

A meeting of the **CABINET** will be held in **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 3TN** on **THURSDAY, 5 APRIL 2007** at **11:30 AM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

  
**Contact  
(01480)**

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

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2007

**Mrs H J 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. INTERIM PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT** (Pages 7 - 12)

To consider a report by the Head of Planning seeking approval for the Council's Interim Planning Policy Statement.

**S Ingram  
388400**

**4. GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME** (Pages 13 - 28)

To consider a report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services seeking approval for the Council's Gender Equality Scheme.

**I Leatherbarrow  
388005**

**5. MEDIUM TERM PLAN: REQUEST FOR THE RELEASE OF FUNDS** (Pages 29 - 34)

By way of a report by the Head of Financial Services to consider a request for the release of funding for the flexible working project.

**S Couper  
388103**

**6. 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 acquisition or disposal of property.

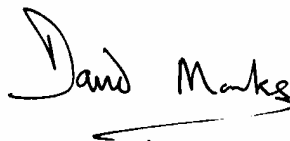
**7. DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND**

To consider reports by the Head of Legal and Estates regarding the disposal of Council owned land at:

**K Phillips  
388260**

- (a) **PRIORY PARK, ST. NEOTS** (Pages 35 - 38)
- (b) **STUKELEY ROAD, HUNTINGDON** (Pages 39 - 42)
- (c) **WESTWOOD ROAD, ST. IVES** (Pages 43 - 46)

Dated this 28 day of March 2007



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.**

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

If you would like a translation of

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

***Emergency Procedure***

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

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## 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, 15 March 2007.

PRESENT: Councillor I C Bates – Chairman.

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

APOLOGY: An Apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor A Hansard.

### **166. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 22nd February 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **167. MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

Councillor Mrs P J Longford declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Minute No. 174 by virtue of being a smoker and left the Chamber for the duration of the discussion and voting thereon.

### **168. CORPORATE EQUALITY POLICY AND ACTION PLAN**

By way of a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), the Cabinet was invited to consider the content of a draft Corporate Equality Policy, together with an associated action plan required to attain Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

Having noted the Policy's main aims and objectives, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the content of the draft Corporate Equality Policy and associated Action Plan be approved.

### **169. MEDIUM TERM PLAN - HOUSING MARKET ASSESSMENT:REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDING**

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 from the Medium Term Plan as the Council's contribution towards commissioning an assessment of housing needs in the Cambridgeshire Sub-Region.

Having been advised that the findings of the assessment would inform and support the Council's Housing Strategy and Planning Policies, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

that the release of funding in respect of the Council's contribution towards the cost of an assessment of housing needs in the Cambridge Sub-Region be approved.

**170. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME: UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 06/160 and by means of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered a proposal to withdraw the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and submit a revised Local Development Scheme, incorporating an updated timetable for delivery of the LDF and Development Control Policy documents to the Secretary of State.

The Cabinet noted that changes to the Core Strategy had been recommended by Go-East and the Planning Inspectorate to reflect the latest emerging guidance regarding the spatial content of the document. Having acknowledged the need for an Interim Planning Policy Statement to provide a framework for continuity of the development control function in the meantime, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the revised Local Development Scheme, appended to the report now submitted, be approved for submission to the Secretary of State;
- (b) that the Head of Planning Services be authorised to request the Secretary of State via Go-East to withdraw the submitted Core Strategy Development Plan document; and
- (c) that the need to adopt an Interim Planning Policy Statement to provide for effective continuity in terms of the development control function be noted.

**171. USE OF COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDERS (CPOS) TO ACQUIRE RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY**

By way of a report by the Head of Environmental and Community Health and of Housing Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet considered the principle of invoking compulsory purchase powers to acquire long-term vacant residential properties where there appeared to be no other prospect of them being brought back into residential use.

Having considered the content of the report, the financial implications associated with acquiring property and the recommended procedure to be followed, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Director of Operational Services be authorised to appoint Environmental Health Officers and Environmental Health Enforcement Officers to exercise the powers of entry set out in Section 54 of the Housing Act 1985 and Section 15 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 for the purpose of survey or examination to determine if Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers should be exercised or progressed;
- (b) that further reports be submitted to Cabinet as necessary addressing those properties considered suitable for compulsory purchase, the case for compulsory purchase, the statement of reasons and a draft CPO;
- (c) that the Head of Environment and Community Health Services be authorised to submit orders approved by Cabinet to the Secretary of State for confirmation and then to complete the CPO procedure;
- (d) that the Head of Housing Services be requested to seek a developer prepared to take over any property acquired by CPO from the Council at the established market value and to transfer ownership on those terms; and
- (e) that the cost of a CPO procedure, estimated at £21.6k per property, be funded from the Repairs Assistance budget subject to a maximum of two acquisitions per annum.

**172. TOWARDS A CAR PARKING STRATEGY FOR THE MARKET TOWNS**

With the aid of a report by the Head of Planning Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the findings of a review of the contents of the Huntingdonshire Car Parking Strategy 2005-2016 undertaken by the Council's consultants, Steer Davies Gleave (SDG).

In discussing the key recommendations made by SDG, the Cabinet acknowledged the importance of developing a tailored approach to future car parking needs based on the specific requirements of individual market towns rather than the current generic district-wide approach. Furthermore, Members recognised that certain issues should be investigated further to alleviate parking problems in town centres including the viability of park and rides schemes, better signage and the management of disabled parking. Having also been acquainted with the deliberations of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) on the matter, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the findings of the consultant's study be noted;
- (b) that a formal Car Parking Strategy and action plan be developed for consideration by the Cabinet;
- (c) that a Members' Car Parking Working Group comprising five Conservative, one Liberal Democrat and one Independent Member, be established to develop and recommend a district-wide car parking strategy and action plan; and
- (d) that nominations for membership of the Working Group referred to in the preceding resolution be made via party groups and that the Chief Executive be authorised to make the appointments.

**173. HEALTH ACT, 2006: SMOKING**

With the assistance of reports by the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services (copies of which are appended in the Minute Book) the Cabinet were acquainted with the requirements of the Health Act 2006 ("the Act") in terms of prohibiting smoking in public places and the consequential enforcement and other implications for the District Council.

Members were informed that from 1st July 2007 the Act would prohibit smoking in virtually all enclosed public places and workplaces in England. To ensure the successful implementation of the legislation a comprehensive programme of education and an enforcement framework would be required along with the requirement for authorised officers to undertake the enforcement duties. In discussing the associated financial implications, Members' attention was drawn to the grant award of approximately £80,431 from the Department of Health for undertaking such duties in the first year. Having expressed concern about funding for the new duties in the longer term, the Cabinet

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services and the Director of Operational Services be authorised to appoint suitably qualified, experienced and trained officers to carry out duties arising under the Act and associated regulations;
- (b) that the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services and the Director of Operational Services be authorised, after consultation with the relevant Executive Councillor, to institute legal proceedings for contravention of the Act and its associated Regulations;
- (c) that funding received from the Department of Health as outlined in Paragraph 6 of the report now submitted be welcomed to support the Council's implementation and



enforcement of the Act;

- (d) that appropriate representations regarding the potential financial impact of implementing the legislation in the longer term be made to the Local Government Association and the Members of Parliament for the Huntingdon and North West Cambridgeshire Constituencies; and
- (e) that the Head of Environmental and Community Health Services be requested to report further to the Cabinet in January, 2008 on progress in implementing and enforcing the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

Chairman

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**CABINET  
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PANEL  
COUNCIL**

**5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2007  
18<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2007  
18<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2007**

## **ADOPTION OF INTERIM PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT (Report by Head of Planning Services)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request that the Cabinet recommends to Council that they adopt the attached Interim Planning Policy Statement.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 As Members' will be aware the Council has had to, on the advice of the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspectorate, request that it's Submitted Core Strategy be withdrawn.
- 2.2 Accordingly, having regard to the fact that the adopted Development Plan is somewhat dated, it is considered vital that this Interim Planning Policy Statement be adopted in order to provide for effective continuity of decision making pending the resubmission of the Council's updated Development Plan Documents.

### **3. THE INTERIM PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT**

- 3.1 Attached for Members' information is a copy of the proposed Interim Planning Policy Statement. In essence it is intended to clarify that the Council, acting in respect of its role as the Local Planning Authority, will be adopting, and therefore taking into account in respect of its decision making processes, the relevant saved policies from the current Development Plan, already adopted supplementary planning policy guidance and the specifically identified policies from the (withdrawn) Core Strategy. It is considered that the combination of these three inter-related areas of policy guidance will create a suitably robust interim policy position.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 That the Cabinet recommends that Council adopts, for Development Control and other related decision making purposes, the attached Interim Planning Policy Statement

#### **Background Papers:**

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995  
The Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002  
The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003  
The Huntingdonshire Submitted Core Strategy 2006 (withdrawn)

**CONTACT OFFICER** - enquiries about this report to Steve Ingram, Head of Planning Services, on 01480 388400.

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## **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **INTERIM PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT**

The Secretary of State has recommended that the submitted Huntingdonshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document, April 2006, be withdrawn in order to enhance its spatial content and therefore its overall soundness. Huntingdonshire District Council has resolved to accept this recommendation and to request that the Secretary of State formally withdraws that document.

Therefore the Development Plan for Huntingdonshire remains as:

- The Huntingdonshire Local Plan 1995
- The Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration 2002
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003
- The Cambridgeshire Aggregates (Minerals) Local Plan 1991
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Local Plan 2003

Specific saved policies from these adopted Structure and Local Plans will retain their status until they are replaced by adopted new Development Plan Documents. The Huntingdonshire Local Development Scheme, March 2007, in Appendix 2 outlines the basis of these saved policies and notes their relationship to the emerging new policy areas whilst Appendix 3 clarifies which supplementary planning policy guidance will also remain material.

The Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the East of England is also at an advanced stage of preparation with its formal adoption programmed for July 2007 (at which point it will also become part of the Development Plan).

In order to maintain an appropriate and up to date local planning policy framework (for development control and other planning decision making purposes) the Council, acting in respect of its role as the Local Planning Authority, and upon advice from the Government Office (GO-East) and the Planning Inspectorate, therefore intends to adopt, as well as the relevant saved Structure and Local Plan policies, the following policies from the (withdrawn) Huntingdonshire Core Strategy 2006. The Council considers that these policies have been subject to substantial public participation and take full account of recent Government Guidance. It is intended that this Interim Planning Policy Statement will guide the Council's decision making processes pending the preparation of its updated Development Plan Documents.

(Withdrawn) Huntingdonshire Core Strategy Policies to be adopted by the Interim Planning Policy Statement:

- Chapter 3 Key Principles:
  - Policy P1 Sustainable Development
  - Policy P2 Natural Resources
  - Policy P3 Social and Economic Well-being
  - Policy P4 Settlement Strategy
  - Policy P5 Settlement – Market Towns
  - Policy P6 Settlement Hierarchy – Key Centres
  - Policy P7 Settlement Hierarchy – Smaller Settlements
  - Policy P8 Development in the Countryside
  - Policy P9 Mixed Development
  - Policy P10 Flood Risk
  - Policy P11 Infrastructure requirements
  
- Chapter 4 Greenspace:
  - Policy G1 Open Space and recreational land
  - Policy G2 Landscape Character
  - Policy G3 Trees, hedgerows and other environmental features
  - Policy G4 Protected habitats and species
  - Policy G5 Historic Parks and Gardens
  - Policy G6 Areas of Strategic Open Space
  - Policy G7 Biodiversity
  
- Chapter 5 Built Environment:
  - Policy B1 Design Quality
  - Policy B2 Street scene
  - Policy B3 Accessibility, adaptability and security
  - Policy B4 Amenity
  - Policy B5 Energy and Water use
  - Policy B6 Re-use and redevelopment of buildings in the countryside
  - Policy B7 Listed Buildings
  - Policy B8 Conservation Areas
  - Policy B9 Sites of archaeological interest
  
- Chapter 6 Housing:
  - Policy H1 Location of housing development
  - Policy H2 Housing density
  - Policy H3 Mix of dwelling sizes

- Policy H4 Alteration or replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside
  - Policy H5 Housing for agricultural and related workers
  - Policy H6 Affordable housing
  - Policy H7 Affordable housing targets and thresholds
  - Policy H8 Rural exceptions sites
  - Policy H9 Retirement housing
  - Policy H10 Nursing and care homes
  - Policy H11 Accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople
- Chapter 7 Economy and Tourism:
    - Policy E1 Location of office development
    - Policy E2 location of industrial and warehouse development
    - Policy E3 Redevelopment of office, industrial and warehouse sites
    - Policy E4 Location of tourist facilities
    - Policy E5 Farm Diversification
    - Policy E6 Town centres, primary shopping areas and primary frontages
    - Policy E7 Location of retail and leisure development
    - Policy E8 Retention of key local services and facilities
- Chapter 8 Transport and Utilities:
    - Policy T1 Transport impacts
    - Policy T2 Car and cycle parking
    - Policy T3 Rights of way and other public routes
    - Policy T4 Telecommunications
    - Policy T5 Renewable energy
- Appendix 1 - Car and cycle parking standards
  - Appendix 2 – Sustainable development checklist

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## **THE GENDER EQUALITY DUTY (Report by Head of Policy and Strategic Services)**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to a Gender Equality Scheme and for the Cabinet to note associated action plan.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 In December 2006 the Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975, as amended, places a duty on all public bodies to promote gender equality, with effect from 6<sup>th</sup> April 2007.
- 2.2 The new duty requires the Council, along with other public sector organisations, to actively promote gender equality, in the same way as it is required to promote race and disability equality.
- 2.3 This positive duty is designed to build gender equality at the beginning of the process; rather than make it an adjustment at the end. It will bring about a shift from a legal framework, which relies on individuals complaining about discrimination, to one in which the public sector becomes active in promoting change.
- 2.4 The Act sets out a general duty, which, means that the Council will have to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment and promote equality of opportunity between men and women. The Council also has a specific duty which is to produce a Gender Equality Scheme which defines how we will meet the general duty.

### **3 Development of the Scheme**

- 3.1 In producing a Gender Equality Scheme the Council has examined existing research and data and produced an employee profile, copies of which are available upon request from Policy and Strategic Services Division. Because of the timing of the new legislation and its need to have a scheme in place by 6<sup>th</sup> April 2007, the scheme will be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) at their meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> April and any comments will be reported to the meeting. Unfortunately it has not been possible to seek the views of the Employment Liaison Advisory Group nor those of the Employment Panel on the scheme. This will be done at their next meeting and may result in changes to the supporting action plan.

### **4. ENFORCEMENT AND GUIDANCE ON THE SCHEME**

- 4.1 It is proposed that the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights will be responsible for guidance and enforcement of the new duty. In the meantime there is a recently published Code of Practice and the attached Gender Equality Scheme is compatible with this. The Scheme is similar in format and content to our current Race and Disability

Equality Schemes. The Schemes can be easily integrated with other processes to promote equality.

## **5. RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 The Cabinet is invited to adopt the Gender Equality Scheme and to note associated action plan.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Duty to Promote Gender Equality Code of Practice

**Contact Officer: Louise Sboui**  
 **01480 388032**

# Huntingdonshire District Council

## Gender Equality Scheme

### Introduction

To ensure we are providing high quality services and effective community leadership the Council is committed to achieving equality of opportunity both as an employer and provider of services.

The Equality Act 2006 amends the Sex Discrimination Act (1975) to place a statutory duty on the Council when carrying out its functions. The first of these is a general duty to have due regard to the need to :

- eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

This requires us to give due regard to promoting equality of opportunity between men and women, which may require additional, dedicated resources or activity to enable men and women to access services on equitable terms.

Secondly, the Council has a specific duty to publish a Gender Equality Scheme (GES), describing how we intend to fulfil this general duty. In this scheme we state which of our functions and policies are relevant to the general duty and describe our arrangements for:

- Assessing, consulting and monitoring our functions and policies for likely impact on the promotion of gender equality;
- Publishing the results of this assessment, consultation and monitoring;
- Making sure the public have access to our services, and;
- Training and developing employees so that they can respond positively to these duties

### Definition

Unlawful discrimination on the grounds of gender includes:

- Direct and indirect discrimination against women and men, in employment; education; in the provision of goods, facilities and services and in the exercise of public functions;
- Harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity/paternity leave;
- Discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment in employment and vocational training;
- Direct and indirect discrimination in the employment field on the grounds that a person is married or a civil partner; and
- Victimisation.

### Our commitment

A commitment to equality and inclusion underpins the Councils' approach to promoting gender equality. The Council recognises that some people do not have equal access to our services or information about them. To ensure fairness and equity in the provision of our services, some services may need to be developed to meet different needs. The Council also recognises that discrimination or exclusion cannot always be dealt with as a single issue. Different strands, particularly those relating to race, disability, age, religious beliefs, sexuality, isolation, gender and deprivation, may combine to cause inequality and social exclusion.

### About Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire is a large rural district, which covers an area of approximately 910 square kilometres (approximately 350 square miles). Nearly 162,000 people live in the district, with about 45% of the population living in the 4 market towns of Huntingdon, Ramsey, St Ives and St Neots.

The gender split in the district is similar to the national average (49.7% male and 50.3% female (Census 2001). However, there are gender differences with life expectancy with males expecting to live more than a year and half longer than the average for England (78.5 compared to 76.92) and females expecting to live two thirds of a year longer than the average (81.8 compared to 81.14). Females can expect to live more than three years longer than males in Huntingdonshire (source - life expectancy at birth 2003-2005, ONS).

Gender difference are noticeable in the workplace where traditional roles are well entrenched. The following table outlines some of the economic disparities between men and women.

	Men	Women
Percentage of those aged 16-74 that are economically inactive (Census 2001)	17.8%	32.9%
Percentage of those aged 16-74 that are economically active (Census 2001)	82.2%	67.1%
Average full time gross weekly wages 2006 (Residence Median ASHA 2006)	£534.99	£371.20

Differences in the occupations that men and women undertake are marked. Women are more likely than men to undertake lower paid occupations, often in a part-time capacity. The most notable differences exist in the following occupations

Census 2001	Men	Women
Managers and senior officials	23.1%	11.9%
Administrative and secretarial	5.1%	23.9%
Skilled trades	18.2%	2.4%
Personal services (healthcare, caring and leisure occupations)	1.3%	12.3%
Sales and customer services	2.9%	10.7%
Process, plant and machine operatives	13%	3.6%

## Huntingdonshire's constitution

Huntingdonshire operates a Leader and Cabinet model of decision making. The Cabinet consists of 9 Members; each Cabinet member is responsible for a number of Council services. The Executive Councillor for Resources & Policy has a specific responsibility for leading on equality issues. The Cabinet meetings are held in public, the Agenda, Reports and Minutes are publicly available. Further information is available on the council's website [www.huntsdc.gov.uk](http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk) or from Democratic Services.

## Council Organisation and Structure

The Council is currently organised into 3 Directorates each of which is headed by a Director, these are:

- Central Services (e.g. electoral registration, licensing, personnel, leisure centres and economic development)
- Operational Services (e.g. planning, environmental and public health, housing services and parks countryside)
- Commerce and Technology (e.g. financial services, council and housing tax benefit)

## Strategic Aims for Equality

Some of the strategic initiatives set out below are specific to gender equality; others reflect the broader diversity agenda. Our policy framework is set out in our corporate plan *Growing Success* (a copy is available on the council's website or from the Policy and Strategic Services Division) it has been developed to provide the context for our strategies, policies and plans.

## Growing Success

The vision in our Community Strategy is:-

Huntingdonshire should be a place where current and future generations have a good quality of life and enjoy:

- Continued economic success
- Opportunities for all
- An environment that is protected and improved

To support this, the Council will strive to:

- Make the most of the opportunities that come from growth by promoting the development of sustainable communities
- Enable people to realise their full potential and have access to suitable homes, jobs and services
- Work towards achieving a balance between social, economic and environmental needs
- Maintain excellent standards

One of our objectives is to:

Strengthen our commitment and capacity to achieve equality, diversity and inclusion

We intend to do this by:

- maintaining or establishing equality schemes which consider gender, race and disability equality issues and the needs of disadvantaged groups at all levels of services, policies and practices
- ensuring that our employment practices provide equality of opportunity and do not discriminate against any individual

To ensure that the above *aspects* are taken into account in the things that we do, the Council is committed to achieving the Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government.

## Corporate Equality Policy

Our Corporate Equality Policy formalises our commitment to gender equality in providing high quality services and effective community leadership.

We intend to do this through the way we -

- plan and deliver appropriate services
- monitor and evaluate our performance
- consult and engage with our communities
- develop & support employees and Councillors
- support our communities

To contribute towards meeting these priorities our Corporate Equality Policy has identified two outcomes that we need to achieve

- That our services are provided in ways that meet the diverse needs of local people
- That the Council is recognised for promoting equality and inclusion in communities

The two measures that will tell us how successful we are:

- % of local people who believe that Council services meet their needs
- % of local people who believe that the Council promotes equality and inclusion in their community

## How we developed our Gender Equality Scheme?

We have established an equality steering group, comprising senior officers who have assisted Chief Officers in developing the scheme and action plan. In recognising the benefits of consultation; we have used the results of recent consultation with the public. Analysis from these surveys does not show any significant disparities between men and women's satisfaction with

Council services. We have also analysed employee data and found some disparities in pay and grade between men and women, we have included an action in our action plan to investigate this further.

This information is available upon request from the Policy and Strategic Services Division.

## **Responsibility for the Gender Equality Scheme**

### **Councillors**

Councillors will support this scheme and work towards the promotion of equality and inclusion in all Council and community activities.

### **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of this scheme for the council as a whole.

### **Directors**

Directors have a duty to promote the scheme throughout their directorates. They also have responsibility for implementing relevant review, monitoring and performance procedures.

### **Services**

Heads of service, activity managers and team leaders are responsible for implementing the scheme in the day-to-day delivery of their service, including the collection of data.

### **Employees**

All employees have a responsibility to implement the scheme and work towards the provision of services that meet the goals and objectives of the scheme. Appropriate training will be provided to help employees achieve this.

### **Head of Policy**

The Head of Policy will ensure that the scheme is reviewed and maintained on a yearly basis, and will evaluate and verify performance data that has been provided.

## **Equality Steering Group**

This group will lead on the implementation of this scheme, help co-ordinate different activities, including

- producing guidance and information
- co-ordination of impact assessments
- production of annual report on progress

Membership of this group comprises representative from each directorate, an employee representative, representatives from Human Resources and Policy and Strategic Services Division. The group will report the results from this scheme's 3 year action plan/annual report on progress to Chief Officers and Cabinet.

## **Review of Gender Equality Scheme**

The equality steering group will keep under review an action plan which sets out the key actions we will take to promote gender equality. The group will also prepare annually a report detailing progress of this scheme. This report will be considered by Chief Officers and the Cabinet and will also be published on our website.

The Council will conduct a comprehensive review of this scheme every three years (next in 2009/10). This will include an assessment of how the Council has complied with its obligations under the Act and compliance with the general and specific duties. The process of assessing policies and functions for relevance, degree of relevance and prioritisation will be repeated every 3 years.

## **Assessment of relevant functions and policies to promoting gender equality**

'Functions' means the full range of the Council's duties, powers and services.

'Policies' means the full range of formal and informal decisions, procedures, plans, strategies, and objectives about how we carry out our duties and use our powers.

'Relevant' means having implications for (or affecting) gender equality.

'Proportionality' means greater consideration be given to gender equality in relation to functions and policies that have the most effect on disabled people.

We have identified our functions and policies to determine their relevance to the general duty and given them a priority depending on their relevance to gender equality. The priority determines our 3 year assessment plan e.g. those functions and policies that have been given a higher priority will be addressed in year one of the assessment plan. A table showing the prioritisation of functions and policies can be found at appendix 1.

## **Assessing the impact of functions and proposed policies on the promotion of gender equality**

The list of functions and policies determined to be relevant to the general duty will be subject to equality impact assessments between April 2007 – 2010. We may combine some functions/policies within one impact assessment in order to make best use of resources. The equality impact assessment will be an integral part of achieving Level 3 of the Equality Standard and will also be monitored through our comprehensive performance management process.

Specifically, we will continue to examine each function and policy to identify whether there is evidence that they are affecting men and women differently. To do this we will gather information in the following ways –

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

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

Without gender monitoring data there is no way of knowing whether discrimination is taking place or if we are doing things that promote gender equality. We will establish and improve systems to monitor the impact of functions/policies on our communities; however we will need to take into account, resource implications, sensitivity of information and willingness of people to supply it.

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

- statistical analysis of gender data
- satisfaction surveys analysed by gender group
- random or targeted surveys
- qualitative research

We will use a range of information to help us monitor and evaluate, for example the 2001 Census and other data provided by the Office of National Statistics.

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

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

We will use this information to determine future priorities, e.g. if evidence suggests an adverse impact we will take remedial action. We will report the findings of any monitoring and evaluation to Chief Officers and Councillors.

## **Consultation and engagement**

We will undertake clear, representative and proportionate consultation, using a range of appropriate methods. Specifically we will try to engage all communities to ensure that any new policy does not discriminate or harm good gender relations. We will work with the representative gender groups to remove barriers to consultation with people and to try to establish effective mechanisms for effective consultation.

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

## **Access to information and services**

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

- consider access to information and services when assessing and monitoring services
- make sure our staff have the necessary skills, information and understanding to provide services and information equally and fairly
- ask local communities what services and information they need and how they want them provided
- provide information in appropriate formats upon request.

## **Employment**

The Council is a large employer, with over 1,200 employees. In order to meet the employment specific duty in the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), the Council will monitor diversity and will publish the results of its monitoring annually. Reports on monitoring will be prepared for the Corporate Equality Steering Group, senior management and Councillors on the following areas:

- employees in post
- applicants for employment, training and promotion
- those who receive training
- those who benefit or suffer detriment as a result of performance assessment procedures
- those involved in grievance procedures
- those who are the subject of disciplinary procedures
- those who leave the council's employment

## **Training**

In order to deliver our responsibilities, we will ensure that all employees and Councillors are aware of relevant legislation and how this impacts upon their work. Over the last 3 years the Council has commissioned a training and development programme for its employees to promote an understanding of equality and its implications for meeting the council's goals and objectives.



Where appropriate detailed training plans for achieving the Equality Standard for each directorate/division will be prepared to ensure that appropriate information and training is provided which takes account of individual's responsibilities. Senior management, Councillors and employees who will be directly responsible for this scheme will receive additional specific training.

The Council's induction programme for new employees will include initial information on the importance of equality and specifically promoting gender equality in meeting the Council's objectives.

## **Publication of the Gender Equality Scheme and publishing results**

The scheme and/or summary will be made available to all employees and to all relevant community and voluntary groups, organisations, individuals and businesses via the Internet, Intranet or hard copy. A summary of the scheme will be made available in alternative formats upon request.

A copy of the report compiled after each assessment will be available in full on our Website ([www.huntsdc.gov.uk](http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk)) or on request from the Policy and Strategic Services Division, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN 01480 388032. Democratic Services can be contacted on 388388.

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

## **Complaints**

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

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Assessment timetable

Appendix 2 – Action Plan 2007-08

**Gender Equality Scheme (GES)**  
**Appendix 1 - Assessment timetable 2007 – 2010**

<b>Function</b>	<b>Priority</b>
<b>Electoral Services</b> The effective conduct of elections, production of an accurate register of electors and participation in boundary/electoral reviews	2007/08
<b>Licensing Services</b> Dealing with new and renewal applications, consultation and enforcement for a range of areas to ensure public protection	2007/08
<b>Local Land Charges</b> To maintain a register of local land charges and deal with local land charge searches	2009/10
<b>Political Management Structures &amp; Support</b> To manage political management systems and to support effective representation	2008/09
<b>Printing Services</b> To provide a high quality printing and reprographic service and enhance the Council's image	2009/10
<b>Leisure Centres</b> To offer a wide range of sport, recreational and social activities for all ages and abilities	2007/08
<b>Estates Service</b> The management of industrial/commercial properties and provision of advice and valuations	2008/09
<b>Asset Management Plan</b> A strategic planning document with the aim of ensuring efficient, effective and sustainable use of land and buildings	2009/10
<b>Legal Service</b> To ensure the Council acts within its statutory powers and its interests are properly protected	2009/10
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b> To promote a safe and healthy workforce and working environment	2008/09
<b>Human Resources</b> Responsible for pay & performance, recruitment & selection, good employment & foster a culture of innovation in service delivery	2007/08
<b>Training</b> To provide the delivery of training and development to employees	2007/08
<b>People Strategy</b> Strategy for ensuring the Council achieves its goals through its employees	2007/08
<b>Communication &amp; Information</b> To publicise the objectives, services and achievements of the Council and promote good practice in internal and external communication	2007/08
<b>Communication &amp; Marketing Strategy</b> To provide a framework for the council's communications and consultation activities on a structured, consistent and sustainable basis.	2007/08

<b>Economic Development</b> To encourage sustainable growth of local businesses and attract inward investment, including the Local Economy Strategy	2008/09
<b>Policy</b> Internal support services, performance management, external funding, consultation & research, equality & diversity.	2008/09
<b>Tourism Services</b> To ensure Huntingdonshire offers a good quality visitor experience, including the Tourism Strategy for Huntingdonshire	2008/09
<b>Information Communication Technology</b> Participate in the development of a corporate Information Strategy, provision of an IT service and ensure the Council makes best use of new technology	2009/10
<b>Customer First</b> This includes; Improving access to services for everyone; Improving the way we work with customers; building on the high level of customer service already offered local people; and improving efficiency of services through sharing of information.	2007/08
<b>Financial Services</b> Including creditor payments, financial management, financial strategy, income generation, insurance & risk management, internal audit, payroll, Procurement Strategy & treasury management.	2009/10
<b>Benefits</b> To process new Council tax benefit and Rent Allowance claims	2007/08
<b>Council Tax</b> Statutory duty as a designated "Billing authority" under the Local Government Finance Act 1992	2007/08
<b>Non Domestic Rates</b> Statutory duty as a designated "Billing authority" under the Local Government Finance Act 1992	2007/08
<b>Sundry Income</b> Collection of debts due to the Council	2008/09
<b>Cashiering Service</b> Assist in maximising cash flow	2007/08
<b>Air Quality</b> To review and assess local air quality	2009/10
<b>Animal Welfare</b> To promote welfare of animals in commercial establishments	2008/10
<b>Caravan &amp; Camping sites</b> To ensure that sites are suitable for occupation	2008/09
<b>Contaminated Land</b> To deal with land which is contaminated	2009/10
<b>Customer Satisfaction</b> Determine customers views of the service	2007/08

<b>Food Safety</b> To protect the public from unsafe or unwholesome food and drinking water	2007/08
<b>Health &amp; Safety</b> Reduce the number of accidents and incidents of ill health resulting from working conditions	2007/08
<b>Health Promotion</b> Control the spread of infectious diseases	2009/10? 2009/10
<b>Pest Control</b> To prevent the potential for the spread of disease and nuisance by rodents and insects	2008/09
<b>Private Sector Housing</b> Maximise fitness for occupation of dwellings and regulate landlord tenant obligations	2008/09
<b>Statutory Nuisances</b> Resolve justifiable complaints of statutory nuisance	2007/08
<b>Travellers</b> Minimise long term illegal encampments that are a public health and nuisance problem	2007/08
<b>Arts</b> To promote and raise the profile of arts activities, to support and develop local voluntary arts organizations	2007/08
<b>Community Initiatives</b> To involve local people in decision making and encourage self help initiatives, to develop strategies for community development to tackle social exclusion	2007/08
<b>Leisure Development</b> To offer a wide range of sport, recreational and social activities for all ages and abilities, to support local voluntary organisations in the promotion and development of their activities	2007/08
<b>Community Safety/CCTV</b> To develop a multi agency approach to crime and disorder by involving communities and to help communities tackle local needs and issues	2007/08
<b>Emergency Planning</b> To secure effective joint-services planning arrangements and ensure the Council can respond to an emergency	2009/10
<b>Car Parks (strategy)</b> To compliment the Transportation Plan	2009/10
<b>Drainage</b> To advise on location of sewers, ensure sewerage maps are available and assess the need for sewerage schemes for unsewered villages	2009/10
<b>Professional Design Services</b> To assist in the completion of the Council's Capital Programme	2008/09
<b>Car Parks Management</b> To provide secure car parking spaces to meet demand and reduce crime and nuisance in car parks	2009/10
<b>Energy Efficiency</b>	2007/08

To improve energy efficiency in all tenures of the housing stock and reduce fuel poverty	
<b>Building Control</b> To ensure building work complies with building regulations and planning condition, and to ensure the public are protected in respect of dangerous structures	2008/09
<b>Grounds Maintenance</b> To keep amenity areas well maintained and safe	2009/10
<b>Refuse Collection/recycling</b> Provision of domestic refuse collection	2008/09
<b>Charter Markets</b> To ensure the viability of weekly markets	2008/09
<b>Street Cleaning</b> To keep the district clean and free from litter	2009/10
<b>Abandoned Vehicles</b> To remove abandoned vehicles from within the district	2008/09
<b>Countryside Services</b> To encourage the publics enjoyment and access to the countryside	2008/09
<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</b> To encourage the use of parks and open spaces, to promote a range of activities to encourage wide use and to encourage use by community groups and voluntary organisations	2008/09
<b>Refuse Collection (strategy)</b> Minimise waste and increase awareness of litter and recycling issues	2008/09
<b>Homelessness</b> Prevent or alleviate effects of homelessness	2007/08
<b>Housing Nominations</b> To make the best use of all housing resources and to assist applicants with special needs, to improve information to applicants	2007/08
<b>Housing Association Development</b> To enable development by Registered Social Landlords to help meet housing needs	2007/08
<b>Housing Strategy</b> Produce an annual Housing Strategy and plan for special needs groups and individuals	2007/08
<b>Home Improvement Agency</b> To enable elderly, disabled and people on low incomes to remain in their own homes using grants for repairs, disabled adaptations and other resources	2007/08
<b>Private Sector Housing</b> To ensure that private sector housing is fit for occupation and consider the housing conditions in the district	2007/08
<b>Administration</b> To provide administrative support and the provision of a housing reception	2007/08
<b>Housing Strategy 2002 – 2005</b> A 3 year plan of action to address identified needs in the District	2007/08

<p><b>Conservation &amp; Design</b> To promote an understanding of the historic environment and engage the public in order to share the responsibility of stewardship of the historic environment</p>	2008/09
<p><b>Development Control</b> To determine planning applications and provide planning advice</p>	2007/08
<p><b>Policy &amp; Technical Support</b> To influence the future pattern of development in the district</p>	2009/10
<p><b>Transport</b> To assist in the completion of Cambridgeshire Transport Plan, to develop the Cycling Strategy and provide advice to Town Centre Initiatives</p>	2007/08

Huntingdonshire District Council  
Gender Equality Scheme (GES)  
Appendix 2 - Draft Action Plan 2007 – 2010

Action	Target	Who is responsible	progress
<b>Year 1 May 2007 – April 2008</b>			
Initial listing and assessment of functions/policies for relevance to general duty		Equality steering group	Complete
Consultation on GES	January/February 2007	Policy and Strategic Services Division (PSSD)	Complete
Process of impact assessments to begin	By April 2007	Equality steering group	Training completed January 2007
Development of guidance for equality impact assessment of <b>proposed policies</b>	April 2007	PSSD & equality steering group	
Development of guidance for <b>monitoring &amp; assessment of existing</b> policies	April 2007	PSSD & equality steering group	
Development of guidance for <b>consulting</b> on proposed policies	April 2007	PSSD & equality steering group	
Review of systems and procedures in relation to gender monitoring	April 2007	Equality steering group	
Report on GES to Chief Officers, Overview & Scrutiny & Cabinet	Annually	Equality steering group	
Publication of GES	April 2007	PSSD	
Establish departmental equality working arrangements	By April 2007	Equality steering group	
Development of training plans for employees (linked into equality standard training) e.g. for For equality steering group For managers/employees Members	By 2007	Equality steering group & HR	Steering group commenced training May 2006. EIA training to commence January 07 General training to commence after April 2007
Assessment and publication of results of equality impact assessments	From April 2008	Equality steering group & PSSD	
Examination of previous years employment (equality monitoring) data	Annually	HR	
Publication of employment monitoring information	Annually	HR	
Annual report on progress in achieving targets to Chief Officers, Overview & Scrutiny and		Equality steering group and Democratic Services	

Action	Target	Who is responsible	progress
<b>Year 1 May 2007 – April 2008</b>			
Cabinet			
Publication of annual report on website	Annually	PSSD	
Review of complaints procedure in relation to race, gender and disability		PSSD and Administration	
Consult with employees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct consultation with employees on gender equality as part of staff satisfaction survey</li> <li>Conduct consultation with ELAG./employees on Gender Equality Scheme</li> </ul>	Summer 2007	PSSD	
Further to analysis of employment monitoring data (05/06) more research in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pay gap</li> <li>Imported discrimination</li> <li>Encouraging more females into high grades</li> <li>Encouraging more males into position graded 8 – 13</li> </ul>	September 2007	HR	
Analysis of training take up by gender using ResourceLink	March 2008	HR	
Annual report on progress to date in achieving GES targets to Chief Officers, Overview & Scrutiny & Cabinet	A year from the date the GES adopted	Equality steering group & HR	
Review of complaints procedure in relation to race, gender & disability	April 2008	PSSD & Administration	
Monitor key employment and workforce profiles by gender	Annually	HR	
Raise general awareness/monitor/evaluate different working patterns and worklife balance options available to both male and female employees as part of mobile/flexible working project	March 2008	HR	
Ensure Consultation & Engagement strategy supports GES	Summer 2007	PSSD	



CABINET

5 APRIL 2007

## MEDIUM TERM PLAN REQUESTS FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

(Report by the Head of Financial Services)

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to allow Cabinet to decide whether to release funds for the MTP scheme detailed in the attached annexes.

### 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council agreed in December 2005 *that, having regard to the implications for future spending and Council Tax levels, Directors review with appropriate Executive Councillors the need for schemes/projects included in the MTP but not yet started and that specific prior approval be sought and obtained from the Cabinet before such schemes/projects are implemented.*
- 2.2 Officers have identified the schemes that they wish Cabinet to consider releasing funding for and have discussed them with the relevant Executive Councillor.
- 2.3 Annex A summarises and the following Annexes detail these requests.

### 3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Cabinet is recommended to release the funds shown in Annex A.

#### ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT 1985

None

#### Contact Officer:

**Steve Couper**

Head of Financial Services ☎ 01480 388103

	Net Revenue Impact (£'000)						Net Capital (£'000)					
	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2006/ 2007	2007/ 2008	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012
<b>SUMMARY</b>												
Annex B 733 - Flexible Working	10	67	52	52	52	52						
C 39B & 309/442/441 Disabled Facilities Grants		9	19	19	19	19						23
D 141 & 381 & 611 Discretionary Loans / Grants		6	12	12	12	12						378
	<b>10</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>83</b>						<b>239</b>
Total amount for which release now requested												<b>640</b>

## MTP Bid – 733 - Flexible Working

## Project Officer – Chris Hall – IMD (Matt Hinton – Project Mgr)

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact						Capital							
	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000	2012/ 2013 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000	2012/ 2013 £000
Approved Net Budget	10	67	52	52	52	52	52	23	23					
Already released	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0					
<b>Amount for which release now requested</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>					

**Justification for Release**

31

The Project is already underway as approved by the Accommodation Project Board in December 2006. Production of a Strategy and Members broadband access roll out are priorities. The revenue budget will support Members broadband access roll out, increase the Council's Internet connection and fund production of the Strategy. The capital budget is to fund the installation and set up costs of the Members broadband and new Internet connection.

For further details see the original MTP submission.

## MTP Bid - 39B &amp; 309/442/441 Disabled Facilities Grants

Project Officer:- Steve Plant

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact						Capital						
	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000	2012/ 2013 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000	2012/ 2013 £000
Approved Gross Budget		23	46	46	46	46		1,253					
Approved Net Budget		0	0	0	0	0		918					
Already released								0					
<b>Gross amount for which release now requested</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>19</b>		<b>800</b>					
<b>Net amount for which release now requested</b>						<b>19</b>		<b>378</b>					

32

**Justification for Release**

The Council must award a DFG for work to achieve one or more of a set of purposes defined by statute. DFGs are awarded on the recommendation of an Occupational Therapist (OT) and funds aids and adaptations like ramps, stair lifts and level access showers. DFGs enable elderly and disabled people to live independently and therefore contribute towards the quality of life for vulnerable people. The Council must be satisfied that a DFG is necessary and appropriate and that to carry it out is reasonable and practicable. The Council is, therefore, expected and required to set a budget that can cope with the likely level of demand placed upon it.

The Government has recently announced allocations for 2007/08 and has allocated a maximum of £421,990 to contribute towards DFGs in Huntingdonshire.

The OT service has predicted that 250 DFG referrals will be made in the year. About 30% of these do not proceed to full application because of an excessive applicant contribution and other reasons. DFGs cost an average of £4.5k, therefore, for 2007/08 a budget of £788k is required. In addition, as a result of the long waiting time for an OT assessment in Huntingdonshire (one year) the PCT are considering the scope to second staff from other areas to bring the Huntingdonshire's waiting list into line with that of other areas. Although this will take time to come to fruition, it should have an impact in 2007/8.

Cabinet are therefore requested to release £800k (£421,990 of which is funded by central Government) to enable DFGs to be processed from the start of the new financial year.

## MTP Bid - 141 &amp; 381 &amp; 611 Discretionary Loans / Grants

Project Officer:- Steve Plant

Financial Impact	Net Revenue Impact						Capital						
	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000	2012/ 2013 £000	2006/ 2007 £000	2007/ 2008 £000	2008/ 2009 £000	2009/ 2010 £000	2010/ 2011 £000	2011/ 2012 £000
Approved Gross Budget		6	12	12	12	12	12		239				
Approved Net Budget		0	0	0	0	0	0		239				
Already released									0				
<b>Amount for which release now requested</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>239</b>				

**Justification for Release**

33

House repair loans / grants are discretionary but it the expectation of government that authorities will work to address private sector unfitness and disrepair. The published guidance from the ODPM states "The government would consider an authority to be failing in its duty as a housing enabler and in its responsibility to consider the condition of the local private sector stock if it did not make some provision for assistance".

**Repair loans / grants are made according to a tightly-defined criteria based on the seriousness and urgency of the repair and the ability of the owner to finance. All repair loans / grants may therefore be assumed to be to finance work that would otherwise not have been carried out, and if not carried out would have led to deterioration in the built environment and, in some cases, would have led to a decline in the health of the owner.**

The Council's policy is to issue interest free loans to eligible owner occupiers. A charge is placed on their property and the loan is repaid when the property is sold. Grants are given in exceptional circumstances if there is inadequate equity in the property to support the charge.

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