the next 10-15 years identifying priorities and responsibilities for carrying them out

- 2.2 During the time that this work was being undertaken the District Council were considering the range of options for the new A14. A key issue arising from this consultation was the future of the Huntingdon Viaduct and whether or not this should be retained or removed as part of the alternative proposals relating to the provision of either a two or three lane dual carriageway on the line of the new A14.

- 2.3 The Council stressed that the removal of the viaduct, the de-trunking of the route and the connection to the local network would have considerable benefits to the town in terms of opportunities for development and to relieve traffic problems. The need for a technical study and detailed modelling of the implications was stressed at the time.

- 2.4 A joint study was commissioned in September and it was agreed to hold back the publication of the Vision document until the outcome of this study so its implications, if any, for land use planning could be illustrated.

- 2.5 The publication of the results of the study indicates that the removal of the viaduct is a viable proposition and has enabled the attached Vision to become a more integrated transport and planning strategy.

2.6 The study has a number of aims:-

- To give guidance to potential investors on the type of development that is likely to be acceptable
- To make the case for regional and national support to achieve the actions proposed
- To illustrate how the removal of the viaduct and changing road patterns that could result will bring wider economic benefits to the town
- To make a contribution to the Local Development Framework currently being prepared

3. THE SPATIAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

3.1 The document describes the overall development potential of the town and identifies a number of opportunity sites and their individual planning and market potential. It introduces a vision for the town centre, identifies aims and objectives and features of the spatial strategy. The spatial strategy is divided into a number of structuring and land use elements and finally into four character areas. The structuring elements identify the following:-

- The extension of town centre functions beyond the ring road in an 'arc of growth' to include the area around the station and Hinchingsbrooke
- the strengthening of the pedestrian connection of the existing town centre to the new commercial opportunity area to the west of the town centre
- the creation of a landscape and leisure corridor connecting the town centre with the Riverside Park and Hinchingsbrooke Park
- 'civilising the ring road' by better crossings for pedestrians and more landscaping
- the creation of 'activity hubs' at the railway station, Hinchingsbrooke, bus station, Chequers Court, and the old town bridge
- the creation of new and improved urban squares throughout the town
- the provision of additional car parks on the edge of the centre with good pedestrian access links to the centre

3.2 An indicative action plan identifying actions in the short term and long term completes the study.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 It is intended that an exhibition is held in July in Huntingdon at which officers of the District, County and the consultants on the viaduct study will be on hand to explain the planning and transportation aspects of the spatial strategy. This will be the first opportunity for the public to see and question officers about the recently published viaduct study.

5. RECOMMENDATION(S)

5.1 That members adopt the Vision as interim policy guidance

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Huntingdon Town Centre – a Vision and Strategy for Growth and Quality
October 2000 produced by the Civic Trust

A14 Huntingdon Study – report by Atkins into the implications of the removal
of the viaduct at Huntingdon station April 2006

Contact Officer: Richard Probyn
☎ 01480 388430

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

29 JUNE 2006

POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS

(Report by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support))

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Having considered a report by the Police Community Support Officers' Working Group, the Panel recommend changes to the funding by the Council for the employment of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in Huntingdonshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council approved a memorandum of understanding in 2003 to provide £300,000 per annum to Cambridgeshire Constabulary which enabled the Police to employ additional 14 PCSOs in Huntingdonshire in excess of was available under Home Office funding. Since then, the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance) have monitored the performance of the PCSOs and established a small working group which has met from time to time with the relevant executive councillors and officers. A report by the working group was considered at the last meeting of the Service Support Panel.
- 2.2 The Panel have reiterated consistently that they value the contribution that PCSOs make in providing reassurance to the public by being a visible presence on the streets. Nevertheless Members sometimes have found difficulty in assessing the impact of PCSOs in the wider context of community safety and Police activities. With the development of neighbourhood policing teams, the Panel have acknowledged that this should be addressed by the new monitoring and reporting arrangements and closer liaison with local communities.

3. FUNDING FOR POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS

- 3.1 The Council's contribution substantially funded 14 of the 31 PCSOs on the Police's Central Division establishment in 2005/06. The balance was funded from a combination of sources but the Panel have been informed that new funding streams are becoming available from central government under the Neighbourhood Police Fund which will support additional PCSO recruitment. Subject to formal confirmation, it now seems probable that funding for an additional 109 PCSOs will be announced in the current year, rising to 178 in 2007/08.
- 3.2 It is likely that the initial allocation will favour Southern Division, which is piloting the neighbourhood policing initiative. Approximately 25% will be allocated to Central Division and it has been assumed (for forecasting purposes) that these will be divided equally between Huntingdonshire and Fenland.

3.3 The Panel are conscious of the Council's financial position and the need to achieve reductions in net expenditure to meet the budgetary targets contained in the Financial Strategy. The availability of Home Office funding should enable the Council to withdraw its financial contribution to the deployment of PCSOs in the District without any reduction in the number of officers employed. Transferring existing staff currently funded by the Council into posts funded from the Neighbourhood Policing Fund will also avoid the Constabulary in the start-up costs (approximately £3,400 per officer) associated with new recruits.

3.4 A phased approach to the withdrawal of funding is considered equitable in that this should enable the retention of existing PCSO levels commensurate with the roll out of the new funding available to the Constabulary. Although this will be dependent upon formal confirmation of the nature of the Home Office funding, the Panel have been informed that it is likely that the Council's contribution can be reduced in the current year to £215,000 and withdrawn entirely in 2007/08.

4. **ENSURING VALUE FOR MONEY**

4.1 Central to the role of PCSOs is reducing the fear of crime and demonstrating a visible presence. To ensure that these objectives continue to be met, the Panel have looked at ways in which their activities can continue to be monitored but without creating additional tasks for the Police which might detract from their existing workload.

4.2 In that respect Annex 1 represents an annual review of the activities of the PCSOs in Huntingdonshire in 2005/06. However the Panel suggest that the quarterly crime report (as set out in Annex 2) would be of more relevance to the great majority of Members and would avoid the necessity for the Police to draft a separate report on the activities of PCSOs for the Council .

5. **CONCLUSION**

5.1 The value of the Police Community Support Officers in providing high visibility policing is acknowledged and welcomed by the Panel but they view the new central funding as an opportunity for the Council to achieve budgetary savings without affecting standards of service in the District. The Cabinet will be updated at their meeting as to the size and timing of the new funding and its precise impact on the phasing of the reduction in District Council funding for PCSOs.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 The Panel therefore

RECOMMEND

(a) that the Cabinet withdraw the District Council's funding for the employment of PCSOs in Huntingdonshire as soon as possible, commensurate with there being no reduction in the number of officers that were financed by the Council; and

- (b) that the Cabinet arrange for copies of the quarterly Community Safety Partnership report on crime in Huntingdonshire to be circulated to all Members of the Council.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Report of PCSO Working Group to Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) meeting held on 13th June 2006.

Contact Officer: Mrs C Bulman
☎ 01480 388234

Huntingdonshire Police Community Support Officers

Annual Review 2005-2006

Background

Police Community Support Officers are part of the wider police family and contribute to the policing of neighbourhoods, primarily through high visibility patrols with the purpose of reassuring the public, increasing orderliness in public places and being accessible to communities and partner agencies working at a local level. PCSOs focus on tackling low level anti-social behaviour and public nuisance. They are given a range of enforcement powers to address issues such as disorder, underage drinking, cycling on the footpath and abandoned vehicles. They can also issue fixed penalty notices to address dog fouling, anti-social driving and drunk and disorderly behaviour. PCSOs are intended to support police officers and to release police officers from tasks that do not require their extensive range of skills and powers.

One of the key benefits about PCSOs is that they do not generally get drawn away from their patrols and reassurance work to deal with other police matters, as is often the case with uniformed police officers. PCSOs spend a higher proportion of their time on visible patrol than police officers and as a result they tend to be identified by and with the communities they work in. PCSOs have the time to provide a quality service in dealing with low level disorder and offences and engage positively with the public.

Police Community Support Officers training is tailored to their specific role and is therefore different to that provided to police officers.

On appointment, a PCSO will attend a 4 week initial training course, which includes:

- understanding their role
- how and when to use their powers
- the structure and principles of the Service
- customer care and service delivery
- community and diversity issues
- multi agency partnership working
- use of technology and systems
- personal safety and first aid

PCSOs in Huntingdonshire

There are 23 PCSOs based in Huntingdonshire covering rural and urban areas. A list of the names of the PCSOs and the areas that they cover is attached.

PCSOs are involved in a wide range of duties. In order to give an idea of the breakdown of time PCSOs in Huntingdonshire spent on each of the duties, the police agreed to ask the PCSOs to record their duties onto time sheets. A break down of the activities that PCSOs have been involved in over the year 2005/2006 in Huntingdonshire is as follows:

Duty	Total hours spent on duty for all Hunts PCSOs	Approx percentage of total time spent on each duty
High visibility patrols	9316	52%
Abstracted (incl training)	3658	20%
Crime related enquiry	1708	9.5%
Vehicle related enquiry	348	2%
Anti-social behaviour	1070	6%
Meetings	886	5%
Other operational activities	554	3.1%
Named police operation	154	0.9%
Not defined	105	0.59%
Dog fouling	8	0.04%
Light duties	8	0.04%

NB. This data is taken from timesheets filled in manually by PCSOs which are then submitted to HDC and entered on to an Access database by HDC staff. The data is approximate. NB percentage do not total 100% due to rounding and allowance for rest and leave.

The analysis shows that the duty which PCSOs spend the most time on is high visibility patrols. Such patrols help to provide reassurance to the community and reduce the fear of crime.

The Huntingdonshire Annual Survey 2006 has shown really positive results in terms of how safe residents feel in their neighbourhood with 90.9% of residents feeling very or fairly safe, an increase of 6.6% from 2005 (84.3%) The high visibility of PCSOs in neighbourhoods may have been a contributory factor in this increase in feeling of safety.

Since October 2004 PCSOs have issued 1,318 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for traffic and disorder related issues.

What do PCSOs do?

Lyndsey and Gemma are PCSOs who work as part of the Yaxley neighbourhood policing team, and cover Sawtry, Alconbury and the surrounding area. They have answered a few frequently asked questions to try to explain a bit more about their role.

What is a police community support officer?

The role of the PCSO is to help with the policing of neighbourhoods. We wear a highly visible uniform, which is reassuring to the public. We patrol on foot, and our presence helps to improve orderliness in public places. The work that we do enables regular police officers to make more effective use of their specialist skills and training – tackling crime and making communities safer.

What do you do?

We deal with incidents such as anti-social behaviour, low level crime, for example vandalism, so police officers can focus on more serious crimes, house to house enquires, taking statements and crime reports. We do high visibility reassurance patrols and gather intelligence.

What powers do you have?

Our powers include

- Issuing fixed penalty notices on selected offences for people over the age of 18 for example cycling on the footway, dog fouling or litter and issuing penalty notices for disorder on selected offences for people over the age of 18, for example drunk in a public place or wasting police time.
- We confiscate alcohol from people under the age of 18 and tobacco from those under the age of 16.
- We enter and search premises to save life and limb or prevent serious damage.
- We remove abandoned vehicles.
- We can take the names and addresses of people acting antisocially and can detain a person for up to 30 minutes pending the arrival of a constable.

How do you feel you help the people in the district?

By being the eyes and ears of the police, people are able to feel safe and secure. We offer a friendly face and people often tell us that it is nice to see us on the streets. We work closely with members of the public, businesses, organisations like the local council and agencies such as Huntingdonshire Business Against Crime (HBAC) and key stakeholders within the community in many ways. These include reassurance patrols, or we may be asked to attend community meetings or provide back up during special operations.

What do you enjoy most about being a police community support officer?

We enjoy the interaction that we have with all sections of the community and the work that we do within schools like safety talks on cycle safety or personal safety.

What sort of things do people say about you? They say things like *“It’s nice to see you around. It makes me feel a lot safer knowing you are helping our community.”*

The PCSOs have become well known members of the community in many areas across the District. Their support and participation in initiatives and projects to address crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour has been well recognised.

A day in the life of a PCSO

Monday 23rd January 2006

I came on duty at 08.00 hrs this morning.

I make my first job to put intelligence on that I gathered the previous day. This intelligence is about Youths on my beat. We have a big youth problem in Godmanchester and find it useful to gather intelligence on their movements and clothing. I then have a look at the incidents that have happened over the last 24hrs on my Beats and look at Briefing notes. I also check 'Crimefile' (a system that records crimes) for any new tasks that I may have allocated to me.

08.45 I set off to do some high visible patrols on my bike in the Godmanchester area. I make my first port of call West Street as at this time of the morning there is a high volume of traffic and there is a one-way slip road at this location which frequently causes problems when people ignore the sign!

09.20 I receive a call on my work mobile from the Clerk to the Town Hall in Godmanchester. She has just arrived for work at the Town Hall to see that they have been broken into over night. She is very distressed. As I am only around the corner, I am there within minutes. My first task is to calm the lady so I called one of her work colleagues to join us there. I note down the point of entry and make sure nothing is disturbed in any way. I report to the Force Control Room and request Scenes of Crime Officers.

I also raise a 301 (an incident report form which is faxed through to the Crime Management Unit so they can allocate a crime number) and I take a statement from the Town Clerk. The Town Hall has its own CCTV so I seize the tape for possible evidence.

11.30 I make my way back to Huntingdon Police Station where I fax off the 301 and book the tape into the Property Office.

Then I break for Lunch.

12.30 I set off on my bike again to do more high visible patrols in Godmanchester for two hours.

14.30 I then have a meeting at Pathfinder House in Huntingdon with the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator for Huntingdonshire District Council. Our meeting is about which youths we currently have on ABC's. An ABC is an Acceptable Behaviour Contract used for youths who are found to be persistently acting in an anti social manner. The contract is drawn up between the youth, the parents, the Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator at Huntingdonshire District Council and the Police. It is one step away from an ASBO. The Anti Social Behaviour Co-ordinator and I discuss each ABC individually and decide when to visit each one and review their behaviour.

16.00 hrs I return to Huntingdon Police Station and book myself off on the radio as it's time for me to go home!

So what have the PCSOs been involved in during 2005 – 06?

Here are just a few examples of the type of initiatives that the PCSOs have been involved in:

PCSO Carol Corn at St Neots arranged for a group of older residents to visit Great Staughton School and talk to children about their experiences of when they were younger. The idea behind the 'Ageism' project was to breakdown perceived barriers between young and old and for both young and old to realise that they can live together without feeling intimidated by each other's behaviours. The response to this project from both communities was very positive and Carol is looking to expand it into other schools in the St Neots area.

In the Huntingdon sector two of the Police Community Support Officers recently completed the safety zone week. Over 400 children aged 9 and 10 years attended Huntingdon Fire Station where they took part in a multi-agency interactive safety project. The messages the children received were all about keeping safe both inside and around the home. A similar project was run in Ramsey in November 2005 where again the two local Community Support Officers played a pivotal role.

In St Ives two dispersal areas have been introduced within the town to try and curb anti-social behaviour. It is recognised that in addition to policing these, diversionary activities should also be considered. To that end a football match is being organised between the local police and some of the youngsters that will hope to breakdown some of the barriers. PCSO Drage is also hoping to organise an event for later in the year that involves the youngsters who are car enthusiasts. In addition PCSO Davis has been working with other agencies on improvements to the skateboard park area of St Ives.

Police Community Support Officers by Sector

Sector	Name	Areas Covered	PoliceStation
Huntingdon (Including North Huntingdon Area)	PCSO Joanna Grant	Oxmoor and Hartford	Huntingdon
	PCSO Jessica Drew		Huntingdon
	PCSO Angie Wilson	Huntingdon Town Centre, Old Huntingdon, Stukeley Meadows	Huntingdon
	PCSO Debbie Thorburn	Godmanchester Brampton	Huntingdon
	PCSO Shiralee Freeman		Huntingdon
	PCSO Gill Goodfellow	Yaxley, Farcet, Holme	Yaxley
	PCSO Barry Chamberlain	Stilton, Caldecote, Denton, Norman Cross, Folksworth, Washingley, Morborne, Alwalton, Chesterton, Elton, Sibson, Stibbington, Water Newton, Haddon, Wansford	Yaxley
	PCSO Lindsey Simkin	Abbots Ripton, Alconbury, Alconbury Western, Barham, Woolley, Brington, Molesworth, Buckworth, Bythorn, Keyston, Catworth, Covington, Conington, Easton, Ellington, Glatton, Grafham, Great Gidding, Little Gidding, Hamerton, Kings Ripton, Leighton Bromswold, Old Weston, Sawtry, Spaldwick, Stow Longa, The Stukeleys, Upton, Coppingford, Winwick, Woodwalton	Yaxley
PCSO Gemma Clark	Yaxley		
St Neots	PCSO Reeve	Buckden, Great Paxton, Stirtloe, Diddington, The Offords, Toseland, Yelling, Abbotsley, Waresley, Great Gransden	St Neots
	PCSO Newman		St Neots
	PCSO Davis	Eynesbury, Eynesbury Hardwicke	St Neots
	PCSO Poole		St Neots
	PCSO List	St Neots Town Centre, Priory Beat	St Neots
	PCSO Corn	Kimbolton, Little Paxton, Broughton, Southoe, Midloe, Hail Weston, Great Staughton, Tilbrook, Perry, Dillington	St Neots
PCSO Bachman	Eaton Socon, Eaton Ford	St Neots	
PCSO Cruickshank	Currently on light duties	St Neots	
St Ives and Ramsey	PCSO Tiernan	Ramsey St Marys, Ramsey Heights, Ramsey Forty-Foot, Ramsey Mereside, Pondersbridge, Bury, Great and Little Graveley, Wistow, Upwood	Ramsey
	PCSO Drage	Burleigh Hill estate and Somersham Road Industrial Estate	St Ives
	PCSO Anderson	St Ives Town centre	St Ives
	PCSO Carr		St Ives
	PCSO Docking	Warboys	Ramsey
PCSO Davis	Bluntisham, Colne, Earith, Needingworth, Somersham, Houghton and Wyton, Fenstanton, Hemingford Grey, Hemingford Abbots, Woodhurst, Broughton, Hilton, Oldhurst	St Ives	

**Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership
Quarterly Crime Report Summary (Excerpts)**

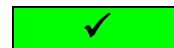
January 2006 to March 2006

Strategy Targets¹ (all by end 2007/08)

Progress

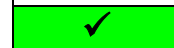
Headline PSA1 Target

- 16% reduction in British Crime Survey Comparator crimes



Vehicle Crime

- 20% reduction in theft of vehicles
- 20% reduction in theft from and vehicle interference
- 10% reduction in malicious fires targeting vehicles



ASB

- 25% reduction in criminal damage
- 5% reduction in people who think that ASB is a 'fairly big' or 'very big' problem
- 10% reduction in other malicious fires



Shop Theft

- 30% reduction in theft from shops



Dwelling Burglary

- 15% reduction in dwelling burglary



Violence Against the Person

- 15% reduction in common assaults and wounding



Domestic Violence

- Increase reporting of domestic violence to the police by 10%
- Decrease the proportion of domestic violence incidents that are repeats to 10%



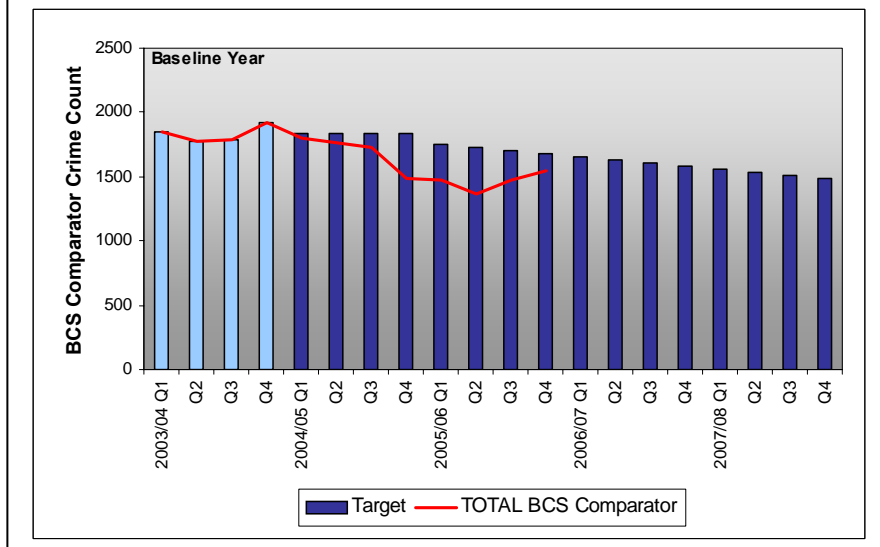
Not available

Key	
CDRP not on track to meet target	X
CDRP Neither significantly on or off track	-
CDRP on track to meet target	✓

AUTHOR:	Debbie West
CONTACT NO:	01480 428095
DATE:	27/04/2006
PRODUCED FOR:	Huntingdonshire CSP

¹ Based upon content of current strategy document

Figure 1: BCS Comparator Crime: Progress Against Target



VEHICLE CRIME

Theft of Vehicles

There has been an 8.9% decrease in the total number of vehicle thefts over the last twelve months, compared to the previous year.

Geographical Analysis:

As noted in previous quarters the Wards of Huntingdon North, Yaxley and Farcet and St Neots Eynesbury remain the hotspot areas for vehicle thefts. The biggest increases since last quarter have been in Yaxley and Farcet, and Huntingdon North, which are both up by 50% compared to the figures for Oct – Dec 2005. From a broader perspective, the Ward average for the whole of Huntingdonshire remains low (2.6 recorded crimes). This suggests that the majority of problems are centred around a few specific wards.

Theft From Vehicle and Vehicle Interference

Over the last quarter Huntingdonshire has experienced a slight increase (8%) in the number of 'Thefts from Vehicles' and Vehicle Interferences' recorded by the police. Overall, however, the Partnership has experienced a reduction of 33% on the baseline year.

Geographical Analysis of Theft From Vehicle and Vehicle Interference:

St Ives East, St Neots Eynesbury and the Huntingdon areas continue to record most incidents. Of particular note are significant increases in Huntingdon North (up 210%) and Huntingdon East (up 91%) compared to the previous quarter. These increases are likely to be related to a recent series of vehicle offences identified by the police in these areas.

Long-term hot spot, St Ives East ward has recorded 17 offences between January and March of this year, this is actually a 43% decrease on the preceding three months. The police have been actively working on crime prevention schemes specifically targeted on vehicle crime hotspots in some of these areas and this may have contributed to these reductions.

THEFT FROM SHOPS

There were 107 'Thefts from Shops' between January and March 2006, bringing the total for the year to 446 recorded offences. This is a 5.3% decrease on the 2004/05 (471 offences). As expected the majority of offences occurred in the wards of Huntingdon West (including the town centre), Huntingdon North and the St Neots' areas of Eynesbury and Priory Park.

DWELLING BURGLARY

There has been an overall reduction in Dwelling Burglaries over the last twelve months of 10.7%, based on the previous year. The greatest reduction has been in 'Distraction Burglaries' with 13 more recorded offences in 2004/05 than 2005/06. This may be a reflection on recent initiatives involving the police and local agencies, aimed specifically at crime prevention and raising public awareness in particularly vulnerable areas.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The changes in ASB incident recording introduced in April 2004 under the National Standards for Incident Recording (NSIR) mean that it is not possible to reliably compare levels of ASB incidents since April 2004 with those recorded before that time. However, based on the figures for January – March 2006, there has been a 14% decrease in recorded ASB since the previous quarter.

Geographical Analysis:

The Wards with the highest incidences of ASB over the last quarter are Huntingdon North, St Neots Eynesbury, St Neots Priory Park and Huntingdon West. This is consistent with previous quarters and with the findings of the Audit.

CRIMINAL DAMAGE

Levels of 'Criminal Damage' have risen again over the last quarter. Over the last three months, almost half of all criminal damage incidents in Huntingdonshire were 'Damage to Vehicles' (334 recorded incidents). This was a 36% rise from the previous quarter.

Geographical Analysis:

The Wards experiencing the highest levels are Yaxley and Farcet (76 counts), St Neots Priory Park (69) and Huntingdon East (55). Eaton Ford (20 to 45) and Ramsey (23 to 44) showed a large increase in number of incidents over the last three months.

VIOLENCE

Recorded assaults and woundings have decreased over the last quarter. When exploring the current twelve-month period against the previous one there has been an overall reduction of 30.2% in 'Violence Against the Person' offences recorded by the police.

Geographical Analysis:

The biggest reduction in the number of Common Assaults and Wounding Offences was in St Neots Eynesbury where the count dropped from 30 between October and December, to 16 (46.7%) in the first three months of 2006. The Ward of Ramsey showed the largest increase with figures rising from 12 to 25 (108.3%) over the same time period.

CABINET & LICENSING COMMITTEE

29 June 2006

LOCAL JUSTICE AREA BOUNDARIES CONSULTATION PAPER (Report by Head of Legal and Estates)

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider whether any comment is required on the proposal that there should be minor changes to the boundaries of the Peterborough, Huntingdonshire and Cambridge Local Justice Areas (LJA's). The proposed changes would have the effect of realigning the LJA boundaries with the Cambridgeshire Police Force divisions, the relevant local authorities and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP's).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In October 2005 Cambridgeshire Constabulary altered some of the boundaries of its three divisions in order to align them with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Huntingdonshire District Council. This meant that the magistrates' courts in Peterborough, Huntingdon and Cambridge were no longer aligned with the police divisions. This has led to an imbalance in workload for the courts. The Cambridgeshire Justices' Issues Group considers that a realignment of the boundaries should improve distribution of workload between the courts, and has requested that a formal consultation in respect of boundary changes is carried out.

3. PROPOSED CHANGES

- 3.1 Yaxley and surrounding villages, to the south and west of Peterborough, would move from the Peterborough LJA to the Huntingdon LJA.
- 3.2 The area around Gamlingay in south Cambridgeshire would move from the Huntingdonshire LJA to the Cambridge LJA.

4. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 From 1st April 2001 s.8 Courts Act 2003 divided England and Wales into LJA's as specified by the Lord Chancellor. Only he may make orders altering LJA's. Before he can make an order various parties must be consulted, one of which is any local authority whose area includes the LJA or part of the LJA. In this case responses are required by 20th June 2006.

5. RECOMMENDATION

Following consultation with Councillor Hansard is recommended that the proposed changes be supported and that this report is noted accordingly. Should any further comment be deemed necessary those representations will be passed on.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Consultation paper outlining the proposals, dated 28th March 2006.

Contact Officer: Vicki Stevens, Solicitor
☎ 01480 388023

**SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP
(Report of the Advisory Group)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Advisory Group met on 14th June 2006 and Councillors J W Davies, A Hansard and K Reynolds were present.
- 1.2 Also in attendance were P Corley, J Craig, P Duerden, Mrs C Rowland and.
- 1.3 The Staff Side representatives in attendance were K Lawson, Mrs G Smith and C Sneesby.
- 1.4 Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor L M Simpson and Mrs T Davidson.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

- 2.1 Councillor K Reynolds was elected Chairman of the Group.
- 2.2 The report of the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 1st March 2006 was received and noted.

3. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

- 3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

- 4.1 K Lawson was elected Vice-Chairman of the Group.

5. ACCIDENT REPORTS

District Council Employees

- 5.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of Personnel Services giving details of 22 accidents and one incident involving employees along with 4 accidents involving non-employees, which had taken place since the previous meeting.
- 5.2 The Group were shown a photograph of the location of the incident No. 1933, where an employee had slipped into a ditch whilst inspecting a grill. The Operations Division representative and the Health and Safety Adviser clarified the policy and procedures for employees undertaking activities of this sort.
- 5.3 The Chairman expressed concern that one of the two physical assaults on employees noted in the report, had resulted in only a caution when the offence appeared fairly serious. The Operations

Division representative confirmed that this issue had been taken up by the Head of Operations who was of the same opinion. The Chairman asked to be kept informed about this matter.

- 5.4 Members were advised that even though both of the physical assault accidents involved employees from the Operations Division, the nature of the work undertaken within the Division unfortunately exposed employees to these sorts of risks; the procedure for response and support to this type of incident was considered appropriate and a pattern with regard to the causes or frequency of physical assault accidents had not been identified.
- 5.5 The Health and Safety Adviser explained the District Council policy and procedure for reporting of verbal abuse.
- 5.6 The Group expressed concern regarding the two incidences of bins falling when attached to the refuse vehicle. The Health and Safety Adviser agreed that a recommendation to the risk assessment and safe working practices for this activity had been made previously by her, to require workers to either take a step back from the bin once it has been attached, or to stand to the side of the vehicle. Subject to agreement with Operations Division, the need for this precautionary action would be emphasised in future “tool box talks” and training activities.
- 5.7 With regard to concerns raised by the Chairman, the Group suggested that those accidents arising in the Operations Division should include a more thorough narrative in the “action taken” column, which in addition to highlighting the need for employees to take care of their own health and safety should include the circumstances of the accident and any preventative measures already in place. The Health and Safety Adviser suggested that once a worker has experienced an accident or incident where a reminder of their own health and safety responsibilities was the outcome, they would be required to attend a “tool box talk” to reinforce this.

Leisure Centre Employees

- 5.8 The Group also received a report by the Leisure Centres’ Health and Safety Co-ordinator containing details of accidents which had been reported at the leisure centres since the last meeting of the Group.

6. FIRE DRILL – 17TH MARCH 2006

- 6.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of Personnel Services giving details of the twice yearly fire drills held in Pathfinder House and Castle Hill House on the 17th March 2006.
- 6.2 The Health and Safety Adviser discussed some of the issues raised as a result of the drill and assured Members that these have been investigated and acted upon.
- 6.3 The Health and Safety Adviser confirmed that any contractors working for the District Council would be required to comply with the

Council's fire protection and prevention procedures as part of their contract.

7. REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER

- 7.1 The Group received a report regarding the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order submitted by the Head of Personnel Services.
- 7.2 The Health and Safety Adviser explained that this Order represents a considerable change to current practice and will require the identification of one "Responsible Person" from the District Council supported by the Health and Safety Adviser in an overseeing or auditing role and a list of identified "Competent Persons" to support the "Responsible Person".
- 7.3 The Chairman questioned the selection of the identified "Competent Persons". In response the Health and Safety Adviser informed the Group that only one individual from the "Competent Persons" required additional suitable Health and Safety training in order to be able to perform this function and the Health and Safety Adviser would be tasked with identifying and monitoring the training needs of "Competent Persons" to ensure these were supported.
- 7.4 The Group were content to endorse the recommendations made in the report submitted.

8. HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING REVIEW

- 8.1 The Group were acquainted by means of a report by the Head of Personnel Services outlining health and safety training courses which had been held since the previous meeting of the Group.
- 8.2 The Health and Safety Adviser confirmed that the training required for the identified "Competent Person" discussed under the Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order (above) would be added to this list. The Group were pleased to note this report on this understanding.

9. SAFETY INSPECTIONS

- 9.1 Arrangements for future inspections of the Council's premises have been agreed and arranged as follows –
- ◆ ad-hoc safety inspection 4th July 2006 – 9.15am – 12 noon;
 - ◆ annual safety inspection – 23rd November 2006 – 9.15am onwards.
- 9.2 In response to a question from the Chairman, the Health and Safety Adviser explained the benefits to the District Council of the safety inspections and other members noted the positive impact these inspections have on their own understanding of the District Council and their Health and Safety awareness.
- 9.2 The Chairman requested future dates for ad-hoc safety inspections be proposed at the next meeting.

K Reynolds
Chairman of the Advisory Group

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank