

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT)** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON PE29 6GZ** on **TUESDAY, 11 JULY 2006** at **7:30 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE WILL BE A BRIEFING FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE PANEL AT 7.00PM

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2006.

**Mrs C Bulman
388234**

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to personal and / or prejudicial interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any Agenda Item. Please see Notes 1 and 2 overleaf.

3. LOCAL PROCUREMENT (Pages 9 - 24)

Following a request at a previous meeting, to consider a joint report by the Heads of Policy and of Technical Services and the Procurement Manager.

**I Leatherbarrow
388005**

4. HUNTINGDON TOWN CENTRE VISION (Pages 25 - 28)

By way of a report by the Head of Planning Services to consider the Strategy and Action Plan for Huntingdon Town Centre which has been considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 29th June 2006.

**R Probyn
388430**

(A copy of the Vision, Spatial Strategy and Action Plan has been circulated separately).

5. GREAT FEN - MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (Pages 29 - 42)

To consider a report by the Director of Operational Services which will be considered by the Cabinet at their meeting on 20th July 2006.

**M Sharp
388301**

6. **WORK PLAN STUDIES** (Pages 43 - 44)

To consider with the aid of a report by the Head of Administration, the programme of studies.

**Mrs C Bulman
388234**

7. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN** (Pages 45 - 50)

In accordance with the agreed procedure, Members are invited to note the Plan and comment as appropriate on the Items contained therein. A copy of the current Forward Plan is attached.

**Mrs C Bulman
388234**

8. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT)** (Pages 51 - 58)

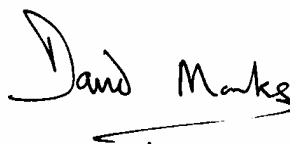
To consider a report by the Head of Administration on decisions taken by the Panel.

**Mrs C Bulman
388234**

9. **SCRUTINY** (Pages 59 - 64)

To scrutinise decisions since the last meeting. A copy of the relevant Decision Digest is attached.

Dated this 3rd day of July 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 C Bulman, Democratic Services Tel 01480 388234 / email Claire.Bulman@huntsdc.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Committee/Panel.

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

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

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

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

Emergency Procedure

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

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Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT) held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 13 June 2006.

- PRESENT: Councillor J A Gray – Chairman.
- Councillors M G Baker, K M Baker, J T Bell, J W Davies, D B Dew, J D Fell, A N Gilbert, I R Muir, M F Newman, G S E Thorpe, R G Tuplin and R J West.
- APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors P J Downes and P A Swales.
- IN ATTENDANCE: Councillors I C Bates, P L E Bucknell, N J Guyatt and T V Rogers.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th May 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Panel placed on record their appreciation of the work of their former Chairman, Councillor P A Swales for his past efforts in chairing overview and scrutiny within the Council.

6. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor J D Fell declared a personal interest in Minute No. 8 by virtue of his membership of Huntingdon Freeman's Charity.

Councillors D B Dew, J D Fell, G S E Thorpe and R G Tuplin declared personal interests in Minute No. 11 by virtue of their memberships of the Council's Development Control Panel and / or Section 106 Advisory Group.

7. FINANCIAL STRATEGY, MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2007 - 2011 AND BUDGET 2006/07

(Councillors I C Bates, Leader of the Council and T V Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance were in attendance for this Item).

Further to Minute No. 05/117 of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Planning and Finance), the Chairman welcomed Councillors I C Bates, Leader of the Council and T V Rogers, Executive Councillor for Finance who had been invited to the meeting to explain the Cabinet's decision not to agree to the Panel's request for consultation on future reductions in Council expenditure.

Having been acquainted with the background to the Panel's request, Members were informed that in reaching their decision the Cabinet had been of the opinion that there were sufficient opportunities already for Members of the scrutiny panels to consider and review the Council's Budget and Medium Term Plan (MTP). The Cabinet also had been mindful of the need to identify and implement efficiency savings as and when opportunities emerged which might have been delayed by a requirement to consult with Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

Having regard to requirement in the Financial Strategy for a reduction in expenditure of £574,000 to be achieved within the current year, Members were assured by the Leader of the Council that work was currently being undertaken to identify savings for consideration. Particular reference was made by Councillor Bates to savings identified from the base budget review, funding for Police Community Support Officers, staffing efficiencies and a forthcoming review of refuse collection rounds which were scheduled within the next year. Councillor Rogers explained that all Heads of Service were currently in the process of reviewing their budgets to identify savings either through efficiencies or otherwise and efforts were also being made to explore potential savings within risk management and procurement. Members' attention also was drawn to the forthcoming District Auditor's Management Letter which was likely to commend the Council for its efficient financial management.

Arising from comments made by Members in relation to consultation on savings being proposed by Heads of Service and the content of the Medium Term Plan, Councillor Bates reiterated that there would be an opportunity for the Corporate & Strategic Framework Panel to comment on any proposals put forward. It was envisaged that a range of draft options would be available for consideration by September, with a firm set of proposals available in November. Notwithstanding the Cabinet's decision on the Panel's specific request for consultation, the Leader indicated that he would welcome any proposals by the Panel in relation to possible savings in revenue expenditure or Medium Term Plan.

8. A14 ELLINGTON TO FEN DITTON IMPROVEMENT - HUNTINGDON VIADUCT TECHNICAL STUDY

(Councillor N J Guyatt, Executive Councillor for Environment and Transport and P L E Bucknell, Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy were in attendance for this item).

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Operational Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) updating Members on the outcome of a jointly commissioned technical study on the implications of the retention or removal of the Huntingdon A14 viaduct. The contents had been endorsed by the Cabinet at their meeting on the 8th June 2006 for submission to the Secretary of State for consideration on the options for the development of the A14 improvement scheme.

Members raised questions as to the lack of consultation prior to the Cabinet decision and whether, in view of its significance, this was a

matter which should have been considered by full Council. In response, Councillor Guyatt explained that the report was a technical study which had been commissioned to demonstrate the feasibility of the Council's decision on the A14 improvement. Having done so, the Cabinet had referred the findings to the Secretary of State. Moreover Councillor Guyatt suggested that as the study had been technical in nature, it would have been an inappropriate subject for public consultation. Members were informed that the study would form part of the review of Huntingdon Vision which was expected to be approved for public consultation shortly. There had been a presentation for all Members on the study and there would be opportunities for additional consultation as part of the planning process.

Having raised a number of specific issues arising from the report, Members discussed the cost of the Council's contribution to the study and the completion of the west of town centre link road (from Brampton to Ermine Street) which was expected to be delivered in advance of the improvements to the A14. Comments were also made in relation to the impact of the proposed development at Northbridge, the potential for traffic restrictions on the medieval bridge in Godmanchester, the potential for some loss of open space and the need for further air quality modelling.

Having been assured by the Executive Councillor that the decision of the Cabinet did not tie the District Council to the specific routes outlined on the map provided but merely addressed the principle of removing the viaduct, with an opportunity for additional consultation in due course. Members

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report and the Cabinet's decision be noted.

9. POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS

(Councillor I C Bates, Leader of the Council was in attendance for this item and declared a personal interest as a Member of the Police Authority).

With the assistance of a report by a group appointed by the Panel (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) Members were acquainted with the deliberations of the Police Community Support Officers Working Group which had been re-constituted to consider the District Council's financial contribution to the employment of PCSOs in Huntingdonshire.

Members' attention was drawn to the availability of substantial additional funding from the Neighbourhood Policing Fund which would provide an opportunity for the Council to reduce their level of funding without the District experiencing any reduction in the level of service available to local people. Annex 1 of the report now submitted outlined proposals by which this could be achieved over a three-year period. Members were also informed that since the preparation of the report, further information had come to light which suggested that the

Home Office funding available was greater than first thought and consequently it might be possible to withdraw Council funding at a faster rate.

Having welcomed the opportunity to reduce Council expenditure without affecting the level of service, Members discussed the gradual introduction of neighbourhood policing teams across the District and the benefits this might bring. The Panel also considered proposals by the Working Group to provide information on a regular basis for Members to enable the monitoring of PCSOs to continue. It was concluded however that it would be unreasonable to expect the Constabulary to devote resources to provide an annual report for the District Council if funding for the scheme had been withdrawn and that the issue might be better dealt with through the new Neighbourhood Policing Panels. However to monitor crime statistics in the District, Members felt that, it would be useful to receive quarterly reports from the Community Safety Partnership.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the Cabinet be recommended –
 - I. to transfer those PCSO staff, currently funded by the Council into posts financed from the Neighbourhood Policing Fund and to withdraw the District Council's financial contribution to the employment of Police Community Support Officers at the earliest opportunity without a reduction in the number of officers funded by the District Council in Huntingdonshire; and
 - II. to circulate the quarterly Community Safety Partnership report on crime in Huntingdonshire to all Members of the District Council; and
- (b) that, having regard to the nature of the recommendations, the PCSO working group be disbanded.

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

(Councillor I C Bates, Leader of the Council was in attendance for this item).

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel were acquainted with a suggested process for reviewing and updating the Council's Corporate Plan, together with the end of year results for local and national performance indicators.

The report proposed a leading role for Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels in the review process by the establishment of a working group comprising Members of both Panels. Arrangements had been made for training to be provided on 29th June to all Panel Members on priority and objective setting.

In respect of the performance information contained within the report, Members were informed that there would be an opportunity to consider the targets and measures in more detail as the Plan was reviewed over the summer period.

Having been informed by the Leader of the Council of the importance of the review process, the Panel

RESOLVED

- (a) that the suggested process for reviewing and updating the Council's Corporate Plan be endorsed;
- (b) that the results of the performance data for the year 2005/06 be noted and the proposed targets for 2006/07 endorsed; and
- (c) that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and Councillor D B Dew be appointed as the Panel's representatives on the working group established to review the Council's objectives.

11. MONITORING SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS : PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

With the assistance of a report by the Head of Policy (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel were updated on the receipt and expenditure of money negotiated under Section 106 Agreements by the Council.

In considering the content of the report, Members were mindful that following the recent realignment of Council services there had been some changes to the personnel implementing the terms of some of the agreements. However the Panel reiterated the need for payments to be received and expended in a timely fashion and requested that information be incorporated within the next update to illustrate those areas where expenditure had occurred over the previous quarter.

12. WORKPLAN STUDIES

The Panel considered and noted a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing the Panel's programme of studies.

In so doing, Members were reminded that an informal Panel meeting had been arranged for Tuesday 4th July 2006 to discuss the Panel's work programme for the forthcoming year.

In respect of their ongoing interest in the Council's Staff Travel Plan,

the Panel expressed a desire for the Plan to be comprehensive and to contain alternatives other than the use of cars for employees to travel to work.

13. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN

The Panel considered and noted the current Forward Plan of key decisions scheduled for consideration by the Cabinet which had been prepared by the Leader of the Council (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book).

In so doing, the Panel reiterated their concerns in relation to the late inclusion of items within the Plan relating to affordable housing and the Local Development Scheme. Concerns were also expressed that there would be no opportunity for the Panel to comment on the Huntingdon Vision document before its consideration by Cabinet.

In reviewing the remainder of the items within the Plan, the Chairman commented on the need to be mindful of the financial implications of all items appearing within the Plan in light of the current budgetary situation. With this in mind, it was

RESOLVED

- (i) that copies of the following reports be circulated for information to Members of the Panel and Members invited to notify the Head of Administration if they wished them to be discussed at a future Panel meeting –

- ◆ Consultation on affordable housing SPD;
- ◆ Huntingdon Town Centre re-visited; and
- ◆ St. Ives Market Town Transport Strategy; and

- (ii) that the Head of Administration be requested to ascertain the financial implications of the proposed extension to Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and report back to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

14. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PLANNING AND FINANCE): PROGRESS

The Panel considered and noted a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) reviewing the Panel's progress to-date.

The Chairman reported that the members of the Development Control Working Party had met recently and would be meeting again in July and August with the Head of Planning Services and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Development Control Panel. An investigation was being undertaken separately by the Planning Division in relation to public participation within the development

control process and it was hoped to bring the results of both studies back to the Panel in the early Autumn.

In relation to other items within the report, the Head of Administration was requested to ascertain whether the Panel's request to the County Council for a review of their speed management policies was being progressed.

15. SCRUTINY

The Panel considered and noted the latest edition of the Council's Decision Digest of decisions made over the previous month.

Chairman

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**LOCAL PROCUREMENT
(Report by the Heads of Policy and of Technical Services and
the Procurement Manager)**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 At the request of the Panel, this report provides background information on —

- initiatives and ideas around the ways in which local authorities and other public bodies can use their spending on goods, supplies and services to support their local economy as well as to promote environmental and/or social objectives;
- information about the Council's current spending and general approach to procurement;
- the initiatives being carried out in conjunction with the business community;
- other activities where the Council's Economic Development Service promotes local spending to support sustainable economic growth, and
- the link between environmental considerations and procurement.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 A number of economic think-tanks, principally the new Economic Foundation, suggest that the value of every pound spent in purchasing goods and services is multiplied up to three times if it is spent locally – recognising that it will be re-used within the local economy. The process for establishing such values is time consuming and requires the cooperation of local contractors. However, a number of local councils have used these methods, eg North Norfolk District Council has evaluated the impact of construction contracts and estimated that the value of a contract with a local builder was some 2½ times greater than using a contractor from outside the area. In some evaluations, such as that carried out by Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, the difference was marginal.

2.2 In March 2005 the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Local Government Association and the Small Business Service produced a Small Business Concordat. This non-statutory Code of Practice identifies suggested actions that local authorities can take to make their contracts more accessible to small and medium size businesses. The underlying principles in the Concordat are set out in Appendix 1.

- 2.3 The Improvement & Development Agency has also produced case studies of councils who have taken a strategic approach to procurement to help to deliver social, economic and environmental objectives. Examples are set out in Appendix 2.

3. THE COUNCIL'S PROCUREMENT

- 3.1 The largest proportion of the Council's expenditure on goods and services is dominated by contracts with large regional, national or international companies or consortia for utilities such as any energy and telecommunications, large construction contracts, ICT hardware and software and specialist suppliers. In 2005/06 approximately 9% (£2.6m) of expenditure was in Huntingdonshire. The Council's expenditure in the PE and CB postcode areas combined was approximately 30% of our total, some £8.7m.
- 3.2 British Law prohibits public authorities from discriminating on the basis of geography. The Council's Procurement Strategy is currently based on the notion of obtaining best value and reflects the prevailing national and regional strategies which are designed to reduce costs through collaboration and the aggregation of purchasing requirements. This provides an inherent tension with local procurement and the need to carefully assess the relative cost – benefits.
- 3.3 In these circumstances, many local authorities address the issues of local procurement by encouraging and helping small and medium enterprises to develop or collaborate to enable them to compete for Council contracts, by promoting local purchasing for environmental and sustainability reasons and using local procurement to support social issues for example by the establishment of social enterprises and commissioning work through community and voluntary organisations.

4. LOCAL BUSINESS COMMUNITY

- 4.1 The views of the local business community have been sought during consultation with their representatives and they have urged the Council to lead a drive to greater local procurement. In response a small Project Group was established which comprises representatives of the Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce, the Huntingdonshire Business Network, the Federation of Small Businesses and the District Council.
- 4.2 This Group has met on several occasions and have identified a number of initiatives to begin to address issues around local procurement. These include –
- an acknowledgement of the legal and regulatory framework in which the Council must operate;
 - agreement by the Council to regularly identify and report on the extent of its spending locally;

- seminars for local businesses – “Keeping It Local” – to raise awareness about Council spending and to provide guidance on bidding for Council work or the supply of goods and services;
- the planned development of a “contracts database” and “early warning systems” to alert business support networks and interested local companies to potential procurement contracts with the Council; and
- consideration of changes to the Council's procurement practices which lower the hurdles for local SMEs to enable them to compete.

5. OTHER ACTIVITIES

5.1 The Council's Economic Development Service is working on a number of projects and proposals which are designed to promote sustainable economic growth, including the demand for and supply of locally purchased goods and services. These initiatives include –

- the organisation of a second “Keep It Local” procurement event in the autumn of 2006 to provide information and help local businesses to bid for Council contracts; and
- supporting the establishment of a Manufacturers Club in St Neots which brings together local businesses to promote effective purchasing and development of local supply chains. Work is under way currently with the Chamber of Commerce and other partners to establish a similar association of businesses for the rest of the District.
- In conjunction with partners from the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership a local Food Festival is being organised to promote the economic, health and environmental benefits from buying local produce; and
- promoting skills and training initiatives to enable local businesses to improve their competitiveness; and
- by alerting and encouraging local suppliers and producers of goods and services to so that they can benefit from opportunities from local events or initiatives.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL

6.1 Transport is both a significant cost and a major source of pollution, particularly the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. Local procurement will help to reduce transport of goods delivering both financial and environmental benefits.

6.2 In the longer term the council will be looking at ways of ‘greening the business’ in conjunction with the occupation of its new offices, which will themselves substantially improve the Council's environmental performance. When seeking external accreditation (e.g. EMAS, ISO

14001) the Council will have to demonstrate that its supply chain participants share similar environmental standard. Assisting local suppliers to achieve their own accreditation will meet the Council's needs but will open further opportunities for local businesses. Increasingly larger enterprises with major purchasing power will require their suppliers to have the relevant environmental accreditation and suitably qualified local businesses will be well placed to exploit the market opportunities that become available.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The Panel are invited to review the information provided and to decide whether they wish to pursue this issue as a study area and if so the areas of focus.

Background Papers

Reports of the Keep it Local Group
Economic Development Service Plan
Procurement Strategy

Contact Officers: Corrine Garbett, Economic Development Manager
☎ (01480) 388459
Nigel Arkle, Procurement Manager
☎ (01480) 388104
Chris Jablonski, Team Leader Environment
☎ (01480) 388368

Underlying principles:

(Taken from Small Business Concordat: Good practice guide for local authorities, 1st March 2005)

Under the Local Government Act 2000, councils are required to prepare a 'Community Strategy' and have powers to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of their communities. Provided there is compliance with the EC Public Procurement Regulations and 'Best Value', councils can work with suppliers to realise 'community benefits' of this kind through their procurement activities.

SMEs are often local businesses and members of the local community; therefore any assistance given to them can also bring benefits to the local community. The same holds true for many social enterprises, voluntary and community organisations and Black and Ethnic Minority Enterprises.

SMEs are generally locally owned and often employ people from a smaller catchment area than larger competitors. Local Authorities should not, however, ignore the benefits offered by small firms who trade on a wider national or regional basis and must ensure that their policies are consistent with EU law i.e. that there is also no discrimination against larger firms.

Small firms can offer real benefits to Local Authority clients, some of which are outlined below:

- They can often respond quickly and flexibly to customer needs.
- They can be a source of innovation, ideas and products.
- They can offer cash savings, improved quality, service and effectiveness.
- They are frequently close at hand.
- Some, like social enterprises and those operating in the voluntary and community sector, may have better access to hard to reach customer groups.
- They may attach more importance to doing business with a Local Authority.

Small Business Service case study:

The SBS, in conjunction with the Office of Government Commerce (OGC), has produced a booklet entitled 'Smaller supplier...better value?' The purpose of the booklet is to raise awareness of the value for money that small firms can offer, to explore the issues that can make it difficult for them to win public sector business, and to set out some ideas about how they can be assisted in this area. It is aimed at procurement professionals in the public sector.

As well as being a source of work there are other benefits for smaller businesses in working with Local Authorities, some of which are detailed below:

They are generally good payers.

They are transparent and treat suppliers fairly.

Doing business with Local Authorities adds credibility - making it easier to win business with other public and private sector clients.

Thurrock case study:

Thurrock has long recognised the benefits of a procurement strategy that includes a substantial role for small businesses. With its partners, Thurrock set about increasing the amount of work, goods and services awarded to local businesses either directly or indirectly within applicable legal constraints. The result was an increase in business with local companies from 9 percent in 1996/1997 to 24 percent by 2002/2003 - an increase of over £20 million.

This approach has been vindicated economically: "Substantial savings are made as a consequence of small - often local - businesses being given the opportunity to demonstrate their competitive advantage."

Sheffield City Council's Social Enterprise case study:

The overall aim of the policy is to improve the linkages between the achievement of the Council's social inclusion and economic regeneration objectives with its mainstream spending activity by providing improved opportunities for social enterprises.

The social economy sector can provide valuable diversity and add skills to the city's economy and labour market. A thriving social enterprise sector also brings excluded groups into work, which in turn helps to secure the sustainability of communities. A successful social enterprise in a community run by local people also encourages entrepreneurship and self-confidence.

The key themes of the strategy are:

- *Improving the range, quality and accessibility of information available to all potential contractors.*
- *Raising awareness and understanding of the value and capabilities of social enterprises.*
- *Developing contracting processes that legitimately incorporate the consideration of relevant community benefits.*
- *Enhancing the Council's policy framework to support the involvement of social enterprises in public procurement.*
- *Using our influence with partners to generate enhanced opportunities for social enterprises.*

Welwyn Hatfield Council's Social Enterprise case study:

Working Herts are a team of unemployed young people who have gained valuable skills and experience fitting loft insulation in properties owned by Welwyn Hatfield Council.

The scheme began in February 2003. In the financial year 2003/2004, 319 lofts were insulated and 97 percent of tenants said they were satisfied with the work.

Neville Wallsworth, the Council's Head of Specialist Maintenance, said the Council had been greatly impressed by Working Herts:

"They have been very reliable. Work has been done well and cost effectively, tenants have been pleased and it has helped young people get into the routine of work."

The Council's economic development unit has also helped by finding funding for a minibus to provide transport for the team.

Tower Hamlets Council Social Enterprise case study:

Tower Hamlets Council has sought to fundamentally change the way it relates to social enterprises through the development of a new commissioning framework and code of practice.

In the context of very high levels of deprivation and a diverse local population, the Council believes that social enterprises - and other 'third sector' organisations - are uniquely placed to help deliver its ambitious programme of service improvements.

The Council believes that, at their best, social enterprises are better able to utilise local knowledge and expertise, gain the trust and support of service users, move quickly to tackle emerging needs, deliver culturally-sensitive services that are configured around individual needs, and secure innovative solutions to some of the most challenging issues facing inner-city areas.

The Council has used its new framework to commission a range of different services, including innovative packages of social care, all their direct youth service provisions, and a £5.5 million contract to deliver community-recycling services.

Although Tower Hamlets recognises and values the contribution that social enterprises can make to wider regeneration, it is clear that the primary focus should be on securing excellent public services that meet the needs of its diverse communities. This means that social enterprises still have to demonstrate that they can deliver the Council's service priorities more effectively than the competition. They must also participate in the Council's rigorous performance management arrangements.

However, outside of any specific procurement the Council offers a wide range of assistance to social enterprises wanting to increase competence in bidding for services, including a capacity building programme, covering areas such as financial systems, IT, HR policies and governance. The Council also gives advice and guidance on bidding, open briefings to potential service providers and offers support in forming consortia.

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A Procurement case study

Forest of Dean District Council: a sustainable purchasing guide

In 1996, the Forest of Dean District Council – supported by its members – published its first environmental strategy, which set out the council's approach to environmental matters.

In 2002, the strategy was revised and the updated version highlighted the need for the council, to review its purchasing activities, and thereby reduce its negative impact on the environment. The council, as a major goods consumer, wanted to support the recycling and sustainable goods market. Subsequently, a task was identified: to produce a green purchasing guide for internal council use.

Sustainable purchasing was officer-driven by the Green team – a group of approximately 15 staff – who organised projects and promotions, to raise environmental awareness within the council. A decision on the production of the guide was reached. And, with the support of the managing director, senior management, and members of the council, it was agreed that recycled paper would be used for letterheads, compliment slips and general office paper – even though the initial production costs were higher.

In the long term, members realised that an initial investment would save on costs at a later date. They also recognised the negative and devastating effects of global climate change, and supported the view that the council should operate in a way to minimise its impact upon the environment.

In 2002, the first edition of the Sustainable Purchasing Guide was produced in partnership with Vicky Guntrip, an Environmental Policy student from Cheltenham and Gloucestershire College. The project involved:

- .. interviewing members of staff involved in purchasing
- .. documenting the views of senior officers using a questionnaire
- .. comparing the purchasing practices of the council with other authorities
- .. reviewing the environmental impact of the goods the council bought in
- .. developing a set of guidelines to reduce the environmental impact of these purchases

The aim of the Sustainable Purchasing Guide was to encourage all staff members, notably cost centre managers, to take sustainability into account, when purchasing goods for the council. The guide aimed to promote awareness of the environmental, social and economic impacts of goods and services. The original guide was produced in a booklet format, and distributed to purchasing employees, as part of a wider training programme on sustainable environmental issues.

In 2003, the Sustainable Purchasing Guide was updated. The development of an electronic version of the guide was given to all employees using the intranet, alongside other purchasing information.

Several purchasing areas were identified that needed to be included in the newly updated guide namely: paper products; cleaning materials; batteries; horticultural products; timber products; paints; computers and hardware; office equipment; stationery products; food; IT consumables; contract management; ozone depleting substances; and water.

Within the guide layout, there are four sections listed under each of the product areas stating: what issues needed to be reviewed, to help educate employees about the need for: sustainable purchasing; good practice; examples of suppliers and products; and further information.

The information published in the guide was predominately researched on the internet, and the contact websites listed in the further information sections.

Before the guide was published, consultation was carried out with the internal procurement team. Positive feedback from the team confirmed that the guide was seen as a useful and viable document.

In order for the guide to become embedded within the procurement process, it was felt that it should be championed by the senior manager responsible for procurement, and linked to the procurement strategy. A lead-elected member for procurement was also appointed.

The council intranet now includes a procurement section, so that the guide is accessible to all employees. Those employees who are responsible for procurement receive training, which includes information on sustainable purchasing issues. However, the impact of green purchasing has yet to be measured.

The guide will continue to be updated on a yearly basis. A regular auditing of compliance with the guide will be taken and measured as part of the annual environmental audit.

October 2004

A procurement case study

London Borough of Haringey – SME Development

The London Borough of Haringey is an area of vast cultural diversity. There are areas of prosperity in the west, whilst there are areas of deprivation in the east of the borough. Most of the businesses within the London Borough of Haringey are SMEs, i.e. small and medium sized enterprises who are defined as employing 250 staff or less. At least half of the SMEs in the locality are Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) businesses. Haringey Council has an ethos that procurement can be viewed as a tool that can help deliver the Community Strategy by making opportunities available to SMEs. The council is currently undertaking a SME Procurement Pilot and is fully involved in a local partnership, Trade Local, to develop the SME supply base.

The Small Business Service, an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry, has commissioned Haringey Council to run an SME Procurement Pilot. This is piloting responses to several recommendations of the Better Regulation Task Force (BRTF) and Small Business Council (SBC) report¹, and has a focus on demand-side procurement development within the council. In particular, Haringey is focusing on:

- The use of community benefit clauses in tendering and contractual documentation. These allow use of SMEs in the supply chain, and other community issues, to be evaluated as part of a normal procurement process. These are derived from a legal framework that links procurement and the obligation of a council to produce and implement a community strategy. In the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ), Haringey Council now inserts a statement which clearly communicates the council's objective to work together with local communities and other partners and to assist in the promotion and improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough in its contracting arrangements.
- Piloting the community benefit clauses in tendering exercises.
- Drafting and implementing success measures, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). For example, measuring the percentage of council spend with SMEs and percentage of council spend with BMEs.
- Devising a SME Issue Log that records barriers that are identified in the procurement process when encouraging SMEs to bid for council business. Haringey Council recognises that if supply chains are to be opened up to SMEs, then the barriers must continue to be recognised, recorded and addressed as part of their procurement processes.
- Development of 'Think SME' elements for incorporation into procurement guidelines and documentation. These include specific clauses which are inserted into all the procurement systems, documents and guidelines that are used by the council; the aim being that SMEs are naturally part of the procurement process and not an optional 'bolt on'.

Alongside the Haringey SME Procurement Pilot, Haringey is running a supply-side focused procurement initiative called Trade Local. This local initiative forms a partnership between Haringey Council, Enfield Council, Middlesex University and Fit to Supply. Almost 1,000 SMEs from across Haringey and Enfield are currently benefiting from Trade Local, in the following ways:

- Trade Local Development Programme - offers a tailored programme of procurement support and capacity building, comprising seminars, workshops, distance learning workbooks and one-to-one diagnostics and mentoring.
- Trade Local Website (www.trade-local.co.uk) - shares information on how the public sector procures and current procurement opportunities
- Trade Local Database - allows information on local suppliers and potential suppliers to be shared around Haringey Council, and for businesses to be contacted directly with relevant procurement opportunities.

Haringey has been working with other authorities to share their knowledge. One such authority, Oxford City Council, has also been keen to work with SMEs and increase their participation in tendering opportunities. Oxford CC has recently produced a newsletter for suppliers that explains how the procurement process works, and have updated suppliers on Oxford City Council's Procurement Strategy. Since meeting Haringey they have also started work on an SME questionnaire, and hope to implement further improvements in partnership with the 'Strategic Procurement Partnership for Oxfordshire'.

Dated September 2004



A procurement case study

Key words: “ease of access to SMEs”

Wakefield Metropolitan District Council – Engaging with Suppliers

The Context

In 2003 Wakefield Council established a new corporate procurement team with a remit to take a strategic approach to procurement and directly contribute to the council's community strategy with a priority of developing a dynamic local economy.

Following a series of workshops on 'Winning Council Business' for regional companies during January to March 2004 (undertaken as part of the West Yorkshire Procurement Partnership), feedback from companies was that Wakefield was difficult to do business with.

An analysis of the creditors system identified that in 2003/04, 40% of approximately £135million spend went to a regional postcode. Comparative information from other large authorities suggested that the norm would be 50% to 60% spent regionally.

The Actions

In April 2004 the council's cabinet approved a series of actions to improve the council's engagement with local and regional businesses, and set a target to increase spend in the regional economy by 10% over two years. Key issues in delivering the target were to ensure compliance with procurement legislation, and to retain value for money.

Feedback from companies suggested that they had difficulty knowing whom to contact in the Council, and were not aware of potential business opportunities; therefore:

- A contact list with phone numbers and email addresses was established on the council's website (www.wakefield.gov.uk/procurement). All non-confidential procurement documents including the procurement strategy, a 'Winning Council Business' booklet plus all guidance for staff is also available on the council's website. This allows companies to find out how the council procures its goods, services and works;
- The council decided to place its tendering opportunities on the regional e-tendering website (www.counciltenders.net), which provides companies with access to council tenders and also serves as a valuable market research tool;

- The council established a major annual 'Meet the Buyer' event (the first held in November 2004). This is run in partnership with **first** (the development agency for the Wakefield District) and Business Link West Yorkshire. The event includes stands covering all commodity lines, partners and business support agencies, with presentations running throughout the day;
- A seminar was held for businesses explaining the council's housing stock transfer and the opportunities that will arise from the large housing improvement programme.

Suppliers indicated concern that they were being excluded from bidding for contracts through lack of awareness or the way in which contracts were packaged, therefore:

- The council adopted a policy whereby all major works contracts should include a local labour clause where relevant to the delivery of the contract and allowable within law;
- Workshops are provided for buyers across the authority to address how they can be more effective in engaging with local and regional suppliers and how to draft contracts so as not to preclude SMEs from bidding;
- Workshops and seminars are provided for companies to explain the tender process and to provide advice on how to respond to tenders;
- Officers are required to offer debriefs to all bidders to help them improve future bids;
- Officers are encouraged to place advance notice of tenders on the regional e-tendering website.

In 1998 the council ceased to use locally established approved lists of contractors, however:

- In September 2004 Wakefield Council launched a new approved list in partnership with Leeds City Council. This enabled Wakefield to adopt a properly managed list, and also simplified access to lists for companies, since a contractor applying to one council could automatically be included on the other council's list. This model is being rolled out to include other West Yorkshire authorities;
- The council has introduced purchasing cards that tend to be used for low value purchases with local suppliers.

The council's corporate systems were considered to be old and unable to provide meaningful analysis of suppliers, therefore:

- The council commissioned a detailed analysis of its supplier base to identify the location and type of suppliers, the nature of their business and the level of spend. This data is being used to rationalise the supplier base where spend is minimal and will not put companies at risk, and is valuable in identifying local skills shortages and employment opportunities;
- Through the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Centre of Excellence the council is intending to adopt a regional web-based contract and supplier management

system. This will be integrated with the council's new suite of financial and e-procurement systems to deliver comprehensive contract management and performance information. It will also facilitate collaborative procurement and benchmarking of contract performance across the region.

The feedback from the local business community has been positive and the council is confident that proactive engagement with local suppliers will meet the target of increasing spend by 10% regionally over the next two years.

Case study prepared by Alan Kirkham, Wakefield MDC

Website: www.wakefield.gov.uk/procurement

Contact: akirkham@wakefield.gov.uk

Dated October 2004

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CABINET

29TH JUNE 2006

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

1. INTRODUCTION

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

2. SUPPORTING/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

2.6 The study has a number of aims:-

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

3. THE SPATIAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

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

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

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

4. CONCLUSION

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

5. RECOMMENDATION(S)

5.1 That members adopt the Vision as interim policy guidance

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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

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

Contact Officer: Richard Probyn
☎ 01480 388430

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CABINET

4TH JULY 2006

GREAT FEN – MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (Report by Director of Operational Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The District Council are partners in this project together with the Wildlife Trust, English Nature and the Environment Agency. The partnership has been guided to-date by a Memorandum of Understanding which was approved by Cabinet on 20th June 2002 (Minute Ref 02/32). The project has now reached a stage where that document needs to be strengthened into a Memorandum of Agreement, which is attached.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Great Fen Project is an exciting 50 year project designed to safeguard important wildlife habitats and species by restoring over 3000 hectares of wetland around two important nature reserves in the fenland landscape of Huntingdonshire. It will also create major access, recreational and tourism opportunities that will stimulate diversification in the economy in and around the project area to the benefit of local communities and the District in general.

- 2.2 The aims of the project are as follows:

The Great Fen Project will:

- ❖ Safeguard two very important National Nature Reserves. These are legally protected sites, one of which is of international importance for its wetland habitats and species;
- ❖ Create over 3000 hectares (over 4200 football pitches) of new wildlife habitat, making a major contribution to local and national local targets as set out in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan;
- ❖ Contribute to diversification in the local economy, creating opportunities for new jobs and income streams;
- ❖ Sustainably maintain and enhance flood protection in the Middle Level drainage system;
- ❖ Create access for a wide range of users in an area largely devoid of public footpaths;
- ❖ Become a significant tourist destination;

- 2.3 The Great Fen area has been included as an area of Strategic Green Space Enhancement within the Council's Core Strategy, recently approved and deposited for formal consultation. These areas are of particular importance in the context of providing recreational and other opportunities to compliment the growth in housing and employment, as well as being important in their own right to encourage biodiversity.

- 2.4 The Memorandum does not create a legal partnership, rather it is meant to be an Agreement entered into in good faith and in the spirit of co-operation to achieve common aims. It sets out the duties of the partners and the project management arrangements. It does not bind the Council to any particular capital or revenue contributions. The

vast bulk of funding is, in any event, being sourced from grant making bodies and private donations. So far, the Council has made modest amounts available from existing budgets but has largely contributed in terms of in-house specialist expertise, particularly Planning, Economic Development and Countryside Management.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 This project is rapidly gaining a national, even international, reputation as being at the forefront of habitat restoration. Its importance to the District is not just in this important ecological work but in the wider social and economic potential. In this regard its relationship to growth areas and to the Ramsey Partnership Area and rural renewal in providing economic potential is highly significant.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 That the Director of Operational Services be authorised to sign the Memorandum of Agreement on behalf of the District Council

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

1. **The Great Fen Project Memorandum of Understanding**

Contact Officer: Malcolm Sharp, Director of Operational Services
☎ 01480 388301

Agreement for Project Partners concerning the partnership for the implementation of the Great Fen Project.

Nature of the Agreement

Nothing in this Agreement will be construed as creating a legal partnership or joint venture. The Partners enter into this Agreement in good faith and in the spirit of co-operation in order to achieve common aims.

The Agreement is between

1. ENVIRONMENT AGENCY whose administrative offices are at Rio House Waterside Drive Aztec West Almondsbury Bristol BS32 4UD;
2. ENGLISH NATURE whose administrative offices are at Northminster House Peterborough PE1 IUA;
3. WILDLIFE TRUST FOR BEDFORDSHIRE, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH LTD whose administrative offices are at the Manor House, Broad Street, Great Cambourne, Cambridge CB3 6DH; and
4. HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL whose administrative offices are at Pathfinder House, St. Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN

Contents

Page No

A	Definitions	3
B	Glossary	3
1	Project Outline.....	4
2	Duration of the Agreement.....	4
3	Funding Arrangements.....	4
4	Duties of the Partners	5
5	Project Management.....	6
6	Land Ownership.....	6
7	Administration	6
8	Copyright and Freedom of Information.....	7
9	Intellectual copyright	7
10	Insurance.....	7
11	Working Language	8
12	Governing Law	8
13	Entire Agreement.....	8
14	Notices	8
15	Nullity.....	9
16	Lapse of Time.....	9
17	Force Majeure	9
18	Legal Succession	9
19	Procurement.....	9
20	Assignment.....	9
21	Non fulfilment of obligations or delay.....	10
22	Arbitration	10
23	Termination.....	10
24	Signatures to the Agreement.....	11

A Definitions

“Agreement”	means this Agreement
“The Project”	means the Project described in the document entitled “Great Fen Project Strategy and Action Plan” of which a copy is attached as Annex 1 to this Agreement; and any modifications, deletions or expansions approved in writing by all parties
“The Partners”	means English Nature, Environment Agency, Huntingdonshire District Council, and the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough
“Project Manager”	means the individual appointed to undertake the role of managing the project.
“The Project Steering Group”	means the group of individuals representing the partners with respect to the project. It may include third party individuals and organisations from time to time as agreed by the partners.

B Glossary

EN	English Nature
EA	Environment Agency
HDC	Huntingdonshire District Council
WT	The Wildlife Trust for Cambridgeshire
PSG	Project Steering Group

1 Project Outline

- 1.1. The project is described in the document entitled “Great Fen Project Strategy and Action Plan” of which a copy is attached as Annex 1 to this Agreement; and includes any modifications, deletions or expansions approved either in writing by all parties or in confirmed Project Steering Group minutes.

2 Duration of the Agreement

- 2.1. This Agreement shall take effect on [7th October 2005]. It shall remain in force until 6th October 2010 unless further extended in accordance with paragraph 5.4. This Agreement will be reviewed annually by the Project Steering Group.

3 Funding Arrangements

- 3.1. Each partner shall seek to provide resources for the benefit of the project. Each partner may seek opportunities for external funding. Information about partner contributions and external funding is presented and considered at each Steering Group meeting.
- 3.2. External funding can be applied for independently or in partnership, but always with the knowledge of the Project Steering Group.
- 3.3. External funding bids shall be agreed and co-ordinated through the PSG.
- 3.4. Summary financial information will be presented at every Project Steering Group meeting by the Project Manager. This will include funds raised, funds applied for and what funds have been used for.

4 Duties of the Partners

- 4.1. The objective of the Partners within this Project is to co-operate and foster the implementation of the Project. The Partners commit themselves to doing everything in their power to achieve the implementation and successful outcome of the Project.
- 4.2. Each Partner will implement the portion of the Project for which they are responsible.
- 4.3. The partners will co-operate to produce a single management plan for all land secured by the project within the project area (excluding the two declared National Nature Reserves). Each partner will confirm in writing their support of the plan and subsequent changes to it.
- 4.4. No Partner shall be responsible to any other Partner (whether for breach of contract, negligence or otherwise) in respect of loss of profit, loss of revenue, or loss of contracts or for indirect or consequential loss or damages.
- 4.5. Partners can pursue legal agreements with each other, singly or severally, to execute certain activities within the scope of the project.
- 4.6. The total liability of each Partner under or in connection with this Agreement (whether for breach of contract, negligence or otherwise) shall not exceed the total contribution of the Partner, as set out in Annex 2 to this agreement.
- 4.7. Nothing contained in 4.4 or 4.5 above shall operate to exclude the liability of any Partner for death or personal injury caused by its negligence.
- 4.8. Each Partner shall be responsible for the employment of all necessary personnel and the provision of all necessary accommodation, equipment and services.
- 4.9. Each Partner undertakes to notify the Great Fen Project Steering Group of any event that is liable to prejudice or delay the performance of the Project as soon as possible and assist the Project Steering Group in rapidly finding a workable solution.
- 4.10. Each Partner will appoint (a) representative(s) to the Project Steering Group. Each partner organisation will have one vote when a vote is required at Steering Group Meetings.
- 4.11. Each Partner shall ensure the accuracy of any information it provides to any other Partner(s) for the purposes of the implementation of the Project and to notify any errors in any such information as soon as is practicable to the Partner(s) concerned. The Partner supplying the information shall be under no further obligation in respect of such error and no warranty, condition or representation of any kind is made, given or to be implied in any case as to the sufficiency, accuracy and rights of Third Parties by the use of such information. The Partner receiving that information shall in any case be responsible for the use it puts that information.

- 4.12. Each Partner shall comply at its own expense with all relevant legislation pertinent to the implementation of the Project including without limitation all health and safety legislation, legislation under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2005.
- 4.13. Each Partner shall be responsible for reporting any financial information as defined by the Project Steering Group in the format of standard accounting procedures (see para 7.1).
- 4.14. Each Partner shall be responsible for the disbursement of all monies and the use of all funds as described in the Great Fen Project Strategy and Action Plan.

5 Project Management

- 5.1. The Project will be overseen by a Project Steering Group consisting of representatives from the partner organisations listed in the Definitions above. Additional members eg specialists, may be co-opted to the Project Steering Group as necessary with the joint approval of all Partners. (Contractors may attend these meetings but it is not desirable that they should be present at all meetings or for all agenda items).
- 5.2. The Project Steering Group will meet approximately every six weeks for the purpose of reviewing the progress of the Project to date against set milestones or performance measures and to consider the future direction of the Project. All meetings will be formally minuted. The rules for conduct of business are attached as Annex 3 to this agreement.
- 5.3. A Project Manager will be employed to undertake various activities to enable the project partners to achieve the targets and objectives set out in the 'Great Fen Project Strategy', attached as Annex 1 to this Agreement. The roles and responsibilities of the Project Manager are set out in Annex 4 attached to this Agreement.
- 5.4. At the end of the duration of this agreement the Project Steering Group will consider whether the Project should continue. All partners must agree to any extension to the Agreement in writing.

6 Land Ownership

- 6.1. Land purchased for purposes of achieving the aims and objectives of the project will remain in the ownership of the purchasing partner. Partners are ultimately responsible for their own land and keeping it in good order. Section 4 above will apply.

7 Administration

- 7.1. Each Partner shall retain all and any documentation required for the implementation of the Project or any other use identified by the Project Steering Group for at least seven years. Partners shall also keep and maintain records in relation to the Project's funding arrangements as may be required by Internal or Statutory Auditors for a period of seven years. All

Partners shall reserve the right to request reasonable access to such documentation for the purposes of examining all records relating to the Project by appropriate staff.

- 7.2. Each Partner shall maintain an Inventory of any Capital item purchased for the purpose of implementing the Project and shall inform the Project Steering Group of any such purchase. All items so purchased shall remain the property of the purchasing Partner who will safeguard and maintain the item(s) in an appropriate manner.

8 Copyright and Freedom of Information

- 8.1. Ownership and copyright of any matter arising from this Project shall be deemed to be shared equally between all Partners to the Agreement in perpetuity. The use of such copyright material during the life of the Project by any Partner shall be agreed by the Project Steering Group. Access to any copyright material shall include rights of access to the Project on reasonable request.
- 8.2. Dissemination of information, publicity and any results, together with acknowledgements relating to the Project, shall be determined and agreed by the Project Steering Group taking into account the provisions of paragraph 8.3 below.
- 8.3. English Nature, the Environment Agency and Huntingdonshire District Council, are required to adhere to Freedom of Information legislation. There is therefore a presumption that information on any aspect of this project may be disclosed. The Project Steering Group has the responsibility for identifying any aspect of this Project which may not be disclosed. The basis for any such decision must be recorded. Individual Partners will advise the Steering Group of any requests for information identified for non-disclosure.

9 Intellectual copyright

- 9.1. All Intellectual Property Rights owned by Partners before the date of this Memorandum of Agreement shall remain the property of that partner.
- 9.2. All Partners will have free and unfettered use of any resulting data arising from this Project, except where the PSG agrees that confidentiality should be kept or where the Data Protection Act might be infringed. All partners will work together to jointly publish and disseminate data and results arising from this project.

10 Insurance

- 10.1. Each Partner is advised to make provision to insure themselves against all damages incurred by sub contractors and other third parties caused by the implementation of the Project and also of this Agreement.
- 10.2. Each Partner (being the organisations not the individual representatives) shall be responsible for the work to be rendered by that Partner (and any

sub contractors). Each Partner shall indemnify and hold harmless such other Partners against liabilities, damages and costs resulting from the non-compliance of their performance, duties and obligations as described in this Agreement and its annexes.

11 Working Language

11.1. The working language of this Agreement shall be English.

12 Governing Law

12.1. This Agreement will be governed under English Law.

13 Entire Agreement

13.1. The Partners agree that this Agreement constitutes the entire contract between them, except in cases described in paragraph 4.5, and may not be varied except by written agreement in the form of Addendum to be signed by all Partners.

14 Notices

14.1. Any notice to this Agreement shall be sent in writing and be sufficiently served on any Partner at the address given above, or any other address stipulated in writing by the Partner. Notices shall be served by recorded delivery in an envelope marked with the Project name. Any change in domicile shall be forwarded to the Project Manager within 15 days following the change of address, by registered mail.

15 Nullity

- 15.1. Should one of the provisions of the Agreement be declared null or void in the law governing this Agreement, this shall not render the remaining provisions null and void.
- 15.2. The fact that one of the Partners does not demand application of one of the provisions of the Agreement does not imply that this Partner waives such provision.

16 Lapse of Time

- 16.1. Legal proceedings concerning any issue from this Agreement may not be lodged before the courts more than three years after the facts giving rise to the claim or after the Partner making the claim first became aware of the facts giving rise to the claim. In the event of legal proceedings concerning a claim to refund funds, a period of three years following the last transfer shall be applied.

17 Force Majeure

- 17.1. No Partner shall be held liable for not complying with obligations ensuring from this Agreement should the non-compliance be caused by force majeure. All events or circumstances outside the reasonable control of the Partners and that impede the implementation of the Agreement shall be deemed to constitute force majeure.
- 17.2. If such a case arises, the Partner involved should notify Project Steering Group immediately in writing.

18 Legal Succession

- 18.1. In cases of legal succession the Partner is obliged to transfer all duties under this Agreement to the legal successor.

19 Procurement

- 19.1. Public sector Partners should adhere to their own procurement procedures that meet or exceed the requirements specified by EC Procurement Directives.
- 19.2. Partners may not tender for any aspect of the Project as they may have an unfair advantage from their position within the Project. Partners may undertake work for other Partners in connection with the implementation of the Project provided that they are reimbursed at cost only i.e. not for profit. Such costs may be subject to scrutiny by an auditor at the request of the Project Steering Group.

20 Assignment

- 20.1. No Partner shall assign or transfer any interest in this Agreement without prior written joint agreement by all other Partners.

21 Non fulfilment of obligations or delay

- 21.1. Should one of the Partners be in default of its obligations, the Partners may decide with two thirds majority of remaining members of the Project Steering Group to debar the defaulting partner from the Project.

22 Arbitration

- 22.1. Any dispute or difference arising from interpretation of the terms of this Agreement shall, at the option of any aggrieved Partner, be referred for arbitration by the Chartered Institute Of Arbitrators.

23 Termination

- 23.1. Any Partner to this Agreement may give three month's notice in writing of an intention to withdraw from the Agreement to the Chair of the Steering Group, giving a full explanation for the reasons for termination.
- 23.2. The remaining Partners will consider the impact of the withdrawal of the terminating Partner and decide upon appropriate action to maintain implementation of the Project.
- 23.3. The remaining Partners will not be required to take on the responsibility or financial liability of a withdrawing Partner. Should the remaining Partners choose to increase their contribution, financial or otherwise, then this will be reflected in an Addendum to the Agreement, signed by all remaining Partners.

24 Signatures to the Agreement

Signed _____
Name (please print) _____
Date _____
Organisation _____

Signed _____
Name (please print) _____
Date _____
Organisation _____

Signed _____
Name (please print) _____
Date _____
Organisation _____

Signed _____
Name (please print) _____
Date _____
Organisation _____

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**WORK PLAN: STUDIES
(Report by the Head of Administration)**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this report is to allow Members of the Panel to review their programme of studies.

2. STUDIES

2.1 The Council has a duty to improve the social, environmental and economic well-being of the District. This gives the Overview and Scrutiny Panels a wide remit to examine any issues that affect the District by conducting in-depth studies.

2.2 Studies are allocated according to the Panels' respective terms of reference. These are currently:-

Service Delivery:

Environment & Transport
Leisure
Housing & Public Health
Operations

Service Support:

Finance
Resources & Policy
Information Technology
Planning Strategy

2.3 A number of studies have commenced but not yet reached the situation where they are able to produce a final report. Details of which are set out in the table below. Members will be aware that since a number of these studies were started there have been changes to the terms of reference of both Overview and Scrutiny Panels. For the sake of continuity these studies are being continued by the Panel in which they were started and have been allocated between the Panels accordingly.

STUDY	PANEL
Twining	Service Delivery
Rural Economy and Services in Huntingdonshire	Service Delivery
The Council's Staff Travel Plan	Service Support
Older Persons Public Health Needs	Service Delivery
Kerbside Sorting of Recycling and Glass Recycling	Service Delivery
Procedural Arrangements for Development Control and Member's involvement in the process.	Service Support
43	

Cleaning Regimes in Town Centres	Service Delivery
Policy on Sale of Council Land	Service Delivery
Implications of Local Procurement	Service Support
Cycling Provision	Service Delivery
Highways Maintenance	Service Delivery
Traffic Enforcement	Service Delivery

- 2.4 Members will also be aware that an informal meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) has been arranged for Tuesday 4th July 2006 to discuss the potential work programme for the current year. A verbal update, including details of any proposed study areas will be provided at the meeting.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Panel is requested to note the progress of the studies selected.

Contact Officer: Mrs C Bulman - ☎ (01480) 388234.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Minutes and Reports from previous meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Prepared by Councillor I C Bates
Date of Publication: 16th June 2006
For Period: 1 July 2006 to 31 October 2006

Membership of the Cabinet is as follows:-

Councillor I C Bates	- Leader of the Council	4 Church End Hilton Huntingdon PE28 9NJ Tel: 01480 830250 E-mail: Ian.Bates@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor L M Simpson	- Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Headquarters and Information Technology	45 Devoke Close Stukeley Meadows Huntingdon Cambs PE29 6XE Tel: 01480 388946 E-mail: Mike.Simpson@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor P L E Bucknell	- Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy	Compass House Pathfinder Way Warboys PE28 2RD Tel: 01487 824222 E-mail: Peter.Bucknell@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor Mrs J Chandler	- Executive Councillor for Leisure	28 Beech Drive St Ives Cambs PE27 6UB Tel: 01480 388925 E-mail: Jean.Chandler@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor N J Guyatt	- Executive Councillor for Environment and Transport	6 Church Lane Stibington Cambs PE8 6LP Tel: 01780 782827 E-mail: Nick.Guyatt@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor A Hansard	- Executive Councillor for Resources and Policy	78 Potton Road Eynesbury St Neots PE19 2NN Tel: 01480 388942 E-mail: Andrew.Hansard@huntsdc.gov.uk

Councillor Mrs P J Longford - Executive Councillor for Operations	46 Avenue Road St Neots PE19 1LH Tel: 01480 214633 E-mail: Paula.Longford@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor Mrs D C Reynolds - Executive Councillor for Housing and Public Health	17 Virginia Way St Ives PE27 6SQ Tel: 01480 388935 E-mail: Deborah.Reynolds@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor T V Rogers - Executive Councillor for Finance	Honeysuckle Cottage 34 Meadow Lane Earith Huntingdon PE28 3QE Tel: 01487 840477 E-mail: Terence.Rogers@huntsdc.gov.uk

Any person who wishes to make representations to the decision maker about a decision which is to be made may do so by contacting Mrs Helen Taylor, Senior Democratic Services Officer on 01480 388008 or E-mail: Helen.Taylor@huntsdc.gov.uk not less than 14 days prior to the date when the decision is to be made.

The documents available may be obtained by contacting the relevant officer shown in this plan who will be responsible for preparing the final report to be submitted to the decision maker on the matter in relation to which the decision is to be made. Similarly any enquiries as to the subject or matter to be tabled for decision or on the availability of supporting information or documentation should be directed to the relevant officer.

Roy Reeves
Head of Administration

Notes:- (i) Additions/significant changes from the previous Forward are annotated ***
(ii) For information about how representations about the above decisions may be made please see the Council's Petitions Procedure at <http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/3F6CFE28-C5F0-4BA0-9BF2-76EBAE06C89D/0/Petitionsleaflet.pdf> or telephone 01480 388006

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
To consider the Quality of Life Strategies for:- Arts Culture, Major Sports Facilities, & Green Infrastructure produced by Cambridgeshire Horizons***	Cabinet	20 Jul 2006	None.	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Note the contents and seek opinion as to whether HDC should include contributions towards these strategies in our own SPD.	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Great Fen Project - Memorandum of Agreement	Cabinet	20 Jul 2006	Draft Memorandum of Agreement	Malcolm Sharp, Director of Operational Services Tel No 01480 388301 or e-mail Malcolm.Sharp@huntsdc.gov.uk		P L E Bucknell	Service Support
47 Amendment to Housing Register Priority System in light of Property Health & Safety Rating System	Cabinet	20 Jul 2006	Implementation of the Housing Act 2004: Regulations and Guidance	Jon Collen, Housing Needs and Resources Manager Tel No 01480 388220 or e-mail Jon.Collen@huntsdc.gov.uk		Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery
To consult on St Neots Conservation Area Character Statement and Boundary Review	Cabinet	20 Jul 2006	St Neots Vision	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Consultation on draft will take place after approval by Cabinet on draft document	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Unit 10, Glebe Road, Huntingdon - Sale of Freehold to Occupier	Cabinet	20 Jul 2006	Exempt Report	Keith Phillips, Estates Manager and Property Manager Tel No 01480 388260 or e-mail Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk		A Hansard	Service Support

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Housing Strategy with supporting documents Empty Homes Strategy and Private Sector Housing Strategy	Cabinet	20 Jul 2006	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister Housing Strategy Guidance Huntingdonshire District Council Housing Strategy 2004-7	Jo Barrett, Housing Strategy Manager Tel No 01480 388203 or e-mail Jo.Barrett@huntsdc.gov.uk	Partners and Stakeholders	Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery
Agreements for the extension to Paxton Pits Nature Reserve	Cabinet	20 Jul 2006	Development Control Panel Decision - Nov 2005 Cambridgeshire County Council - Development Control Committee Report: 27th March 06	Keith Phillips, Estates Manager and Property Manager Tel No 01480 388260 or e-mail Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk or Pat Knight, Countryside Services Manager, Tel No 01480 388422 or e-mail Pat.Knight@huntsdc.gov.uk	Extensive consultation with statutory bodies/local groups and interested parties through County Council mineral planning procedures	Mrs J Chandler	Service Support
Enforcement Policy for Private Sector Housing	Cabinet	20 Jul 2006	Draft Enforcement Policy	John Allan, Public Health Manager Tel No 01480 388281 or e-mail John.Allen@huntsdc.gov.uk		Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery
Oxmoor Property Implications	Cabinet	7 Sep 2006	Report to Cabinet - 16.12.04 Report to Cabinet - 15.12.05	Keith Phillips, Estates Manager and Property Manager Tel No 01480 388260 or e-mail Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk	Internal consultation	A Hansard	Service Support
Financial Strategy	Cabinet Council	7 Sep 2006 27 Sep 2006	2006/07 Report	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No 01480 388103 or e-mail Steve.Couper@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate Strategy Framework) – 5 Sept.06	T V Rogers	Corporate Strategy Framework

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Choice Based Lettings - Sub-Regional Scheme	Cabinet	7 Sep 2006	Bid document for Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) funding and ODPM bid guidance	Jon Collen, Housing Needs and Resources Manager Tel No 01480 388220 or e-mail Jon.Collen@huntsdc.gov.uk	Register applicants and stakeholders	Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery
To adopt Urban Design Framework for St Mary's Village	Cabinet	7 Sep 2006	Draft Urban Design Framework	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having followed consultation with the public and statutory bodies	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Race Equality Scheme	Council	27 Sep 2006	Existing Race Equality Scheme and current draft Race Equality Scheme	Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy Tel No 01480 388005 or e-mail Ian.L Leatherbarrow@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Panels Peterborough Race Equality Council Cambridge Ethnic Community Forum	A Hansard	Service Support
Land South of High Street, Ramsey - Urban Design Framework	Cabinet	28 Sep 2006	Ramsey Conservation Character Statement	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Consultation on draft will take place after approval by Cabinet on draft boundaries	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
To adopt Broughton Character Assessment and Management Plan	Cabinet	28 Sep 2006	Draft Conservation Character Statement and Management Plan	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having followed consultation with the public and statutory bodies	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
To adopt Warboys Character Assessment and Management Plan	Cabinet	28 Sep 2006	Draft Conservation Character Statement and Management Plan	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having followed consultation with the public and statutory bodies	P L E Bucknell	Service Support

Subject/Matter for Decision	Decision/ recommendation to be made by	Date decision to be taken	Documents Available	How relevant Officer can be contacted	Consultation	Relevant Executive Councillor	Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Panel
To approve the St Ives Market Towns Transport Strategy	Cabinet	28 Sep 2006	Draft Market Towns	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Support and endorse the document having followed consultations with the public and statutory bodies	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
To adopt St Neots Conservation Area Character Statement and new Boundary	Cabinet	19 Oct 2006	St Neots Conservation Character Statement and new boundary in draft and comments	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No 01480 388430 or e-mail Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having followed consultation with the public and statutory bodies	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Travel Plan***	Cabinet	19 Oct 2006	Draft Travel Plan	Richard Preston, Head of Technical Services Richard Preston, Head of Technical Services, Tel No 01480 388340	Employees	P L E Bucknell	Service Delivery

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE SUPPORT)

11TH JULY 2006

PROGRESS TO DATE (Report by the Head of Administration)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Panel have asked for the submission of a brief progress report to their monthly meetings to monitor action taken and the response to any recommendations which they have made.

2. PROGRESS REPORT


- 2.1 The monthly progress report therefore is attached which covers all outstanding items. Actions previously reported upon as having been completed have been deleted from the report as the process rolls forward. The report is in tabular form and comprises a brief synopsis of the Panel's decisions and the subsequent action taken.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The Panel are requested to note the contents of the attached report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Minutes and Reports of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Internal/Planning and Finance)

Contact Officer: Mrs C Bulman – Democratic Services Officer
 (01480) 388234

Panel Date	<u>Decision</u>	Action	Response	Date
14/02/06	<p><u>Police Community Support Staff – Governance Protocol</u></p> <p>PCSO Sub Group to be reconvened and requested to consider the District Council's financial contribution to the employment of PCSOs in Huntingdonshire.</p>	<p>Meeting held on 10th April 2006. Head of Environmental & Community Health to prepare a future report outlining a series of options for reducing the District Council's contribution to the scheme without any impact on the service provided in the community. Future consideration to be given to future role of sub-group if the District Council were no longer financing the initiative.</p>		
13/06/06	<p>Panel has recommended the Cabinet to withdraw the District Council's financial contribution to the employment of PCSOs at the earliest opportunity on the understanding that this will not reduce the number of officers deployed in Huntingdonshire.</p> <p>Panel has also recommended that the Community Safety Partnership's quarterly crime report for Huntingdonshire be circulated to all Members of the Council.</p> <p>PCSO working group to be disbanded</p>	<p>Recommendations submitted to Cabinet meeting on 29th June 2006.</p>	<p>Recommendations approved by the Cabinet.</p>	

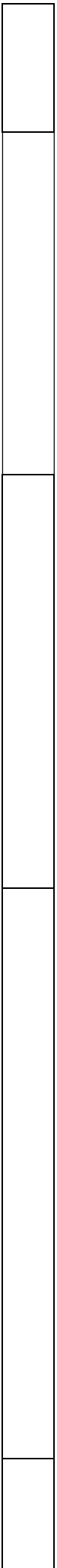
Panel Date	<u>Decision</u>	Action	Response	Date
08/02/05	<u>The Council's Travel Plan</u> Consideration to be given to the draft Action Plan prior to its determination by the Cabinet.		Report to be submitted to future meeting.	
14/03/06	Update on progress requested.		Travel Plan to be progressed over the summer and submitted to Panel / Cabinet in Autumn.	Autumn 06
13/06/06	Expressed their desire for the Plan to be comprehensive and to contain alternatives other than the use of cars for employees to travel to work.	Comments conveyed to Head of Technical Service. Informed that Plan will be submitted to the Panel's September meeting		Sept 06
14/4/05	<u>Use of S106 monies</u> Quarterly reports to be submitted to the Panel. Consideration to be given to the monitoring of expenditure by Cambridge Horizons on infrastructure development at a future meeting.		Next Report to be submitted September 06. (To include information to illustrate those areas where expenditure has occurred over the quarter.	Sept 06

<u>Panel Date</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Action</u>	Response	Date		
<u>14/06/05</u>	<p><u>“Growing Success”: A Corporate Plan</u></p> <p>Noted that the Panel would be receiving quarterly reports against the targets in the Plan and other indicators.</p>	<p>Initial Training Session for working group held. Training also held on priority and objective setting for all Members of the Panel. Meetings of working group to be arranged in July / August. Report to be submitted to September’s Corporate & Strategic Framework Panel.</p>	<p>Next Report due September 06.</p>	<p>Sept 06</p>		
<u>13/06/05</u>	<p>Endorsed the process for reviewing and updating the Council’s Corporate Plan. Appointed Chairman, Vice Chairman and Councillor D B Dew on the working group established to undertake the review.</p>				<u>11/04/06</u>	<p><u>Procedural Arrangements for Development Control & Members involvement in the process.</u></p> <p>Agreed to widen the review to include other aspects of the determination process and to establish a working group for the purpose of undertaking this review. Councillors J A Gray, M F Newman, J W Davies and M G Baker appointed to working group. Councillor J A Gray to act as rapporteur.</p>
<u>11/04/06</u>	<p><u>Procedural Arrangements for Development Control & Members involvement in the process.</u></p> <p>Agreed to widen the review to include other aspects of the determination process and to establish a working group for the purpose of undertaking this review. Councillors J A Gray, M F Newman, J W Davies and M G Baker appointed to working group. Councillor J A Gray to act as rapporteur.</p>	<p>First meeting of the Working Group held on 1st June 2006. Agreed to review / consider a number of issues related to the process. Noted that public involvement was being considered separately by the Planning Division.</p>	<p>Further meetings arranged with Head of Planning Services / Planning Champion / Chairman & Vice Chairman of Development Control Panel. Outcomes of both reviews expected to be presented to Panel’s September meeting.</p>	<p>Sept 06</p>		

Panel Date	<u>Decision</u>	Action	Response	Date
<u>13/09/05</u>	<p><u>Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2006 to 2011</u></p> <p>Having expressed dissatisfaction with various aspects of the County Council's current speed management policy, Panel concluded that the relevant County Council's Scrutiny Panel be requested to investigate the subject and County Councillor P J Downes be asked to pursue the matter on the Panel's behalf.</p>	<p>Matter considered by County Council's Environment & Community Services Scrutiny Panel.</p>	<p>A report was considered by the Environment & Community Service Scrutiny Panel on 23rd November 2005. In considering the report, the Committee agreed to defer any consideration of the County's Speed Policy until the Department for Transport had published its guidance on rural roads and agreed to wait until March / April time to see whether the guidance has come through. The item was subsequently placed on the Committee's forward work programme as something which could be addressed in the future. County Council is still awaiting the DFT guidance.</p>	
<u>11/04/06</u>	<p>Head of Administration requested to ascertain whether the Panel's request to the County Council for a review of their speed management policies was being progressed.</p>	<p>Email sent to County Council Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordinator – awaiting response.</p>		
<u>13/06/06</u>	<p>Head of Administration again asked to ascertain the current situation in respect of the Panel's request.</p>	<p>Email sent to County Council Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordinator</p>	<p>DFT guidance still awaited. Once guidance is received O&S Committee will do some preliminary work to determine whether a more detailed piece of work would add value</p>	

<u>Panel Date</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>14/03/06</u>	<u>Base Budget Review</u> Executive Councillor for Leisure Services to provide a summary at a future meeting with regard to the implications of establishing alternative methods of managing the leisure centre service.	Head of Administration to submit a summary to a future meeting.		
<u>13/12/05</u>	<u>Implementing IEG Statement 2005</u> Copy of report on the use of mobile technology within the Benefits division to be circulated when available, to include details of cost implementation.		Report to be submitted to Panel's October meeting.	Oct 2006
<u>11/04/05</u>	<u>Implementing IEG Statement 2006</u> Requested further information in respect of the implementation of the implications of the Government's introduction of Direct.gov.		Report to be submitted to Panel's September meeting.	Sept 2006
<u>10/01/06</u>	<u>Local Area Agreements</u> Head of Policy to investigate feasibility of the results of the quarterly monitoring of the LAA and LPSA performance being reported to the relevant O&S Panels.			
<u>10/01/06</u>	<u>Local Procurement</u> Study to be undertaken into the implications of local procurement.	Report to be presented to July 2006 Panel meeting.		July 2006
<u>11/04/06</u>	<u>Workplan Studies</u>			

	Arrangements to be made to convene an informal meeting during the latter part of June 2006 to discuss the Panel's work programme for the forthcoming year.		Meeting arranged for 4 th July 2006.	July 2006
<u>Panel Date</u>	<u>Decision</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Response</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>11/04/06</u>	<p><u>Forward Plan</u></p> <p>Copies of the following reports to be circulated to Members as they became available:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Memorandum of Agreement for Great Fen Project ➤ Review of payments from recycling credits 	Report Authors requested to circulate information when available.	Copy of Cabinet report circulated to all Members. At the request of the Chairman, this has been included on the Panel's July agenda.	
<u>13/06/06</u>	<p>Identified the following items as being of interest to Panel Members:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consultation on Affordable Housing SPD ➤ Huntingdon Town Centre Revisited ➤ St Ives Market Towns Transport Strategy <p>Head of Administration requested to ascertain the financial implications of the proposed extension to Paxton Pitts Nature reserve and report back to the Chairman and Vice Chairman.</p>	<p>Copy of Cabinet report circulated to all Members for comments.</p> <p>Included on July Agenda</p> <p>Copy of report to be circulated in due course. Members to be invited to notify the Head if they wish to consider this item at a future Panel meeting.</p> <p>Information provided to Chairman / Vice Chairman. At the suggestion of the Chairman, information circulated to all Panel Members for information.</p>	<p>Agreed with Chairman that any issues emerging could be discussed under the progress report.</p>	



HDC Decision Digest

Edition 64

Monthly summary of the decisions taken at meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny and other Panels for the period 8th May to 23rd June 2006.

REDUNDANCY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Arising from a decision by an Employment Tribunal in connection with the selection of an employee for redundancy and some minor changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme, the Employment Panel has approved amendments to the Council's Redundancy Policy and Procedure. The Panel has agreed that other than in exceptional circumstances, fixed term contracts, in future, should not be issued to employees for more than one year's duration or extended such that the aggregate exceeds more than a year.

STAFF RELOCATION PACKAGES – STAMP DUTY

Having regard to the impact of rising house prices since the inclusion of an allowance for stamp duty in the removal package for newly appointed staff who need to relocate to the area, the Employment Panel has agreed to cap the allowance payable under the scheme to the relevant rate up to a maximum of £14,150.

REQUESTS TO FILL VACANT POSTS

Having considered the circumstances applicable to vacancies within the Operational Services and Commerce and Technology Directorates for a:

- ◆ Development Control Manager;

- ◆ Supervising Inspector – Arboricultural;
- ◆ Helpdesk Analyst; and
- ◆ Housing Advice and Options Officer.

the Panel has authorised the Head of HR and Payroll Services to commence recruitment in each case.

EARLY TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

In the interests of the efficient exercise of the Council's functions, the Employment Panel has agreed to terminate the early employment of a member of staff in the Housing Services Division and the terms of a severance package.

FINANCIAL STRATEGY, MEDIUM TERM PLAN 2007 – 2011 AND BUDGET 2006/07

The Leader of the Council and Executive Councillor for Finance have attended a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) to explain the Cabinet's decision to reject the Panel's request for additional consultation on future reductions in Council expenditure.

The Panel has been advised that in reaching their decision, the Cabinet was of the opinion that there were sufficient opportunities already for Members of the Scrutiny Panel to consider and review the Council's Budget and medium term plan and that the Cabinet

had been mindful of the need to identify and implement efficiency savings as and when opportunities arose. The Panel has been assured by the Leader of the Council that work is ongoing to identify savings to achieve the Council's target for expenditure reductions in the current year.

The Panel has also been assured that there will be ample opportunity for Members of the Corporate and Strategic Framework Panel to consider modifications to the Medium Term Plan, together with the outcome of the current budgetary review at their forthcoming meetings. In the meantime, Members have been encouraged to submit any proposals for possible savings in revenue expenditure or in the Medium Term Plan which would be considered by the Council.

POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) has been acquainted with the deliberations of its Police Community Support Officers' Working Group which has considered the District Council's financial contribution to the Employment of PCSOs in Huntingdonshire.

Having regard to the availability of substantial additional funding from the Neighbourhood Policing Fund, the Panel had recommended the Cabinet to withdraw the District Council's funding for the employment of PCSOs at the earliest opportunity, on the understanding that this will not reduce the number of Officers deployed within Huntingdonshire.

To enable all Members to be aware of the situation locally, the Panel has also recommended that the Community Safety Partnership's quarterly crime report for Huntingdonshire be made

available, in future, to Members of the Council. The Panel's recommendations will be considered in due course by the Cabinet.

Having regard to the nature of their recommendations to Cabinet, the Panel has also decided to disband their PCSO Working Group.

MONITORING SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS: PLANNING OBLIGATIONS

The quarterly monitoring report listing the receipt and expenditure of money negotiated under Section 106 Agreements has been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support). The Panel has reiterated the need for payments to be received and expended in a timely fashion and has requested that information be incorporated within the next update to illustrate those areas where expenditure had occurred over the quarter.

SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE – A GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

The Development Control Panel has welcomed the publication of a Good Practice Guide produced under a joint initiative by Cambridgeshire Horizons and the County Council to assist those involved in the planning, design and construction of new development in Cambridgeshire. The guidance gives advice on sustainable construction issues in terms of climate change, energy, waste, water and materials in accordance with key principles set out in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, 2003. Although fully supportive of the principles contained in the document, the Panel were concerned at the weight they would carry with developers and were assured that their inclusion in the structure plan and core policies would

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more than encourage developers to comply.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK (UDF) MASTER PLAN: ST. MARY'S URBAN VILLAGE, ST. NEOTS

Having acknowledged the opportunities that redevelopment of land to the west of St. Mary's Church between the High Street and Brook Street, St. Neots would offer to remove current inappropriate uses and improve car parking, pedestrian links and the environment generally in that part of the town, the Development Control Panel has recommended the Cabinet to adopt the UDF and Master Plan document for St. Mary's Urban Village as Interim Planning Guidance.

BROUGHTON AND WARBOYS CONSERVATION AREAS: DRAFT CHARACTER STATEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS

In response to Best Practice guidance published by English Heritage and Best Value Performance Indicator (BPVI) criteria relating to the production of Conservation Area Character Statements and Management Plans on a five-year programme, the Panel has endorsed the content of and recommended the Cabinet to adopt updated Character Statements and Management Plans produced for both Broughton and Warboys as Council policy.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Seven applications were considered by the Development Control Panel in June and of these four were approved and three refused.

The meeting attracted great public interest because the Panel considered and subsequently refused an application for the erection of a poultry

unit to accommodate around 500,000 birds on a site close to Lodge Farm, Low Road, Little Stukeley. Whilst the application was refused largely on the basis of an inadequate Environmental Statement, the Panel considered that the proposal would also have had a totally unacceptable impact upon the landscape and conflict, therefore with Structure Plan, Local Plan and Core Policies.

GROWING SUCCESS – CORPORATE PLAN AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Cabinet has endorsed a draft timetable for reviewing and updating the Council's Corporate Plan "Growing Success". This includes local performance indicators and targets, an improvement plan and objectives supporting the achievements of the Council's priorities. The review is intended to link the Council's objectives with significant activities or projects, along with the day-to-day activities set out in the service plans. With this in mind, the Cabinet has noted performance data for 2005/06 and revised targets for 2006/07.

Having regard to the role of Overview and Scrutiny in this process, a Cross Panel Working Group has been established to lead on the review of the Council's objectives and the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) has nominated its Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Councillor D B Dew for this purpose. Councillor R W J Eaton will represent the Service Delivery Scrutiny Panel

In their discussion, the Scrutiny Service Delivery Panel has discussed the end of year results for local and national indicators. In particular Members have considered the Council's performance in relation to the collection of non-domestic rates, the electronic delivery of services, grant aid for legal advice for local residents that had the quality

mark, domestic burglaries, processing notification of changes to circumstances, land and highways cleanliness, economic development and affordable housing. With reference to a local indicator on the Council's employees, Members have been reminded that the action plan arising from the employee opinion survey will be submitted to a future meeting. The Service Delivery Panel also has commented on the format of the performance monitoring report, following which it has been agreed that the inclusion of the quartile in which the Council's performance for each indicator fell, development of qualitative measures and prioritisation and weighting of indicators will be included in the review.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

The Cabinet and Employment Panel have endorsed the content of the Council's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy. The Policy outlines good practice for the safety of young people and vulnerable adults using the Council's services and should protect employees and Councillors from false allegations. The policy has been developed by an Officer Working Group comprising representatives from Leisure Development, Leisure Centres, Policy and Personnel, and has evolved using recommended best practice and from liaison with other Councils in Cambridgeshire. Issues regarding the procedure, portability and cost of criminal record bureau checks will be discussed at the Corporate Governance Panel.

MEDIUM TERM PLAN: REQUESTS FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

The Cabinet has agreed to release appropriate funding from the Council's Medium Term Plan for the

establishment of a choice based letting scheme across the Cambridge Sub-Region.

A14 ELLINGTON TO FEN DITTON – HUNTINGDON VIADUCT TECHNICAL STUDY

The outcome of a jointly commissioned technical study on the implications of the retention or removal of the existing A14 viaduct at Huntingdon as part of the Highways Agency's upgrade of the road from Ellington to Fen Ditton has been reported to the Cabinet. The study has concluded that the original CHUMMS option is viable and that the highway network in Huntingdon could be modified to accommodate the removal of the A14 viaduct and the construction of new highway links and junctions designed to improve the local road network. Having recognised the benefits that these developments would have in terms of separating local and through traffic, improving traffic movements between and around Huntingdon, Godmanchester and Hinchingsbrooke and the opportunities for regeneration and development in the area, the Cabinet has decided to -

- ◆ endorse the Consultant's Study for submission to the Secretary of State, for consideration as part of the options for the development of the A14 improvements scheme;
- ◆ support the principles of the CHUMMS Options Strategy presented at the Highways Agency's, Public Consultation in 2005; and
- ◆ write to the Secretary of State urging the development of the new highway links in Huntingdon as part of the A14 scheme in consultation with the County and District

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Council's and the promotion of necessary statutory orders for such links along with those that will be required for the wider A14 scheme and its associated local access roads.

Having raised a number of specific issues arising from the report and been informed that the study would now form part of the review of the Huntingdon Vision which is expected to be approved for public consultation shortly, the Overview and Scrutiny (Service Support) Panel has agreed to note the study and the Cabinet's decision.

BUDGET AND MTP PROCESS 2007 - 2012

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate and Strategic Framework) has recommended the Cabinet to approve a timetable and strategy for the review of the financial strategy, the 2007/08 budget and 2008/12 medium term plan. In discussing the process, Members have queried the format of the report to be submitted to their meeting in September, and, in response, they have been informed that it will contain overall forecasts of the Council's position. Then, in response to concerns expressed regarding the length of time the review will take under the proposed timetable, Members have been advised of the key components of the review and how these relate to the proposed timescale. The Panel also has been informed of the reasons why the review process cannot be completed in advance of the timetable.

The Panel has noted the savings that will be required in the period to 2016/17 and the procedure that will be followed to identify them. In response

to a question on Members' role in the process, the Panel has been informed that they will be presented with prioritised potential savings which they will be expected to consider and comment on at their meeting in November. The Panel has emphasised the need for the timetable for the identification of prioritised potential savings to be adhered to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 – FORWARD PLAN

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) has requested Councillor D Harty to investigate items appearing in the forward plan relating to an enforcement policy for private sector housing and on agreements for the extension of Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and to ascertain whether, either needs to be considered by the Panel.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – PROCEDURE, REMIT AND STUDIES

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) has been reminded of the remits of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels and the processes involved in their work. Members' attention has been drawn to the importance of the forward plan procedure which assists with pre-scrutiny of Cabinet matters and helps avoid call-in decisions.

The Panel has reviewed its programme of studies. With regard to the study on twinning it has been agreed that the Working Group carrying out the study should meet as soon as possible to conclude the study. In discussing the study on the rural economy and services, Members concurred with a suggestion that the meeting with the patient and public information in health forum should be deferred for twelve months in order that the effects of changes to dentistry services can be

assessed. On the same study, the Panel has considered whether it could be extended to any other sectors of the rural community. Having discussed farming, affordable housing and youth facilities, Councillor R W D Bailey has been requested to consider whether there are any areas where the study can usefully be pursued and to report back to the Panel.

The Panel has agreed to request the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) to undertake a study on cycling provision in the District and, having discussed the merit of a study on highways maintenance, Members have agreed to request the permission of the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) to undertake the study, which falls within his Panel's remit. It also has been agreed to carry out a study into the possibility of introducing a traffic enforcement scheme to be delivered by town and parish councils.

APPOINTMENTS

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) has appointed Councillor D J Priestman to the Flood Forum and Councillor K J Churchill as the Council's substitute on the Cambridgeshire County Council Health and Adult Social care scrutiny committee.

SCRUTINY

The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) has been informed that Ms G Hanby has been appointed on a twelve month temporary contract to continue her work on young peoples' active involvement.