

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 9 NOVEMBER 2006** at **2:30 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

  
**Contact**  
**(01480)**

## **APOLOGIES**

### **1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 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. HUNTINGDON TOWN CENTRE VISION (Pages 7 - 14)**

By way of a report by the Head of Planning Services to consider the feedback received in response to the Huntingdon Vision Exhibition and to approve general principles to guide future work.

**R Probyn**  
**388430**

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

To consider a report by the Head of Revenue Services summarising the debts written-off during the quarter ended 30th September 2006.

**J Barber**  
**388105**

### **5. SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP (Pages 17 - 20)**

To consider the report of the meeting of the Safety Advisory Group held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**C Bulman**  
**388234**

### **6. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

To resolve:

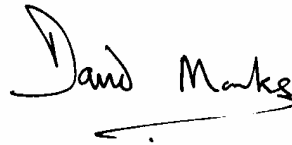
that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the financial affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).

**7. PROPOSED TRANSFER OF LAND AT THE MALTINGS,  
EATON FORD TO ST. NEOTS TOWN COUNCIL (Pages 21 -  
24)**

To consider a report by the Head of Legal and Estates.

**K Phillips  
388260**

Dated this 1 day of November 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 /e-mail: if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Cabinet.**

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

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

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

***Emergency Procedure***

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

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# Agenda Item 1

## HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CABINET held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Thursday, 19 October 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.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs D C Reynolds and T V Rogers.

### **83. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 28th September 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **84. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Mrs Chandler declared a personal interest in Minute No 91 by virtue of her membership of the Muir Group Housing Association Regional Committee.

### **85. TRAVEL PLAN**

The Cabinet received a report by the Head of Technical Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was appended a proposed travel plan for the District Council.

In considering the plan, together with statistical information on employee travel data and in noting the views of the Employment Panel, Employee Liaison Advisory Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support), the Cabinet

#### RESOLVED

- (a) that subject to such minor textual amendments to the document as may be approved by the Head of Technical Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillor for Environment and Transport, the District Council Travel Plan be approved for publication; and
- (b) that the promotion of car sharing, the introduction of a cycle to work scheme and the use of pool cars as detailed in paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of the report be approved; and
- (c) that the proposed use of virement among existing

budgets to fund capital and revenue expenditure in 2006/07 as set out in paragraph 10 of the report be approved;

**86. GROWING SUCCESS - CORPORATE PLAN UPDATE**

By way of a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with progress in updating the Council's Corporate Plan.

Having noted the findings of a joint working group established by the Overview and Scrutiny Panels to undertake a detailed review of the plan and associated objectives and targets, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that progress in the review of the Corporate Plan be noted.

**87. MONITORING OF THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2006/07**

By means of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) and having been acquainted with variations in the Capital Programme in the current year, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the report be received and the expenditure variations and capital and revenue impact noted; and
- (b) that the position with regard to individual schemes as set out in Annex A to the report now submitted be noted.

**88. FINANCIAL MONITORING - REVENUE BUDGET**

The Cabinet received and noted a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) detailing expected budget variation already identified in the current year.

RESOLVED

that the spending variations estimated in the revenue budget as at 11th October 2006 be noted.

**89. MEDIUM TERM PLAN - REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS**

By way of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a request for the release of funding for a Medium Term Plan scheme.

Having considered the scheme involved, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the relevant funding be released to support the establishment of a new post of Environmental Health and Safety (Housing) Officer.

**90. PLANNING SERVICES - PROPOSED COMMUNITY LIAISON AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

With the aid of a joint report by the Heads of Planning Services, of Policy and of Information Management Divisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered the content of the Community Liaison Engagement Strategy aimed at enhancing the integrity, visibility, accessibility and inclusiveness of the planning process.

In discussing the eight actions identified in the Strategy, Members' attention was drawn to terms for the introduction of public speaking at Development Control Panel meetings which would be considered further at the meeting of full Council on 6th December 2006. Having noted the Royal Town Planning Institute's Guidelines on "Effective Community Involvement and Consultation", the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the Community Liaison Engagement Strategy for Planning Services, as appended in the report now submitted, be approved.

**91. CAMBRIDGE SUB REGION CHOICE BASED LETTINGS SCHEME**

Further to Minute No. 06/18 and by way of a report by the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were updated on progress with the introduction of a sub regional Choice Based Lettings scheme.

Having noted details of the District Council's involvement and the requirement for a partnership agreement between the parties involved, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that progress on the introduction of the Choice Based Lettings scheme be noted; and
- (b) that the Head of Housing Services be authorised to continue with negotiations to establish a Choice Based Lettings scheme throughout the Cambridge Sub-Region and to present updates as necessary to Cabinet.

**92. THE NOTTINGHAM DECLARATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

By way of a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with progress on the development of a community-wide Environmental Strategy and priorities relating to the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.

In considering the contents of the report, Executive Councillors noted the requirement for authorities subscribing to the Declaration to commit to the preparation of a two year action plan with the aim of

addressing, progressively, the causes and impacts of climate change. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the schedule proposed for submitting the Environment Strategy to Cabinet in January 2007 be noted; and
- (b) that the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive be authorised to sign the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change on behalf of the District Council.

**93. DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT:  
HUNTINGDONSHIRE DESIGN GUIDE**

With the aid of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet received a draft Design Guide aimed at improving the quality and distinctiveness of Huntingdonshire's environment.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the draft supplementary planning document, "The Huntingdonshire Design Guide", be approved as a basis for public consultation; and
- (b) that the Head of Planning Services be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Strategy, to make any minor consequential amendments to the text and illustrations arising from the sustainability appraisal, prior to the issue of the document for public consultation.

**94. HUNTINGDONSHIRE LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE  
ASSESSMENT**

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached a draft copy of the Supplementary Planning Document, "The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment".

Having noted the main aims and objectives of the document, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the draft Supplementary Planning Document, "The Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment be approved as a basis for public consultation; and
- (b) that the Head of Planning Services be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Strategy, to make any consequential amendments to the text and illustrations arising from the sustainability appraisal, prior to the issue of the document for public



consultation.

**95. ST NEOTS CONSERVATION AREA: REVIEW, CHARACTER ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Further to Minute No. 06/49, the Cabinet considered a report by the Planning Policy Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the responses received to the consultation on the Boundary Review, Character Statement and Management Plan for the St. Neots Conservation Area and suggested amendments as a consequence thereof.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the St. Neots Conservation Area be designated according to the boundary in the St. Neots Boundary Review document without modification;
- (b) that the revised St. Neots Conservation Area Assessment, as amended to reflect the content of the Annex to the report now submitted, be approved;
- (c) that the Management Plan for the St. Neots Conservation Area be approved as a set of proposals for the enhancement of the area and as the basis for further discussion and project work; and
- (d) that the Head of Planning Services be authorised, after consultation with the Executive Member for Planning Strategy, to make any minor consequential amendment to the text and illustrations as a result of the amendments referred to in (b) above.

**96. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED

that the public be excluded from the meeting because the business to be transacted contains exempt information relating to the financial affairs of particular persons (including the authority holding that information) and/or information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.

**97. SALE OF LAND FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT CRANFIELD WAY, BUCKDEN**

By way of a joint report by the Heads of Legal and Estates and the Head of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book), the Cabinet considered proposed terms for the transfer of Council-owned land at Cranfield Way, Buckden to the Nene Housing Society for the purpose of providing affordable housing.

While endorsing the principle of disposal of the land in question, Executive Councillors expressed the view that issues associated with the tenure of the affordable housing to be provided on the site and the

terms of any future disposals to tenants under the right to acquire would benefit from further clarification in conjunction with the Leader and Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy. Accordingly, it was

RESOLVED

that the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy, be authorised to approve terms for the sale of land at Cranfield Way, Buckden to the Nene Housing Society.

**98. UNIT 10, GLEBE ROAD, ST PETER'S INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, HUNTINGDON**

Further to item No. 06/36, the Cabinet considered a joint report by the Head of Legal and Estates and the Director of Commerce and Technology (a copy of which is appended in the Annex to the Minute Book) regarding a request to purchase the freehold of a factory unit at 10 Glebe Road, St. Peter's Industrial Estate, Huntingdon. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the Director of Central Services, after consultation with the Executive Councillors for Resources and Policy and for Finance be authorised to approve terms for the sale of the Council's freehold interest in Unit 10, Glebe Road, Huntingdon and the re-investment of the proceeds in an industrial/commercial property which is likely to yield an equivalent return.

Chairman

CABINET

9<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2006

## HUNTINGDON TOWN CENTRE VISION – FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC CONSULTATION (Report by Head of Planning Services )

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to outline the feedback received in respect of the Vision Exhibitions and to agree a set of general principles to guide the evolving work on the economic and car parking strategies, future MTP bids relating to the town centre, and the Local Development Framework.

### 2. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Exhibitions were held in Huntingdon and Godmanchester on five days in the middle of September to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the document. They were well attended and nearly 200 questionnaires were completed. The analysis of the data is set out below and a copy of the questionnaire is included in the appendix.

### 3. PROFILE OF THOSE COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRES

- 77% live in Huntingdon or Godmanchester
  - 29% work in Huntingdon or Godmanchester
  - 57% were males and 43% females
  - 25% were under 50 years old
  - 43% were between 50-64years
  - 41% worked full time and 41% were retired
- 3.1 The highest percentage of people came from the Hinchingsbrooke area, Ermine Street, Mill Common, Hartford Road and Post Street. This may indicate that the main point of interest was the potential removal of the viaduct for those in Post Street, Mill Common and Ermine Street. The issues relating to the future of the Riverside Park and the car parking proposal may have attracted those living in the Hartford Road area. It may also have been the pertinent issue regarding the future of the hospital that attracted those from the Hinchingsbrooke area.

### 4. MAIN ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 84% supported or strongly supported the provision of more shops and places to eat and drink
- 41% supported or strongly supported the provision of more houses
- 74% supported or strongly supported more car parking
- 90% supported or strongly supported improved public transport services and hubs at the station and town centre

- 89% supported or strongly supported the removal of through traffic from the ring road in association with the viaduct coming down
- 95% supported or strongly supported further environmental improvements and protection of heritage
- 90% supported or strongly supported better access into and within the town for pedestrians and cyclists
- 86% supported or strongly supported improvements to green spaces and better linkages between them
- 78% supported or strongly supported the idea of removing the A14 viaduct

4.1 There appears to be overwhelming public support for more shops and places to eat, improved public transport, removal of through traffic from ring road, environmental improvements and protection of heritage, better access for pedestrians and cyclists and, improvements to green spaces.

4.2 Car parking and the viaduct were the principal issues on which counter arguments were raised resulting in a lower support than the average.

4.3 In carrying out a cross tabulation between those who live and those who work, with how strongly they feel the need for more car parking to serve the town centre it is interesting to note that 71% of those living in the towns supported more car parking but only 63% of those working in the towns supported more car parking.

4.4 Several written comments have also been received in addition to the comment boxes that were filled in. The principal comments are summarised below.

- Losing the flyover will make straightforward journeys to Peterborough more difficult for those living in Godmanchester. The road configuration when the viaduct comes down and resulting congestion may make it more difficult for residents of Buckden, Brampton and other villages in the west to reach the Hinchingbrooke area and the town centre
- There must be more suitable places to put car parking than the Riverside Park which should be protected as open space. Has Mill Common and Stanton Way been considered?
- Has a scheme for Park and Ride or park and walk for long stay vehicles been considered?
- Improve traffic routing to Chequers Court car park and increase the car park by decking it with 2-3 decks
- Relocate ATS from the ring road as other uses in this area would be more appropriate

- Ensure that a successful redevelopment takes place in the town centre before development is allowed to take place beyond the ring road

4.5 From the comment boxes the following comments have been gleaned:-

**Car parking:** 56 people commented on parking, with a total of 91 comments:

- 35 comments were requests for more car parking. As well as 5 general requests for more parking there were a wide range of options given for how and where this should be done. These were multi-storey car parks (8 comments in favour), out-of-town car parking (5), town centre parking (2), underground parking (2), more short-stay parking (1), residents-only parking (1), shoppers-only parking (1), workers-only parking (2), car parks on brownfield sites (1), increased parking at the train station (1), ensuring new developments include sufficient parking (3), out-of-hours car parking at Pathfinder House (2) and using the redundant A14 as a car park (1);
- 29 comments said car parks should not be built at the Riverside or green spaces generally, although many of those saying this also wanted more car parking;
- 18 comments relating to Park & Ride schemes. Of these 16 were in favour and 2 were against. The reasons for these two comments were that 'people like to park in the town, not out of town' and that 'big name shops' were needed before a Park & Ride scheme would be used to get into Huntingdon.

**Green spaces:** there were 42 comments about these. More than three-quarters of these also related to car parking (32). All 42 comments wanted green spaces left alone or improved.

**Retail:** 16 people commented on retail in Huntingdon. 5 comments requested more shops generally, 6 were for more independent shops, 1 was for more 'big name' shops, 1 was for new shops as long as Huntingdon remains a 'market town' and 1 was for less estate agents. There were also two comments against a new shopping area away from the town centre and two comments blaming closure of shops on increasing rents and rates.

**Public transport:** 15 comments related to public transport (excluding Park & Ride schemes). 3 comments requested general improvements to public transport, 5 related to improvements to bus services, 5 comments were about encouraging use of public transport and 2 were about integrating rail and bus services. There were 8 comments about the Guided Bus scheme, all opposed to it. Reasons given for this were cost, expected use and loss of green space.

**Cycle paths/pedestrian footpaths:** A general comment was that the town centre needs to be more cycle and pedestrian friendly and better links between the town centre and outlying housing areas. 11 comments were made requesting more cycle paths or footpaths: 1 requesting better lighting for footpaths; 1 requesting improved access

for cyclists and pedestrians at the train station; 1 comment highlighting the 'downside' of reduced green spaces by providing paths, and; 1 requesting split cycle paths and footpaths due to the 'danger' of mixing cyclists and pedestrians. Several comments were made regarding this issue if the viaduct came down. 1 saying access around busier Hinchingsbrooke junction would have to be improved and 1 saying the old bridge at Godmanchester should be pedestrianised.

**Housing:** there were 7 comments about housing. 6 of these said too much housing was proposed or infrastructure/parking needs to be in place before additional housing is built.

**Removal of viaduct:** There were 28 comments which were generally positive about the scheme, most of which stated that they supported the removal of the viaduct. 3 comments were against the viaduct being removed. 2 people commented that their journey times/distances would increase. There were 2 comments saying that the plans will lead to disruption. 29 comments were made about congestion. 3 said that there would be less congestion as a result of the viaduct being removed and the new link roads while 21 thought that the congestion would remain the same or get worse. 4 said that the scheme must ensure that congestion is reduced. 7 comments (which relate to appearance) all support removal of viaduct. There were 7 comments about noise. 5 of these said that noise will get worse, 1 said it will get better. There were 5 comments about pollution, with 3 saying the problem will stay the same or get worse, 1 saying the scheme should aim not to lead to more.

## 5. POINTS OF PRINCIPLE

5.1 The following points of principle have been distilled from the written comments and verbal comments made at the exhibition venues. If supported they will help the Council to develop and direct its policies and to come to decisions in a number of areas of current involvement:

- acceptance that car parking for long stay (commuter parking) should generally be provided outside the existing defined town centre
- charging regime suggested for free car parks as there needs to be a control mechanism
- park and ride/walk must be considered particularly as County Council and HDC offices will have less car parking in the future – some loss provided for by additional public space provided at Godmanchester depot July 2007. Are the County considering options?
- more attention given to targeting of specific improvements to walking and cycling routes with particular reference to routes from car parks and housing areas and crossings of the ring road to link with the town centre
- need for more short stay in existing town centre to maintain economic viability ( shoppers and visitors) and better access to them from the ring road – this points to Chequers court and Princes' Street and the need to increase car park capacity in

those areas . Sainsbury control their own car park and therefore phasing of any redevelopment must avoid loss of spaces during construction

- urgent discussions needed with train operating company as there is concern over station car parking and the spill over of car parking into residential streets
- important that ATS situated at the junction of the ring road and Hartford Road is relocated and this land included as part of the retail development strategy for the town centre
- other options for locating car parks need to be considered before a decision on extending the car park at Riverside Park
- must have clear budget arrangements for improvement to Riverside Park before any alterations to that open space
- in short-term work to develop west of town centre master plan to ascertain quantum of development and impact on junctions. Impact of existing parking on Ermine Street also to be considered
- acceptance of the benefits that will accrue with the viaduct coming down and assistance it will give in the implementation of vision and improved access to and from Huntingdon centre
- acceptance that the town centre needs larger retail spaces and must happen in existing town centre in next three years otherwise pressure on other sites beyond ring road will materialise

## **6. RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 That members note the comments made regarding the Vision and endorse the points of general principle as outlined in Section 5.

**Contact Officer: Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager**  
**☎ 01480388430**

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## LOOK WHAT COULD BE HAPPENING IN AN EXPANDED HUNTINGDON TOWN CENTRE IN THE FUTURE!

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE MAIN PROPOSALS?

	Strongly Support	Support	No Opinion	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
The provision of new shops and more places to eat and drink	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The provision of more houses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More car parking to serve the town centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improved public transport services and hubs at the station and town centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The removal of through traffic and pollution from the ring road in association with the viaduct coming down	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Further environmental improvements and protection of Huntingdonshire's heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Better access into and within the town for pedestrians and cyclists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Improvements to green spaces and better linkages from the riverside through the town to Hinchingsbrooke	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please use the space below to make any other comments.

In relation to the A14 viaduct, how do you feel about the proposal to remove it?

Strongly Support	Support	No Opinion	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you have any additional comments about the removal of the viaduct and in particular the new road links that will be needed?

Please help us to analyse these responses by telling us a little bit about yourself:

Gender Male  Female

Age Under 20 years  20-34yrs  35-49yrs  50-64yrs  65yrs and over

Working Full time  Part time  Not working  Retired  Student  Other

Do you live in Huntingdon or Godmanchester? Yes  No

If yes your street name \_\_\_\_\_

Do you work in Huntingdon or Godmanchester? Yes  No

If yes the street name \_\_\_\_\_

If you wish to leave us your name and full address please do so :-

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CABINET

9 November 2006

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

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Head of Revenue Services, or in her absence the Head of Financial Services is authorised to write-off debts with an individual value of up to £4,000, or of a greater amount after consultation with the Executive Councillor, having taken appropriate steps to satisfy herself that the debts are irrecoverable or cannot be recovered without incurring disproportionate costs. A summary, detailing debts written-off, shall be submitted to the cabinet quarterly.
- 1.2 The summary of debts written-off during the quarter ended 30 September 2006 and during the 2006/07 financial year, is shown below with the comparative amount for the previous financial year shown in brackets.
- 1.3 Whilst these amounts have been written-off in this period of the 2006/07 financial year, much of the original debt would have been raised in previous financial years as the table at 4 demonstrates.

### 2. WRITE-OFFS UP TO £4,000

Approved by the Head of Revenue Services

Type of Debt	In Quarter		Financial Year Total		
	No. of Cases	Amount £	No. of Cases	Amount £	Previous Year (£)
Council Tax	113	16,084.96	422	98,754.22	(64,896.28)
NNDR	17	1,845.06	42	22,935.43	(27,545.85)
Sundry Debtors	10	3,825.79	57	17,873.42	(21,373.35)
Excess Charges	0	0	67	2,590.00	(5,836.18)

- 2.1 The write-off of Excess Charge debts in this quarter has been delayed due a high level of appeal and recovery activity coupled with staff leave.

### 3. WRITE-OFFS OVER £4,000

Agreed by the Executive Councillor

Approved by the Head of Revenue Services

Type of Debt	In Quarter		Financial Year Total		
	No. of Cases	Amount £	No. of Cases	Amount £	Previous Year (£)
NNDR	2	9,592.66	5	144,902.54	(47,349.29)
Sundry Debtors	0	0.00	0	0.00	(15,303.82)

- 3.1 In this quarter one NNDR case, valued at over £4,000, was written off after the company ceased trading and had no assets. The other was written off as a result of bankruptcy.

#### 4. DATE ANALYSIS

Year of Debt	Council Tax (£)	NNDR (£)	Sundry Debtors (£)	Excess Charges (£)
Pre 98/99	723.01	216.61	2,021.56	0.00
1998/99	651.34	0.63	0.00	0.00
1999/00	344.43	0.21	1,835.44	0.00
2000/01	4,361.29	331.43	45.00	0.00
2001/02	7,067.75	435.04	1,119.81	0.00
2002/03	12,215.97	1.33	1,909.70	0.00
2003/04	20,365.34	87,851.70	4,843.47	0.00
2004/05	27,589.94	48,845.57	3,278.20	0.00
2005/06	24,019.40	28,466.10	2,820.23	2,590.00
2006/07	1,415.75	1,689.35	0.01	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>98,754.22</b>	<b>167,837.97</b>	<b>17,873.42</b>	<b>2,590.00</b>

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS

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

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

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

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Advisory Group met on 13th September 2006 and Councillors A Hansard, K Reynolds (Chairman) and L M Simpson were present.
- 1.2 Also in attendance were P Corley, P J Duerden, N Martlew, A Stewart and Mrs C Rowland.
- 1.3 The Staff Side representatives in attendance were K Lawson and C Sneesby.
- 1.4 Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J W Davies and Mrs D Collins, Mr S Richardson, Mrs T Davidson and Mrs G Smith.

**2. REPORT OF THE ADVISORY GROUP**

- 2.1 The report of the meeting of the Advisory Group held on the 14th June 2006 was received and noted.

**3. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

- 3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

**4. AD-HOC SAFETY REPORT: 4TH JULY 2006**

- 4.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of Administration outlining the observations and comments made by the Group during an ad-hoc inspection of the Swimming Pool and Impressions Fitness Suite at Huntingdon Leisure Centre on the 4th July 2006. The Group acknowledged that, overall, the findings of the inspection had been very positive and demonstrated that the facilities were well managed.

**5. VIOLENCE AT WORK**

- 5.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of HR & Payroll Services outlining 7 incidents of "violence at work" at the District Council since the preparation of the last report in March 2004. The Group noted that, overall, there had been a reduction in the number of recorded incidents.
- 5.2 Following a meeting of a working group that morning, the Health & Safety Adviser acquainted the Group with progress achieved in the creation of a Violent Incident Register, such that details of certain more serious violent incidents would soon be made available to District Council employees via the Council's intranet and possibly the GIS system. The creation of a register had been delayed because of concerns surrounding the Council's compliance with the Data Protection Act and the aggressor's human rights.

- 5.3 Arising from concerns expressed by Members that aggressors' names could be removed from the register if the violence ceased, the Group were informed that, whilst this was possible, a stringent management regime for reviewing the register was required to be introduced to deal with this and other issues.
- 5.4 In considering the mechanism by which aggressors' details would be included on the register, Members noted that this was subject to Data Protection and Human Rights legislation. A senior officer within the organisation should be nominated to oversee the process undertaken by a small team of officers who would determine the inclusion and removal of violent incidents via a risk assessment process. A report on the progress this project would be submitted to the Group's next meeting.
- 5.5 Whilst Members had expressed concern in relation to one incident at the Leisure Centres when a decision was taken not to involve the Police, it was subsequently acknowledged, in the light of a detailed account of the incident, that Police attendance was not appropriate in the circumstances. The Group has recommended that in future incidents the Police should be involved where possible.

## **6. ANNUAL ACCIDENT REPORTS**

### **(a) District Council Employees**

- 6.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of HR & Payroll Services summarising and comparing accident data and statistics for 2005/6 compared to previous years. In so doing, the Group noted that the total number of accidents across the Council had risen by 15 when compared to the previous year although all injuries had been of a minor nature. The Group's attention was also drawn to trends demonstrated in accidents over the year.
- 6.2 In expressing their disappointment at the increase, Members suggested that consideration may need to be given to an increase in expenditure on Health & Safety training or the introduction of "drip feed" sessions to reinforce the safety culture to employees. The Group noted that the Head of Operations had asked the Health & Safety Adviser to provide a number of tool box sessions to employees at the Depot. In the ensuing discussions, Members acknowledged that it was difficult to establish whether the figures were being skewed by an increase in the number of accidents being reported, particularly in the light of efforts being made by the Council to promote the reporting of accidents by employees.
- 6.3 Having acknowledged the need to keep a watchful eye on the situation and in discussing the best means of presenting information to them, the Group asked the Health & Safety Adviser to incorporate ratios in future reports detailing the number of accidents per 100 employees, both in total and by Directorate.

**(b) Leisure Centre Staff**

- 6.4 A report by the Leisure Centres' Health & Safety Co-ordinator detailing the results of the annual accident summary at Leisure Centres also was presented. In so doing, the Group noted a similar increase in the total number of accidents involving employees but a reduction in frequency when compared to the previous year with 18 out of a total of 33 being of a minor nature. The Group was pleased to note the year on year reduction in the number of non employee related accidents.

**7. ACCIDENT REPORTS**

**(a) District Council Employees**

- 7.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of HR & Payroll Services giving details of 23 accidents and 1 incident involving employees, together with 2 accidents and 1 incident involving non employees which had taken place since the previous meeting. The Group were pleased to note that the comments in the 'action taken' column now provided a much more detailed account of the circumstances in each case.
- 7.2 In considering the contents of the report, Members commented upon the number of incidents involving refuse workers and suggested that consideration might need to be given to devoting more resources to the Operations Division. Suggestions were made about the need for regular training sessions in this area to try to persuade all employees to think safer. Having noted that employees at the Depot were encouraged to report all incidents, Members suggested that this ought not to be discouraged as this would represent a backwards move but the situation should continue to be monitored and a technique of "drip feed" training implemented.
- 7.3 In respect of injuries involving animals, the Health & Safety Adviser agreed to consider the inclusion of some of these on the Violent Incident Register.

**(b) Leisure Centre Employees**

- 7.4 The Group also received a report by the Leisure Centres' Health & Safety Co-ordinator detailing accidents which had been reported at the Leisure Centres since the last meeting.
- 7.5 In considering the specific accidents within the report, the Group has noted that the booking system at the Huntingdon Centre had been reviewed so there would be no future incidences of table tennis tables being carried upstairs.

**8. HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING**

- 8.1 The Group were acquainted by means of a report by the Head of HR & Payroll Services outlining health and safety training courses which had been held since the previous meeting of the Group.
- 8.2 In considering the format of the report the Group discussed whether it still required information to highlight where training needs had been

identified but not yet carried out. It was generally concluded that Members were happy to receive the statistics across the organisation as a whole in future reports.

- 8.3 The Group discussed the provision of Health & Safety induction training for new starters and expressed concerns about the need to provide this training, which was compulsory in a timely manner. Concerns were also expressed that the Health & Safety Adviser was the only resource available for the formal Corporate Health & Safety Induction and it was suggested that this could be a potential role for the Health & Safety Co-ordinators. Having acknowledged that specific Health & Safety training must be provided before the commencement of duties in high risk activities, the Group expressed their concerns that in other areas of the Council it could not be guaranteed that employees would receive a basic level of Health & Safety awareness within a two month period. In response to particular concerns raised concerning temporary and agency staff, the Health & Safety Adviser agreed to look into the situation.
- 8.4 The Group requested a report to be prepared on the Health & Safety induction system for consideration at a future meeting to address the issues identified.

## **9. PROVISION OF HEALTH & SAFETY INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING**

- 9.1 The Group considered a report by the Unison Safety Officer seeking their support for a review and evaluation of the existing arrangements for the provision of instruction, training and supervision for those workers for whom English is not their first language. If necessary, the report proposed the provision of resources in their first language.
- 9.2 Having endorsed the contents of the report, the Group agreed that consideration as to how best means to progress this work should be undertaken by the Health & Safety Adviser, Mr K Lawson and Mr A Stewart with a further report to be submitted to a future meeting of the Advisory Group.
- 9.3 The Group agreed that this subject also should be considered for inclusion in a future workplace inspection.

## **10. PROPOSED FUTURE AD-HOC SAFETY INSPECTION DATES**

- 10.1 The Group suggested the following dates for an ad-hoc safety inspection in October -
- ◆ 16th October 2006 – morning:
  - ◆ 18th October 2006 – all day

(Subsequently the inspection was rescheduled for 9am on 25th October 2006.)

K Reynolds  
Chairman of the Advisory Group



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