

A meeting of the **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY)** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **TUESDAY, 6TH NOVEMBER 2007** at **7:00 PM** and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

**Contact
(01480)**

APOLOGIES

1. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 2)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 2nd October 2007.

**A Roberts
388009**

2 Minutes

2. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

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

2 Minutes

3. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - FORWARD PLAN (Pages 3 - 10)

A copy of the current Forward Plan, which was published on 12th October 2007, is attached. Members are invited to note the Plan and to comment as appropriate on any items contained therein.

**R Reeves
388003**

15 Minutes

4. A SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMY STRATEGY FOR HUNTINGDONSHIRE (Pages 11 - 36)

To consider and comment on a report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services to which is attached a draft Sustainable Local Economy Strategy for Huntingdonshire.

**C Garbett
388459**

30 Minutes

5. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP STUDY – SCOPING REPORT (Pages 37 - 50)

To consider a report by the Head of Administration setting out areas for study and possible further information requirements as part of the study on the Strategic Partnership.

**A Roberts
388009**

6. WORKING GROUPS

(a) Youth Forum (Pages 51 - 56)

To consider the final report of the Youth Forum Working Group.

**A Roberts
388009**

10 Minutes

(b) State of the District Consultation (Pages 57 - 60)

To consider a progress report on the work of the State of the District Consultation Working Group.

**A Roberts
388009**

10 Minutes

(c) Adoption of Roads and Sewers (Pages 61 - 62)

To consider a progress report on the work of the Adoption of Roads and Sewers Working Group.

**A Roberts
388009**

10 Minutes

7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY) - PROGRESS (Pages 63 - 72)

To consider a report by the Head of Administration on the Panel's programme of studies.

**A Roberts
388009**

10 Minutes

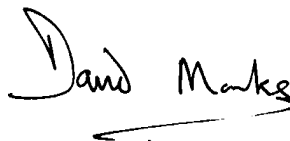
8. SCRUTINY

To scrutinise decisions taken since the last meeting as set out in the Decision Digest (**TO FOLLOW**) and to raise any other matters for scrutiny that fall within the remit of the Panel.

**A Roberts
388009**

15 Minutes

Dated this 26th day of October 2007



Chief Executive

Notes

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*

- (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, their family or any person with whom they had a close association;*
 - (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 £25,000; 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 A Roberts, Democratic Services Officer, Tel No 01480 388009/e-mail: Anthony.Roberts@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 car park adjacent to the Methodist Church on the High Street (opposite Prima's Italian Restaurant).

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Agenda Item 1

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY) held in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Tuesday, 2nd October 2007.

PRESENT: Councillor S J Criswell – Chairman.

Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, Mrs K E Cooper, J E Garner, D A Giles, Mrs C A Godley, Mrs P A Jordan and J S Watt.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors J D Ablewhite, E R Butler, K J Churchill, D Harty, P G Mitchell, J M Sadler and P K Ursell.

28. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

30. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 - FORWARD PLAN

The Panel considered the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which had been prepared by the Leader for the period 1st October 2007 – 31st January 2008. Members requested that an item on Migrant Workers in Huntingdonshire was submitted to a future meeting.

It was reported items on the Consultation and Engagement Strategy and on the Local Economy Strategy would be submitted to the next meeting.

31. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the Council's performance against "Growing Success" – the Council's Corporate Plan. Members were reminded that the data presented related to the Council's priorities that fell within their remit and that the Council continued to monitor its performance against all of its aims and objectives and details were available if required.

With regard to the Council's homelessness objectives, attention was drawn to the risks that might hinder the provision of affordable housing. Members requested that future reports include the number and proportion of housing completions on qualifying sites that were affordable.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report be noted.

32. MARKET UPDATE 2006/07

Pursuant to Minute No. 06/52 (b), the Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Operations (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book), which contained updated information on the District's markets.

Subject to Councillor J D Ablewhite identifying matters to pursue and to the circulation to Members of information on the markets budget and on the Ramsey market, it was decided not to undertake any further study work in this area.

33. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Panel gave consideration to a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was attached an Internal Audit Report on Overview and Scrutiny. Attention was drawn to the finding that overall the Overview and Scrutiny function at the Council was performing well and suggested recommendations for improvements. Having approved amendments to the study template which were intended to address the identified audit actions, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that audit report be noted; and
- (b) that the actions agreed with Deloitte and Touche Public Sector to address the residual risks as summarised in the report now submitted be endorsed.

34. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SERVICE DELIVERY) - PROGRESS

The Panel received and noted a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which contained details of actions taken in response to recent discussions and decisions and reviewing the programme of studies.

With regard to the study on disability access, Members suggested that additional information might usefully be obtained from Directions Plus and the Papworth Trust.

35. SCRUTINY

In scrutinising the 76th edition of the Digest of Decisions taken by the Cabinet and other Panels, etc. Councillor J E Garner referred to the benefit derived by the Council from the Great Fen Project.

Chairman

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

Councillor I C Bates
12th October 2007
1st November 2007 to 29th February 2008

Prepared by
Date of Publication:
For Period:

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 Cams PE29 6XE Tel: 01480 388946 E-mail: Mike.Simpson@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor P L E Bucknell	- Executive Councillor for Planning Strategy, Environment and Transport	Compass House Pathfinder Way Warboys PE28 2RD Tel: 01487 824222 E-mail: Peter.Bucknell@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor D B Dew	- Executive Councillor for Leisure Centres	4 Weir Road Hemingford Grey Huntingdon PE28 9EH Tel: 01480 469814 E-mail: Douglas.Dew@huntsdc.gov.uk
Councillor C R Hyams	- Executive Councillor for Operations, Parks and Countryside	22 Bluegate Godmanchester Huntingdon Cams PE29 2EZ E-mail: Colin.Hyams@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 D C Reynolds	- Executive Councillor for Housing and 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 Plan are annotated ***

4 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
Growing Success Performance Reports***	Cabinet	8 Nov 2007	None.	Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy and Strategic Services Tel No. 01480 388005 or email - Ian.L Leatherbarrow@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Panels.	A Hansard	Service Delivery
Homelessness Prevention Fund	Cabinet	8 Nov 2007	CLG Homelessness Prevention Good Practice & Guidance	Jon Collen, Housing Needs and Resources Manager Tel No. 01480 388220 - email - Jon.Collen@huntsdc.gov.uk		Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery

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
Decent Homes for Vulnerable People in the Private Sector	Cabinet	8 Nov 2007	http://www.huntsdc.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres.57940FOE-C100-4761-9A2A-A900591D1934/0/finalhousingstrategy.pdf - A Decent Home Definition and Guidance for Implementation, 7 June 2006, CLG, http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1152190 - The Decent Homes Target Implementation Plan, June 2003, CLG, http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1152202	Steve Plant, Head of Housing Services Tel No. 01480 388242 - email - Steve.Plant@huntsdc.gov.uk		Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery and Resources
Kerbside Collection of Glass for Recycling	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Panel - 3rd October 2006	Robert Ward, Head of Operations Tel No. 01480 388635 or email - Robert.Ward@huntsdc.gov.uk	None	C Hyams	Service Delivery
Caxton Road Depot, St. Ives - development of new industrial/commercial units	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Estates File - C/165	Keith Phillips, Estates Manager and Property Manager Tel No. 01480 388260 or email - Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk	Not applicable.	A Hansard	Service Support
Communications and Marketing Strategy	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Existing communications and engagement strategy	Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy and Strategic Services Tel No. 01480 388005 - email - Ian.L Leatherbarrow@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
Local Economy Strategy	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Existing LES	Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy and Strategic Services Tel No. 01480 388005 - email - Ian.L.leatherbarrow@huntsdc.gov.uk	Business Community Stakeholders via Hunts Strategic Partnership	A Hansard	Service Delivery
Consultation and Engagement Strategy	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Existing communications consultation strategy	Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy and Strategic Services Tel: 01480 388005 - email - Ian.L.leatherbarrow@huntsdc.gov.uk		A Hansard	Service Delivery
Core Strategy Preferred Options	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Issues and Options Report and Summary of Representations	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for Consultation	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Development Control Policies Preferred Options	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Issues and Options Report and Summary of Representations	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for Consultation	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Statement of Licensing Policy	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Draft Statement of Licensing Policy - Existing Statement of Licensing Policy	Greg Peck, Licensing Officer Tel No. 01480 388010 - email - Greg.Peck@huntsdc.gov.uk	Extensive consultation with responsible authorities and interested groups	A Hansard	Service Support
Asset Management Plan	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	None.	Keith Phillips, Estates Manager and Property Manager Tel No. 01480 388260 or email - Keith.Phillips@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve annual report.	A Hansard	Service Support
To adopt Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Draft Consultation Document	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email: Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adopting, 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
Revised Customer Service Strategy	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Customer Service Strategy (as approved by Cabinet 26/06/03)	John Taylor, Senior Business Analyst Tel No. 01480 388119 - email - John.Taylor@huntsdc.gov.uk		L M Simpson	Service Support
Draft MTP	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Financial Strategy Previous Years Budget Report Various Annexes	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. 01480 388103 or email - Steve.Couper@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview & Scrutiny (CSF)	T V Rogers	Corporate Strategic Framework
Huntingdon West Area Action Plan Preferred Options	Cabinet	22 Nov 2007	Issues and options report and summary of representations	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No: 01480 388430 or email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for consultation	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Migrant Workers in Huntingdonshire	Cabinet	13 Dec 2007	Report	Dan Smith, Community Initiatives Manager Tel No: 01480 388377 - email Dan.Smith@huntsdc.gov.uk	J Collen – Housing C Garbett – Economic Development C Waters – Community Safety	Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery
Draft Planning Contributions Supplementary Planning Document	Cabinet	13 Dec 2007	Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No: 01480 388430 or email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for Consultation	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
To Adopt Car Parking Strategy and Agree Revised Parking Charges	Cabinet	13 Dec 2007	Draft Consultation Document	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 - email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having carried out consultation exercise	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
Potential Implications under the Animal Welfare Act 2006	Cabinet	13 Dec 2007	None.	John Allan, Public Health Manager Tel No. 01480 388281 - email - John.Allan@huntsdc.gov.uk		Mrs D C Reynolds	Service Delivery
To adopt Huntingdon Conservation Area Boundary Changes and Character Statement	Cabinet	13 Dec 2007	Draft Consultation Document	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email: Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having followed consultation with the public and statutory bodies.	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Sustainable Community Strategy (Draft): Update	Cabinet	31 Jan 2008	None.	Ian Leatherbarrow, Head of Policy and Strategic Services Tel No. 01480 388005 - email - Ian.L Leatherbarrow@huntsdc.gov.uk	Public/Stakeholder Consultation	I C Bates	Corporate Strategic Framework
Budget and MTP Recommendation to the Council	Cabinet Council	31 Jan 2008 20 Feb 2008	Draft MTP - Previous year's budget report - Various Annexes	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. (01480) 388103 - email - Steve.Couper@huntsdc.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny (CSF) – 29th January 2008	T V Rogers	Corporate Strategic Framework
Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators	Cabinet Council	31 Jan 2008 20 Feb 2008	Previous year's Strategy	Steve Couper, Head of Financial Services Tel No. 01480 388103 - email - Steve.Couper@huntsdc.gov.uk		T V Rogers	Corporate Strategic Framework
Draft Proposals for Riverside Park, Huntingdon	Cabinet	31 Jan 2008	Riverside Park Options Study by Gillespies 2004	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 - email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve for Consultation	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 Adopt the Quality Charter for Cambridge's Growth Areas as Informal Planning Guidance	Cabinet	31 Jan 2008	Draft Consultation Document and Comments Made	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 - email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Consultation already carried out	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
Parish Plans and Local Plan Policy***	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	Previous Cabinet Report - December 2003	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Adopt process of incorporating relevant Parish Plan Policies into Planning Policies.	P L E Bucknell	Service Support
To Adopt Somersham Conservation Area Boundary Changes and Character Statement****	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	Draft Consultation Document	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email - 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 Earith Conservation Area Boundary Changes and Character Statement****	Cabinet	21 Feb 2008	Draft Consultation Document	Richard Probyn, Planning Policy Manager Tel No. 01480 388430 or email - Richard.Probyn@huntsdc.gov.uk	Approve changes for adoption having followed consultation with the public and statutory bodies.	P L E Bucknell	Service Support

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A SUSTAINABLE LOCAL ECONOMY STRATEGY FOR HUNTINGDONSHIRE

(Report by Head of Policy and Strategic Services)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an opportunity for the Panel to comment on the draft Sustainable Local Economy Strategy (SLES) before it is considered by the Cabinet and partner organisations.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The development of the Strategy comes at an important time amid a number of national and regional policy initiatives. Specifically, it coincides with the review of the East of England Regional Economic Strategy and the Sub-national review of Economic Development and Regeneration. There is a move to bring together regional spatial and economic policies. It is important, therefore, that there is a clear and unified vision for the development of Huntingdonshire's economy and how it compliments the (sub-) regional economy and the national picture.
- 2.2 An important principle adopted in the development of a new Strategy was to ensure that, as far as possible, it was linked to and mutually supportive of both the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) and the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). Time has been taken also to both influence and reflect objectives in other partnership approaches under development where they impact on the local economy, for example the Environment, Culture and Leisure and Housing strategies.
- 2.3 The review of the strategy commenced last September with a series of consultation events and analysis as summarised below.

Activity	Purpose
Regional and sub-regional analysis.	To identify regional and sub-regional priorities and plans.
Employment/ business sector analysis.	To establish GDP sector forecasts and future trends.
Local economy analysis	In conjunction the Economic Forum* to identify business needs
Employment land review	A joint exercise to establish spatial needs for the LDF and SLES.
Assessment of local skills and future requirements	Skills need assessment undertaken by the Huntingdonshire Learning Partnership.

Consultation with Business Community	The Business Forums were used to canvass wider views on priorities for interventions and investment.
Consolidation and interpretation of research/assessments/consultation.	Development of economic interventions/investments and formulation of strategy.
Consultation with individual partners and the Economic Forum	To gain endorsement of proposed economic interventions and strategy.

- 2.4 The draft Strategy sets out a long term (15 year or so) vision for sustainable economic growth in the district in line with the emerging Sustainable Community Strategy for Huntingdonshire and is designed to provide a medium term (3 to 5 year) focus for investment and interventions for a range of organisations working in the district for continued economic success.

3. DELIVERY OF STRATEGY

- 3.1 Individual partners are being invited to comment and support the draft Strategy so that it can be developed as a partnership approach. This will allow the formulation of a joint action plan to help coordinate work being undertaken or planned in the district and ensure it fits with other strategic approaches. Key elements of the Strategy will be taken forward through other means, including the Local Development Framework, Local Transport Plan and the Environmental Action Plan. Activities which can only be achieved through partnership and are considered to be of sufficient importance will be considered as part of the development of the SCS. Subject to broad agreement on the approaches set out in the draft Strategy, it is envisaged that the joint action plan will be developed from January 2008 for implementation from April 2008 onwards.
- 3.2 The Economic Forum will be responsible for overseeing the achievement of the Strategy, while individual organisations will be responsible for the delivery and performance management of specific activities or projects. Progress will be monitored regularly and the delivery plan will be reviewed annually to reflect achievement, changing needs and opportunities. The achievement of the Strategy and its contribution to the achievement of the SCS will be subject to scrutiny arrangements.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 The Panel are invited to comment on the draft Sustainable Local Economy Strategy prior to its consideration by Cabinet and partner organisations.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

EEDA Regional Economic Strategy
Local Economy Strategy 2002 to 2007
Draft Sustainable Community Strategy

**Contact Officer: Corrine Garbett,
Sustainable Economic Development Manager
☎ 01480 388459
email: corrine.garbett@huntsdc.gov.uk**

***Note:** The Economic Forum is a thematic partnership within the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership comprising representatives of the public services with responsibility for promoting economic development and regeneration – Huntingdonshire District Council, Town and Parish Councils, Cambridgeshire County Council, Job Centre Plus; Businesses representative organisations – Federation of small Businesses, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Chamber of Commerce, Huntingdonshire Business Network, National Farmers Union; individual businesses such as Huntingdon Life Sciences, Luminous. The Forum engages also with the following partners/organisations as necessary - Greater Cambridge Economic Partnership, Greater Peterborough Economic Partnership, East of England International, East of England Development Agency.

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DRAFT

Huntingdonshire

Local Economy Strategy

Medium Term Plan 2008 -2015

Building Sustainable Communities

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Vision for Huntingdonshire
3. Economic Context
4. Strategic Priorities
5. Delivery Mechanism

Appendix One: Huntingdonshire in Perspective, an economic, social and demographic account of the District

Appendix Two: Overview of the East of England and sub-regional context

Appendix Three: Consultation process and review of Local Economy

Introduction

This document sets out a vision and strategy for sustainable economic growth in Huntingdonshire to support the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Huntingdonshire which, balanced with action on environmental and social issues, will assist in achieving the objectives set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy. It provides a focus for investment, activities and interventions for a range of organisations working in the local economy for continued economic success.

Our economy continues to be healthy with a high rate of start up businesses, employment and productivity. Over the last few decades the District has experienced considerable growth with rapid and extensive new house building. This growth is set to continue and potentially increase. While the local economy has developed successfully the number of jobs created has not matched population growth. To address past deficiencies and future growth it is predicted that at least 20,000 new jobs will be needed in Huntingdonshire over the period of the current draft Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021.

The local economy plays an important, fundamental, role in creating sustainable communities, and this strategy sets out Huntingdonshire's aspirations to provide local people with high value, local jobs, matching local skills based on a comprehensive review of the local economy including its regional context.

The development of this strategy comes at an important time amid a number of government policy reviews. It coincides with the review of the East of England Regional Economic Strategy and the Sub-National Review of Economic Development and Regeneration. There is a move for regional spatial policy to be brought together with regional economic policy. It is important, therefore, that Huntingdonshire has a clear, unified vision for its local economy and how it fits into the regional economy and the national picture. The Local Economy Strategy will directly inform the preferred spatial option to be promoted in Huntingdonshire's Core Strategy and Planning Proposal Document, key elements of the District's Local Development Framework. The Strategy has also been developed particularly mindful of the challenges and opportunities of climate change and the emerging Environmental Strategy for Huntingdonshire.

This medium term strategy identifies six strategic priorities, which will help partners focus future activities and help secure public and private investment. The strategy will be delivered through the development and implementation of an action plan which brings together partner organisations. The action plan will be monitored by the Huntingdonshire Economic Forum and reviewed on an annual basis.

Ian Bates
Chairman of Huntingdonshire
Local Strategy Partnership and
Leader of Huntingdonshire DC

Malcolm Lyons
Chairman of HSP Economic
Forum and FSB

Our Vision for Huntingdonshire

The Sustainable Community Strategy for Huntingdonshire sets out a shared, long term, vision for Huntingdonshire as a place where current and future generations have a good quality of life and can –

- make the most of opportunities that come from living in a growing and developing District;
- enjoy the benefits of continued economic success;
- access suitable homes, jobs, services, shops, and things to do;
- realise their full potential; and
- live in an environment that maintains the special character of our market towns, villages and countryside and the effects of climate change.

To help make this vision a reality this strategy identifies the need **to maintain a strong and sustainable local economy**. If we are successful in achieving this outcome Huntingdonshire's economy will continue to provide the basis of sustainable communities and make a significant contribution to sub-regional and regional priorities.

To address past deficiencies and future growth it is predicted that 20,000 new jobs will be needed in Huntingdonshire over the period of the current draft Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021. Given the pressure for additional growth and the need to identify opportunities for further housing over a longer period this actual requirement may rise. These jobs need to be located near to centres of growth through out the District. However, we need to ensure that smaller communities remain vibrant and able to sustain an appropriate level of economic activity.

To ensure a strong and sustainable economy we need to foster a number of successful sectors, supported by a diversity of other businesses and local supply chains. These sectors create high value jobs and demand a highly skilled workforce; they can be the drivers for improved quality of life, higher levels of local services and create an environment of entrepreneurial activity.

We strive for high rates of new business start ups, growth in productivity, innovations in products and services and export led growth, which are all indicators of an economy's health. Our economy needs coherent and tailored business support services, available space and premises, effective business networks and sub-regional cohesion and connectivity between businesses.

We want Huntingdonshire to attract high levels of inward investment, and engage with national and international markets, all of which help accelerate growth and sustainability. This growth needs to be delivered in a way that reduces our carbon foot print.

People are at the heart of the economy. It is from the different communities and cultures within our population that the District draws its strength. By removing barriers and helping all groups to access the opportunities available to them, the area's social and economic vitality will grow richer.

Text box: 'To maintain a strong and sustainable local economy, we will build on our strengths, capitalise on our distinctive opportunities and tackle the challenges together'

Economic Context

Huntingdonshire is a large District of about 350 square miles with a current population of 166,000 people. It is characterised by four market towns – Huntingdon, Ramsey, St Ives and St Neots, which act as service centres, for around 100 distinctive villages set in diverse countryside. A number of large villages – key settlements - act as local service centres for surrounding areas. The towns, villages and countryside provide attractive and exciting environments in which to live and work.

The District has experienced considerable growth. Since the 1960's there has been a rapid and extensive new house building. The emerging East of England Plan sets an allocation of 11,200 new homes to be built in Huntingdonshire for the period 2001 to 2021, 8,500 homes have already been built or permissions granted however 2700 homes are still required. However, recent Government announcements will require the identification of higher targets over a longer period with the growth options to be set out in the Council's Core Strategy.

The local economy has developed successfully but the number of jobs has not matched housing or population growth. As a result there are a large number of residents who commute out of the District for work. Similarly, the development of facilities, services and local infrastructure has been outstripped by population growth.

Huntingdonshire lies within the London/Stansted/Cambridge/Peterborough Growth Area within the East of England region. It holds a strategic location with excellent road and rail networks that link to the rest of the UK. It forms part of the Greater Cambridge Economic Sub-region. However, economies straddle administrative boundaries and people living in the north of the District look to Peterborough as a service centre and, therefore, the need to maintain a good relationship with the Greater Peterborough Economic Sub-region is acknowledged and also with Bedford to the south.

New development will generate additional demands on the District's physical and social infrastructure. A key challenge will be timely provision of adequate and appropriate new infrastructure to meet these demands. This is essential to create balanced sustainable communities and is being addressed through the Council's Local Development Framework.

A long period of growth has resulted in a generally prosperous area with a buoyant economy and low unemployment. The majority of residents experience a good quality of life. However, there are disparities and imbalances and challenges evidenced across the District that impact on the economy. Nearby growth areas such as Cambridge have also resulted in a high level of out commuting from the District.

Since the publication of the last Economic Strategy a wide range of research has been undertaken providing detailed information about the District's economy. These reports, analyses, projections and indicators of change have informed the consultation process with partners. This work, along with the strategic priorities of government and regional bodies and the needs identified through the Local Development Framework processes, has formed the evidence base for this strategy.

Strategic Priorities

The six strategic priorities identified in this document will be influential in delivering both the goals of the regional economic strategy and the outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy. They are significant pillars to maintain the strength of the District's economy and promote economic prosperity.

- **Business Support**
- **Infrastructure Improvement**
- **Skill Development**
- **Town Centre Support**
- **Visitor Development**
- **Sector Development**

Business Support

Outcome: A high level of Business Support

Objectives:

- coordinate the delivery of advice and support for new start ups;
- ensure the availability of general business services and advice across the District;
- ensure specific business advice, for key growth sectors, rural businesses, young people, migrant workers and businesses looking to re-locate here;
- enable the growth of small and medium sized businesses;
- encourage appropriate (de) regulation;
- promote strong business to business networks; and
- develop appropriate service and support for business already in the District and those looking to locate within Huntingdonshire

Judged by growth in VAT registered businesses, Huntingdonshire's business dynamism is much greater than the national average; in recent years the District's business base grew by over 7 percent, while nationally, it was 3.8 percent. Huntingdonshire had a higher growth rate in almost every sector.

Research consistently identifies the need for basic start-up space for businesses in Huntingdonshire, this was reflected in the recent employment land study undertaken to inform the Local Development Framework. Start-up space is important as it underpins new business growth in the high value sectors. Also there is an unmet demand for move-on space which is important for the second phase of a company's development.

There is a wide range of business support across the District. However, we need to ensure that all businesses are able to access this support especially those in outlying rural areas. Better signposting, clearer support information, and mentoring (especially for start-up businesses) will ensure that more business benefit from the support on offer.

Encouraging supply chain networks will be key to ensuring that more companies in the District can prosper and grow. Supporting these developing and increasingly complex networks will ensure closer integration with existing networks and make certain they provide the necessary support.

A focus on inward investment will help attract more businesses to the District. Promoting the assets of the District, responding to enquiries by a fast-track procedure, targeting existing companies, and other activities will improve the District's business profile and add strength to existing and developing supply chain networks.

Physical Infrastructure Development

Outcome: Improved business infrastructure

Objectives:

- Improve public transport
- Improve transport network for business
- Ensure land & premises for economic growth
- Improve ICT broadband/capacity

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) incorporates the regional transport strategy for the East of England. EEDA's Economic Strategy highlights those elements of the RSS which are of particular significance for the region's economy and underlines the importance of investment fundamental to the region's success. Huntingdonshire is strategically placed within the region, with the UK's major road and rail networks contributing to its wider infrastructure. This strategy supports the implementation of the RSS, Local Development Framework and the Local Transport Plan and will be used to guide investment decisions and to pursue the objectives outlined above.

This strategy also acknowledges that while a modern and efficient transport network is essential for a growing economy, this must be reconciled with the environmental impacts. It will be necessary to ensure that every plan and proposal is assessed through the appropriate appraisal process against the sustainable development criteria.

Innovative transport solutions such as the Cambridge-St Ives-Huntingdon Guided bus, which is already under construction. Identifying and developing forward-thinking solutions, in particular reducing the need to travel, will be important factors in tackling the challenges of developing transport networks and improving the way people travel throughout the District.

A sustainable and thriving economy will be dependent on achieving a balance of housing, especially affordable housing, and jobs. Developing housing and employment sites that support business growth will ensure the economic viability of local communities. Home working is increasing in significance, it is a practice which can help address the sustainability of communities and also reduce travel congestion and carbon dioxide emissions. This strategy has been developed in line with the Employment Land Review to ensure spatial and economic policies complement each other.

Working with businesses and other partners will ensure land and premises that meets current and future needs. Developing public and private sector partnerships will drive activity which meets a clear business requirement. Adequate land allocations will come forward through the Planning Proposals Document part of the L.D.F., in accordance with appropriate environmental standards.

Quote box : 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. (The World Commission on Environment and Development).

Skill Development

Outcome: To ensure that skill levels support economic prosperity

Objectives:

- meet skill shortages;
- address skills for the future, particularly in key growth sectors;
- maximise opportunities for workplace learning and training;
- promote learning and training opportunities for people in deprived communities and those who are long term out-of-work;
- seek investment opportunities for learning and skills development;
- increase retention of young people in learning and training;
- promote vocational opportunities for young people; and
- ensure the readiness and transition of young people to work.

Although Huntingdonshire's economy is strong, indicators show the local labour market is constrained and migrant workers are helping to meet the employment needs of local employers. Almost a quarter of people aged 16–74 in Huntingdonshire have no formal qualifications. However, this remains lower than the county and national average. The level of qualification attained by the people of Huntingdonshire is close to the national average.

The table below shows how Huntingdonshire attainment levels compares with the rest of Cambridgeshire.

	2005			2005		
	Level 2 and Above			Level 4 and Above		
	Numbers	%	+/-	Numbers	%	+/-
Cambs & Peterborough	282,336	64.5	25.5	135,578	31	9
Cambridgeshire	230,362	66.7	23.3	117,269	33.9	6.1
Huntingdonshire	67,195	68.2	-21.8	27,888	28.3	-11.7
Cambridge	47,860	66.6	-23.4	34,908	48.5	8.5
East Cambridgeshire	26,269	58.4	-31.6	12,255	27.3	-12.7
Fenland	27,943	57.2	-32.8	6,577	13.5	-26.5
South Cambridgeshire	61,095	75.2	-14.8	35,641	43.9	3.9
Peterborough	51,974	56.5	-33.5	18,309	19.9	-20.1

In Huntingdonshire there are six wards with a higher level of people with no qualifications than the national average. The two wards with the highest levels are Huntingdon North and Ramsey. There are eight wards with lower levels of people with qualifications at level 2 or higher (5+ A*-C grade GCSEs and above) than the national average, also including Ramsey and Huntingdon North wards.

The Leitch Report showed that achieving world-class skills in the UK will require a commitment to achieving certain targets by 2020. Skill development will depend upon:

- identifying and acting upon current and future skills shortages;
- focusing on particular basic skill or high-level skill deficits;
- tailoring supply to better support employers;

- stimulating demand for skills and a learning culture from both employers and employees;
- attracting and retaining skilled people; and
- tackling problems of deprivation and social exclusion.

Quote box : “Increasing skill levels of workers and jobs in the long term is the key to developing more sustainable employment” (East of England Development Agency).

Town Centre Support

Outcome: Economical, viable and vibrant town centres

Objectives:

- increase the number of people using town centres;
- encourage residents and businesses to buy local produce and services;
- increase the retail offer and mix;
- improve the evening economy; and
- enhance town centre environments.

Huntingdonshire has four market towns, Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Ramsey. They are the service centres for the District, acting as hubs and links for their surrounding villages and smaller settlements. Within Cambridgeshire St Neots is the largest town, other than Cambridge itself, with a population of almost 30,000 people and on a sub-regional level Huntingdon is an important administrative centre with the headquarters of the Fire Service, Police, Hinchingbrooke Hospital and the District Council all being located in the town.

Their distinctiveness lies in their individual characteristics, and the balance of elements for developing their local economies will vary from town to town. However, common to them all is need for sustainable growth, with vibrant town centres meeting the needs of their residents, businesses and visitors.

This strategy acknowledges the regional requirements not only for delivering the number of homes needed, but matching it with the transport, jobs, social and environmental infrastructure and services to make this growth sustainable. Delivery will rest with a number of agencies and businesses; developing and supporting the right partnerships will ensure engagement with all stakeholders and delivering local interventions for local needs.

Each town has its own natural and built heritage, including rivers, landscapes, architecture, public space and green corridors. The protection, conservation and enhancement of these assets are vital to maintaining their intrinsic value and increasing their sustainable economic contribution to the economy.

Developing additional floor space and facilities for residents and business visitors will be key to building our town centres' vibrancy and growth. Greater community engagement will strengthen the sense of ownership and civic pride, and is the foundation of high quality sustainable development.

Visitor Development

Outcome: Increased investment in the local economy

Objectives:

- encourage local people to visit local attractions;
- encourage business visitors;
- market Huntingdonshire to prospective businesses;
- Improve the mix of attractions, facilities and leisure opportunities; and
- develop attractions and services for visitors specifically overnight stay visitors.

Visitor development is an important economic driver in the sub-region. The planned rapid population growth in Cambridgeshire will require an expansion of job opportunities in the sub-region. An increase in service sector employment is seen to be of vital importance in achieving the desired balance between population growth and job growth. These jobs are not high value jobs but they do help to stimulate new investment in the area, increasing value added per visitor and using tourism as a tool in tackling economic inactivity by providing appropriate skills and employment opportunities.

Supporting, promoting and celebrating what is special about Huntingdonshire plays an important role in improving the quality of life of local people. At the same time it can underpin economic growth and inward investment across all sectors by contributing to the areas image, providing high quality business facilities and generally ensuring that the areas is seen as an attractive place in which to invest.

Some parts of the Huntingdonshire are already highly visited, others are less so. The District has a wealth of natural and built heritage including the waterways, countryside, nature reserves, cycle ways and bridle paths, historical market towns and other visitor attractions. The way visitor development is promoted should seek to spread benefits over the District and throughout the year. A particular strong theme is likely to relate to developing the economic potential of the significant and unique network of strategic open spaces.

This strategy supports the sub-regional tourism strategy. A primary action is to develop partnership-working to deliver the objectives outlined above and raise the performance of the economy of the four market towns as visitor destinations.

Text box:

Tourism is worth over £425 million to Huntingdonshire.

Sector Development

Outcome: Well developed key growth sectors

Objectives:

To promote:

- creative industries;
- high value manufacturing;
- environmental science and technologies; and
- high tech and knowledge based enterprises.

Future job creation in all sectors will be important to the local economy however the identification and selection of these key sectors have emerged from sub-regional and District wide studies and they will be influential in realising the vision of this strategy.

The Regional Economic Strategy outlines a vision of “a leading economy founded on our world class knowledge base and the creativity and enterprise of our people”. Knowledge-based industries are often defined as businesses that “use knowledge to produce economic benefits”. This includes: printing, publishing, electrical and optical technology, communications, business services, education and health. The knowledge-based sector is forecast to grow over the period to 2021 and account for around 36% of all jobs in Cambridgeshire

These sectors will be important in achieving this vision by establishing high value jobs, maximising growth opportunities and embedding their dynamism into the local economy, particularly the local supply chains and networks that service and support them.

Creative Industries

Sector Objectives:

- improve business-to-business networks and information for creative industries;
- promote the profile and strength of creative industries in Huntingdonshire
- develop business support and promote training for individuals and businesses within the creative industries;
- encourage employment creation within the sector both in the market towns and rural areas of our District;
- help develop collaboration, supply chains and new markets;
- develop St Neots as a District centre for creative industries; and
- provide the physical infrastructure - ‘Spaces for Creativity’ - in St Neots and other appropriate locations.

Creative enterprise offers the potential to be a major key to sustained economic growth in the UK. Creative businesses depend on individual creativity and skill to generate prosperity. They extend from music through marketing and advertising, architecture, furniture making and software design. They are commonly defined as “those activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property”.

Nationally, around 2 million people are employed in creative industries, helping to transform many urban and rural areas. The government has set out clearly the links between creativity and business performance, stating that creativity is a key ingredient in the success of business across the UK economy. They are important in their own right and also support the development of existing and new businesses.

In the Eastern region there are around 17,000 creative businesses employing some 145,000 people (approximately 5.5 percent of the workforce). The East of England Creative Industries Strategy identifies three regional hubs:

- Cambridge - for new technology and innovation;
- Norwich - for animation, TV production, writing, visual arts; and
- Hertfordshire – for film and media.

In Huntingdonshire around 2,000 people are employed currently in creative industries (around 3.2 percent of the workforce). The development of a District based creative industries centre in St Neots will help to ensure that the economic benefits from the regional hubs can be linked with opportunities for job creation and economic regeneration throughout the Cambridge sub-region and Huntingdonshire specifically.

Businesses within the Creative industries sector are often small and insular employing just a few people. The diversification of redundant buildings in rural parts of Huntingdonshire could help accommodate the growth of this sector and stimulate economic vitality in rural areas.

Environmental Science and Technologies

Sector Objectives:

- cultivate the world-class expertise of our companies in environmental technologies and promote the sector;
- embed a culture of resource efficiency and environmental management within the business sector and other major organisations;
- encourage construction and physical development to high environmental standards; and
- harness opportunities from the natural landscape to showcase environmental best practice

The Regional Economic Strategy identifies the need to deliver a transformational reduction in carbon dioxide and emissions and resource use. In this context, the scale of economic and housing growth forecast for the region has the potential for a rapid widespread adoption of low carbon technologies and standards.

EEDA acknowledge that the large-scale uptake of a range of clean power, heat and transport technologies required to make deep cuts in emissions demands leadership, commitment and radical action from the private, public and third sector. Huntingdonshire has a number of environmental businesses who are leaders in their field and are well placed to champion this technology.

Action on climate change also presents a major economic opportunity for the East of England. Predictions of a 45 percent growth in the global environmental technologies sector by 2015 coupled with a large proportion of the UK's environmental goods and services sector being based in the region means that the East of England and Huntingdonshire has the potential to become a centre of excellence for low carbon technologies.

Huntingdonshire contains a large number of sites of particular importance for biodiversity, such as the Ouse Washes, Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and Portholme Meadow. The Great Fen project is a major habitat restoration project which will create a 3700 hectare wetland by connecting Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen, providing new opportunities for recreation, education and business. This project will be a flagship scheme of international importance and will provide opportunities to show case environmental best practice.

High Value Manufacturing

Sector Objectives:

- harness the world-class expertise of our companies in high value manufacturing to promote the sector;
- encourage the development of networks and collaboration and foster the growth of supply chains;
- promote the development of a sub-regional high value manufacturing hub
- support local hi-tech product development and manufacturing;
- develop a manufacturing campus for learning and business enterprise in Huntingdon; and
- provide appropriate space for manufacturing businesses to locate across the District

Manufacturing remains one of the most important sectors in terms of employment for Huntingdonshire and the sub-region as a whole. In the Greater Cambridge region it accounts for 60,000 jobs compared to the Hi tech industries which employ around 40,000 people. In Huntingdonshire it makes up the largest job sector with over 13,500 people 20% of the workforce employed in this sector.

The majority of the manufacturing activities are located in Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots. There are a number of reasons behind the trend for manufacturing to cluster in these locations. This includes the relative availability of land compared with Cambridge, the costs of land and rents, access to national strategic road networks (A1 and A14) and the availability of appropriately skilled labour.

The District has a cluster of businesses in the manufacturing sector which can be classed as 'advanced engineering', for example IT related products such as printers and display screens, audio equipment and high performance sports cars to name a few. Some of these companies benefit from research and

development being undertaken in Cambridge and some have this function located in the District.

Investment and interventions for future growth in the sub-region and Huntingdonshire is forecast to continue to centre a round high value manufacturing. Huntingdonshire is a prime location for the development of a sub-regional manufacturing campus. Such a facility would provide a spatial focus for developing prototype products emerging from research undertaken within the District and elsewhere within the region.

High Tech Enterprises

Sector Objectives:

- cultivate a dynamic cluster of hi tech industries;
- promote commercialisation of product development;
- support the creation of a local hi-tech product development and manufacturing campus for learning and business enterprise;
- work in partnership to coordinate business support and promote training for individuals and businesses within hi tech industries;
- improve employment creation within the sector both in the market towns and rural areas of our District; and
- help develop collaboration, supply chains and new markets

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England identifies a job growth estimate of 70,500 jobs in the Greater Cambridge Partnership sub region to 2021. The hi-tech proportion of the forecast growth is expected to be 8,500 jobs (more than 10 percent of all jobs).

The standard industrial classification (SIC) definition of hi-tech industries include:

- computer services;
- information communication technology;
- biotechnology and biomedicine; and
- research and development.

Huntingdonshire is already home to world class hi-tech companies. Building links with these companies will foster the growth of supply chains and cultivate a dynamic cluster of knowledge development.

Delivery Mechanism

The Economic Forum along with partners will be responsible for delivering this strategy. The Forum will develop and implement an action plan which coordinates work being undertaken and outlines projects and targets under each of the priorities. Project progress will be monitored regularly by the Forum and the delivery plan will be reviewed annually to reflect changing needs and opportunities.

The action plan will be used to secure private and public funding for projects and attract further investment to the District.

The Economic Forum is made up of a number of organisations including:

- Business Link East;
- Huntingdonshire and Cambridge Enterprise Services;
- Huntingdonshire and Peterborough Chamber of Commerce;
- Huntingdonshire Business Network;
- Federation of Small Business;
- Huntingdonshire Regional College;
- Huntingdonshire District Council;
- Cambridgeshire County Council;
- ACRE;
- large employers; and
- small and medium sized companies.

The Forum will engage with other partners including:

- Greater Cambridge Economic Partnership;
- Greater Peterborough Economic Partnership;
- East of England International; and
- East of England Development Agency.

Key elements of the Strategy will also be taken forward through other policies and programmes of the District Council and its partners. Notable amongst these are the Local Development Framework, Local Transport Plan and Market Town Transportation Strategies and the Environmental Strategy and Action Plan.

Huntingdonshire in Perspective, an economic, social and demographic account of the District

Huntingdonshire has a population of around 166,000. Almost half of the population is concentrated in the four market towns of Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Ramsey. The District covers an area of over 900 square kilometres (approximately 350 square miles). Huntingdonshire is predominantly rural with village settlements providing the main focus for community facilities outside the market towns

House prices in Huntingdonshire are 5.4 percent below the average for England and Wales and 8.9 percent below the county average. However, house prices in the District have risen by almost 9 percent during 2006/7 and in recent years cheaper homes have experienced some of the highest price rises, leading to a shortage of affordable housing across the area for lower paid workers in particular. The average cost of a property in the District has more than doubled since 1999, increasing from £91,488 to £200,040 (July-September 2006).

Median weekly earnings of Huntingdonshire residents in employment are more than 5 percent higher than the national average. Economic activity is particularly high, with all wards in the District having a higher level than the national average. The claimant count unemployment rate in the area remains low at 1.4 percent compared to the UK average of 2.5 percent. Only the Huntingdon North ward has a rate higher than this figure. The median household income in Huntingdonshire is £31,600 which is £1,600 above the county median.

The median weekly full time earnings in Huntingdonshire are nearly 5 percent below the national average and around 8 percent lower than the countywide average. The median figure for the District in 2006 was £432.20 per week, which is 2.6 percent lower than the 2005 figure. The national figure increased by 4.9 percent in this period. These figures all relate to workplace data – figures for Huntingdonshire residents are higher due to higher wages earned by people living in the District and commuting to better paid jobs outside the area.

Huntingdonshire has a low overall level of people claiming income support, job seekers allowance and pension credit. However, it should be noted that there are a few wards with high levels of claimants.

Huntingdonshire has a high level of out-commuting at 35.3 percent. The 2001 Census showed there has been a 4 percent increase in out-commuting since the 1991 Census. All of the Districts in Cambridgeshire, with the exception of Cambridge City, have experienced an increase in out-commuting over the last 10 years. The average distance travelled to a fixed place of work for people living in Huntingdonshire is the seventh highest of all 48 local authority areas in the East of England. The East of England has the highest average distance travelled to a fixed place of work of all the regions in England.

Of those people who work in the District, 22.8 percent commute in. A significant level of people in employment in Huntingdonshire work from home (9.8 percent), the largest proportion of which are small employers and own account workers.

Almost a quarter of people aged 16–74 in Huntingdonshire have no formal qualifications. However, this remains lower than the county and national average. The level of qualification attained by the people of Huntingdonshire is close to the national average.

There are six wards with a higher level of people with no qualifications than the national average. The two wards with the highest levels are Huntingdon North and Ramsey. There are eight wards with lower levels of people with qualifications at level 2 or higher (5+ A*-C grade GCSEs and above) than the national average, also including Ramsey and Huntingdon North wards.

Life expectancy in Huntingdonshire is high compared to the national average. In the 2001 Census 73.37 percent of people described their health as 'good'. This is almost 5 percent higher than the national average. The District has a lower level of claimants for incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance than the national average and has a lower percentage of people with a limiting long-term illness.

Huntingdonshire's residents are predominantly white, with just 2.85 percent categorised as non-white in the 2001 Census. This is considerably lower than the national average of 9.08 percent. Since the 1991 Census, the percentage of non-white people in the District has increased slightly from 2.36 percent. However, the total number of non-white residents has increased by more than 30 percent to nearly 4,500 people.

The percentage of households in Huntingdonshire that have access to two or more cars or vans is significantly higher (+14 percent) than the national average. The District's rural areas generally have higher levels of vehicle ownership than urban wards.

The level of owner occupied housing in Huntingdonshire is higher than the national average and hence there are lower levels of both private and social rented households.

Of all crimes reported in Cambridgeshire, 24.9 percent were in Huntingdonshire. The rates of crime per 1,000 population in Huntingdonshire are below the average for England and Wales.

The business sectors with the largest number of VAT-registered businesses in the District are 'real estate, renting and business activities', 'wholesale, retail and repairs' and 'construction'. There has been an increase in the number of VAT-registered businesses in the District over the last five years, with a total of 6,080 businesses registered in 2005 – 10.6 percent more than in 2000. This is nearly twice the UK increase in VAT-registrations during this period (5.7 percent) and more than 2 percent higher than the countywide increase.

The industrial sectors employing the largest numbers of Huntingdonshire's workforce are 'manufacturing', 'wholesale/retail and repair of motor vehicles', 'real estate, renting and business activities', public administration and defence' and 'health and social work'. The 'creative industries' sector employs 7.4 percent of all those employed in the Huntingdonshire workplace, which is around the same level as those employed in creative industries nationally.

The main occupations of Huntingdonshire's workforce are 'managers and senior officials', 'associate professional and technical occupations', 'administrative and secretarial occupations', 'skilled trades occupations' and 'elementary occupations'.

Huntingdonshire has experienced considerable growth. Since the 1960's there has been a rapid and extensive new house building. The emerging East of England Plan sets an allocation of 11,200 new homes to be built in Huntingdonshire for the period 2001 to 2021, 8,500 homes have already been built or permissions granted however 2700 homes are still required.

The local economy has developed successfully but the number of jobs has not matched housing or population growth. As a result there are a large number of people who commute out of the District for work. Similarly the development of facilities, services and local infrastructure has been outstripped by population growth.

Overview of the East of England and sub-regional context

EEDA's Regional Economic Strategy describes the East of England as diverse and, '*...though containing fewer cities or major conurbations than other parts of the country, the region is characterised by its proximity to London and its regional and sub-regional centres serving a hinterland of market towns, villages and rural populations*'.

It is acknowledged as a region of ideas, innovation and enterprise, with a strong service sector and a significant number of internationally important businesses engaged in research and development, with one of the strongest and fastest growing economies in the UK, with output totalling £81 billion in 2002.

The region has a growing population of just under 5.5 million, which has grown by over 11 percent from 1982 to 2002. The population is forecast to increase by around half a million up to 2021, making it one of the fastest growing regions in the UK. (Ref: A Shared Vision: East of England Development Agency).and a significant concentration of internationally important businesses have brought prosperity, diversity and a world-stage presence,

Almost half the population lives in the region's rural areas where market towns act as service centres.

To achieve sustainable employment led growth and regeneration in the region in the period to 2021 requires levels of jobs growth projected in the Regional Spatial Strategy:

Projected jobs growth 2001 - 2021

Cambridge Sub-region (part)	70,500
Greater Peterborough Sub-region	21,900
Rest of Cambridgeshire	500

Huntingdonshire - a sub-region

Huntingdonshire straddles the sub-regions of Greater Peterborough and Greater Cambridge. Working in partnership with both the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership and the Greater Peterborough Partnership underpins our strategies and actions. In this way Huntingdonshire is, and will continue to be, key to sub-regional and regional growth. This ethic of partnership working will facilitate the way in which we will improve the District's economic performance and the quality of life of those who live and work here.

text box : 'Regional and sub-regional partnerships are agents for economic development and growth.'

Consultation Process and Review of Local Economy

A range of methods has been employed to gather the qualitative and quantitative data that has informed this strategy. Information has been gathered from both published and specially commissioned research and analysis, and through a variety of consultation processes engaging with the business community, delivery bodies and partner organisations.

Firstly, a review of Huntingdonshire’s economic role within the East of England region and the Cambridgeshire sub-region identified the priorities and mechanisms important to delivery. Secondly, grass-root consultation addressed the needs of people, organisations and businesses.

Employing this ‘outward looking (regional and sub-regional) and ‘inward looking’ (market towns, villages and rural hinterlands) approach to identify the District’s distinctive issues and priorities, formed the framework for the goals, priorities and actions identified in this strategy.

The review of the local economy strategy commenced in September 2006 and was completed in Summer 2007. It involved a series of consultation events and studies as tabled below. The review was undertaken in conjunction with the review of Employment Land to ensure the two pieces of work were considered together:

Activity	Purpose
1. Regional and sub-regional Study	Identify regional and sub-regional economic development priorities
2. Employment/ business Sector Analysis	Establish GDP sector forecasts
3. Local Economy SWOT Analysis	Consultation with Economic Forum to identify business needs
4. Employment Land review	Joint exercise with Planning to establish spatial needs
5. Assessment of local Skill requirements	Skills need assessment undertaken as part of Huntingdonshire Learning Conference
6. Consultation with Business Community	Forum to canvass wider views on priority interventions required
7. Consolidation and interpretation of research/ assessments/consultation	Identification of economic interventions and formulation of strategy
8. Consultation with Economic Forum	To gain endorsement of proposed economic interventions and strategy

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP STUDY – SCOPING REPORT
(Report by the Head of Administration)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Panel previously has expressed an interest in carrying out a study on the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership (HSP). This report contains information to enable the Panel to plan its study.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 places a duty on principal local authorities to prepare community strategies for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of their areas and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK. It also gives authorities broad powers to improve and promote local well-being as a means of helping them to implement those strategies. The Local Government Act 2000 requires local authorities, in preparing community strategies, to consult and seek the participation of such organisations and people as they consider appropriate. This is undertaken by local strategic partnerships (LSP). There is no definitive approach to the way in which such LSPs should be structured, the bodies that should be represented, or the way in which the partnership should operate. That is a matter for the LSP itself to determine.

- 2.2 Local strategic partnerships are non-statutory, multi-agency partnerships, which match local authority boundaries. LSPs bring together at a local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. The HSP is Huntingdonshire's version of a local strategic partnership. Its structure comprises a Board (including Members), the Executive (officers) and a range of Thematic Groups. This structure and the terms of reference for each of its components appear at Appendix A.

- 2.3 The Thematic Groups have adopted various structures of their own. The Environment Forum, for example, is a stand alone body, while the Community Safety Partnership has its own Board, Executive and subordinate groupings. The Community Safety Partnership predates the HSP as it was established to comply with a requirement of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 that local authorities and the police form crime and disorder reduction partnerships. On the basis of the public consultation undertaken to inform the Community Strategy the Community Safety Partnership was incorporated into the HSP. As such it can be seen that the Community Safety Partnership has complex responsibilities and reporting lines.

3. THE STATUS OF LSPs

- 3.1 The term "partnership" is widely but loosely used in relation to LSPs. It has been universally employed towards LSPs but nationally it has been recognised that the arrangements that have been put in place do not comply with the legal definition of "partnership". The term "collaboration" has come to be accepted as preferable. This is a useful distinction because it draws attention to the fact that partners

in the HSP do not have a duty to contribute towards achieving the Community Strategy. A model that has been developed to differentiate between the various kinds of relationships that have emerged, which might usefully be employed to understand the workings of LSPs, comprises three basic structures:

1. Goals based coalition – a coalition established between a local authority, other statutory bodies and other sectors of the community to develop common goals/objectives/strategies; crucially each party retains responsibility for its services;
2. Strategically co-ordinated services – joint service planning and provision, a partnership between different organisations to engage jointly in a service planning process that results in a strategic statement of objectives and plans and the commitment to coordinate better resource allocation and service delivery; and
3. Liaison body – a forum for information sharing/consultation.

It may become evident in the course of the study that elements of each type of engagement exist within the HSP.

4. COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE AGREEMENT

- 4.1 Members will be aware that the Community Strategy is in the process of being reviewed and updated with a view to adopting the Sustainable Community Strategy. This coincides with and will contribute towards the introduction of arrangements to deliver the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA). At the same time extensive measures are being put in place to monitor and scrutinise the LPSA and, therefore, there may be little merit in scrutinising this directly. There are, however, a number of matters relating to the HSP may provide learning points for its future operation.

3. POTENTIAL ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

Member Involvement

- 3.1 Members are involved in the HSP in various ways from the Board to working groups at the lower levels. Patterns of representation may be something that the Panel could investigate.

Resources

- 3.2 The HSPs relationship to financial resources is something that could provide significant findings. In particular, Members may enquire whether each element in the structure has access to a budget, where any funding comes from, how budgets are allocated, what grant-aid is available and the accounting measures in place to ensure probity.

Publicity/Public Access

- 3.3 Members may have a view on the level of public awareness of the existence/work/achievements of the HSP. On the basis of this, the Panel may want to discuss the HSPs history of public engagement. On a related matter a question that always exists towards public

sector organisations concerns the degree to which the public is given the opportunity to attend (and makes contributions to) meetings of the various HSP bodies. Clarity could be sought on the practices that have been adopted and the reasons for them.

Outcomes/Monitoring/Information

- 3.4 As was stated at the outset the purpose of preparing community strategies is to promote or improve economic, social and environmental well-being. It follows that a fundamental part of a study of the HSP will constitute an assessment of the outcomes that have been achieved. The targets and criteria employed, the regularity of monitoring and the information that is available are all common facets of a performance management culture and could provide a starting point for investigation of the HSPs outcomes.

Administration/Support

- 3.5 The District Council's Administration Division provides administration services for the Board, Executive and all but one of the Thematic Groups. The Primary Care Trust administers the Health, Housing and Social Care Thematic Group. The Director of Public Health is Chairman of this Thematic group. The Policy and Strategic Services Division undertakes research and is responsible for consulting on and drawing up the Strategy. Additional research is carried out by the County Council's Research Team for both the Community Safety Partnership and for the Strategic Assessments that have informed the Sustainable Community Safety Strategy. The Panel might look at the evidential basis on which the HSP undertakes its work, the level of support provided and other officer input.

4. DOCUMENTS

- 4.1 The Panel will have a clear interest in examining the Community Strategy in order to assess its effectiveness in complying with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000. The Government, in support of this Act, published guidance both on Local Strategic Partnerships and on Preparing Community Strategies. Although published in 2001 they may provide further background on the HSP.
- 4.2 More recently the former Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Communities and Local Government have commissioned and published national evaluations of LSPs. In addition, looking to the future, the Local Government Association has published a response to consultation by the Government on the proposed changes to their structure.
- 4.3 The documents listed in paragraph 4.2 may be more useful than those in 4.1 as are they are based on experience of how LSPs have worked and they are forward looking. Details of all of the reference materials (and others) appear in the Background Information section at the end of this report.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Panel has expressed an interest in undertaking a study on the HSP. Background information has been briefly summarised and a number of potential area for investigation have been outlined. The

latter are, however, only suggestions and Members are free to choose any aspects of the HSP to study. In order to take the study forward, the Panel is requested to:

- a) consider whether there are any particular aspects of the HSP to study;
- b) decide whether to carry out the study as a whole Panel or to appoint a Working Group;
- c) identify the study's terms of reference and links to the Council's policies/Strategies;
- d) set out the study's objectives and projected timescales for completion;
- e) determine what further information/documents are required; and
- f) consider the potential use of those actions listed in the Study Template at Appendix B.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2001) *Local Strategic Partnerships – Government Guidance* (London: HMSO)

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (2001) *Preparing community strategies: government guidance to local authorities* (London: HMSO)

Geddes, M. (2006) *National Evaluation of Local Strategic Partnerships – Theory of Change Issues Paper* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government)

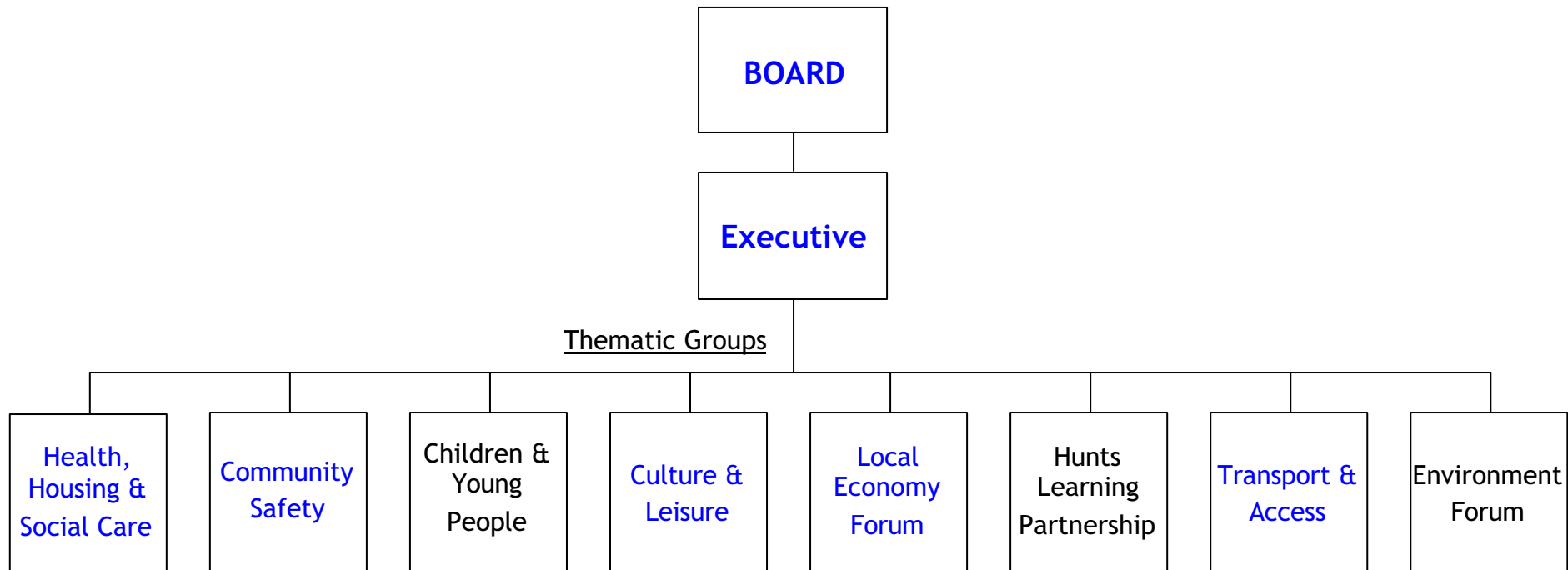
Ipsos MORI (2006) *Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their future* (London: Department for Communities and Local Government)

Local Government Association (2006) *LGA response to ODPM consultation Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their future* (London: Local Government Association)

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2006) *National Evaluation of Local Strategic Partnerships: Formative Evaluation and Action Research Programme 2002-2005 – Final Report* (London: ODPM Publications)

Contact Officer: **A Roberts**
  **01480 388009**

Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Structure



Further information about the Board, Executive and most Partnerships/Thematic Groups are available by clicking on the blue links above. Details of the Children & Young People Thematic Group, the Hunts Learning Partnership and the Environment Forum will be added soon. Contact details for members of the Board, the Executive and the Partnerships/Thematic Groups will also be added in the near future.

Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Board

The Board is composed of senior representatives from the following partner organisations:

- Cambridgeshire Association of Local Councils - Huntingdonshire Branch
- Cambridgeshire Constabulary
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Environment Sector - represented by the Environment Agency
- Huntingdonshire District Council
- Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust
- Providers of learning, represented by Huntingdonshire Regional College
- The business community, represented by Tony Roberts
- The voluntary sector, represented by the Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations

To ensure that the Strategic Partnership concentrates on achievement of improvement, the Board has adopted five key priorities. While work on delivery of the Community Strategy generally will continue, the Board will focus its energy on making improvements in the priority areas. Details of the priorities can be found at [this link](#).

A draft forward programme for Board meetings can be accessed from [this link](#).

Members

Chairman: Councillor Derek Holley OBE, Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council

A full list of members will be added soon.

Frequency of meetings

Quarterly

Contact for further information

Helen Lack, Huntingdonshire District Council
Address: Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN
Email: helen.lack@huntsdc.gov.uk

[Back to structure diagram](#)

Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership Executive

Members

Chairman: Peter Watkins, Director of Central Services, Huntingdonshire District Council

A full list of members will be added soon.

Terms of Reference

- ❖ To support the work of the HSP Board.
- ❖ To act as a link between the Board and partnership groups.
- ❖ To undertake a co-ordinating role between the partnership groups.
- ❖ To support the development, implementation and monitoring of the Huntingdonshire Community Strategy and its links with the partners’ corporate plans.
- ❖ To provide the Board with performance management information.
- ❖ To ensure that the public and stakeholders are engaged in strategy development and implementation.
- ❖ To disseminate good practice.
- ❖ To anticipate and co-ordinate the implementation and effect of new legislation.
- ❖ To ensure smooth working and the avoidance of overlap between agencies.

Frequency of meetings

Quarterly

Contact for further information

Helen Lack, Huntingdonshire District Council
 Address: Pathfinder House, St Mary’s Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN
 Email: helen.lack@huntsdc.gov.uk

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Health, Housing and Social Care

Members

Chairman: Dr Christine Macleod, Director of Public Health, Huntingdonshire PCT

A full list of members will be added soon.

Terms of Reference

- ❖ To support and (where appropriate) co-ordinate the strategic development of health, housing and social care for Huntingdonshire, including:
 - Supporting People
 - HIPS
 - HIMP
- ❖ To ensure delivery of the health, housing and social care elements of the Huntingdonshire Community Strategy.
- ❖ To co-ordinate and deliver other work required by the Huntingdonshire Partnership.
- ❖ To ensure stakeholders have been engaged in the process of strategy development and implementation.
- ❖ To disseminate good practice.
- ❖ To anticipate and co-ordinate the implementation and effect of new legislation.
- ❖ To provide the Partnership Board and Executive with performance management information.
- ❖ To support the development of the Community Strategy.
- ❖ To ensure smooth working between agencies.

Frequency of meetings

Three times per year

Contact for further information

Maureen Mendham, Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust
 Address: The Priory, Priory Road, St Ives, Cambs PE27 5BB
 Email: maureen.mendham@hunts-pct.nhs.uk

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Community Safety

Members

Chairman: Elizabeth Wilson, Director of Operational Services, Huntingdonshire District Council

A full list of members will be added soon.

Terms of Reference

- ❖ To co-ordinate the strategic development of community safety for Huntingdonshire.
- ❖ To ensure delivery of the community safety elements of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Strategy.
- ❖ To co-ordinate and deliver other work required by the Huntingdonshire Partnership.
- ❖ To ensure stakeholders have been engaged in the process of strategy development and implementation.
- ❖ To disseminate good practice.
- ❖ To anticipate and co-ordinate the implementation and effect of new legislation.
- ❖ To provide the Partnership Executive and Board with performance management information.
- ❖ To support the development of the Community Strategy.
- ❖ To ensure smooth working between agencies.

Frequency of meetings

Six times per year

Contact for further details

Tony Roberts, Huntingdonshire District Council

Address: Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN

Email: anthony.roberts@huntsdc.gov.uk

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Culture and Leisure Group

Members

Chairman: Councillor Mrs Jean Chandler, Huntingdonshire District Council

A full list of members will be added soon.

Terms of Reference

- ❖ To support and (where appropriate) co-ordinate the strategic development of culture and leisure for Huntingdonshire, including:
 - sport;
 - arts and entertainment;
 - museums and heritage;
 - libraries;
 - media;
 - the countryside
 - parks and playgrounds; and
 - tourism.
- ❖ To ensure delivery of the cultural and leisure elements of the Huntingdonshire Community Strategy.
- ❖ To co-ordinate and deliver other work as required by the Huntingdonshire Partnership.
- ❖ To ensure stakeholders have been engaged in the process of strategy development and implementation.
- ❖ To disseminate good practice.
- ❖ To anticipate and co-ordinate the implementation and effect of new legislation.
- ❖ To provide the Partnership Board and Executive with performance management information.
- ❖ To support the development of the Community Strategy.
- ❖ To ensure smooth working between agencies.

Frequency of meetings

Meetings are held quarterly

Contact for further details

Christine Deller, Huntingdonshire District Council
 Address: Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN
 Email: christine.deller@huntsdc.gov.uk

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Local Economy Forum

Members

Chairman: Malcolm Lyons, Chairman, Federation of Small Businesses (Huntingdonshire branch)

A full list of members will be added soon.

Terms of Reference

- ❖ To support and (where appropriate) co-ordinate the strategic development of the local economy and learning for Huntingdonshire, including
 - supporting business
 - Local Economy Strategy
 - Town Centre Vision Strategies
 - Welfare to Work
- ❖ To ensure the delivery of the economic development elements of the Huntingdonshire Community Strategy.
- ❖ To co-ordinate and deliver other work required by the Huntingdonshire Partnership.
- ❖ To ensure stakeholders have engaged in the process of strategy development and implementation.
- ❖ To disseminate good practice.
- ❖ To anticipate and co-ordinate the implementation of new legislation.
- ❖ To provide the Partnership Board and Executive with performance management information.
- ❖ To support the development of the Community Strategy.
- ❖ To ensure smooth working between agencies.

Frequency of meetings

Meetings are held quarterly

Contact for further details

Claire Harris, Huntingdonshire District Council
 Address: Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN
 Email: claire.harris@huntsdc.gov.uk

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Transport and Access Group

Members

Chairman: Councillor Nick Guyatt, Huntingdonshire District Council

A full list of members will be added soon.

Terms of Reference

- ❖ To support and (where appropriate) co-ordinate the strategic development of transport and access for Huntingdonshire, including:
 - Local Transport Plan
 - Market Town Transport Strategies
 - Car Parking, Bus, Rail, Cycling Strategies
 - Network Management Plan
- ❖ To ensure delivery of the transport and access elements of the Huntingdonshire Community Strategy.
- ❖ To co-ordinate and deliver other work required by the Huntingdonshire Partnership.
- ❖ To ensure stakeholders have engaged in the process of strategy development and implementation.
- ❖ To disseminate good practice.
- ❖ To anticipate and co-ordinate the implementation of new legislation.
- ❖ To provide the LSP with performance management information.
- ❖ To support the LSP in development of the Community Strategy.
- ❖ To ensure smooth working between agencies.

Frequency of meetings

Meetings are held quarterly

Contact for further details

Claire Harris, Huntingdonshire District Council
 Address: Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambs PE29 3TN
 Email: claire.harris@huntsdc.gov.uk

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
STUDIES – WORKING GROUP TEMPLATE**

Title of Study:

Appointing Panel:

Members Assigned:

Interests Declared:

Rapporteur:

Officer support:

Objective:

Terms of reference:

Link to Council policies/strategies:

Action by working group:

- possible co-option
- external/specialist support
- existing documentation
- evidence to be obtained
- reference sites
- investigations
- witnesses
- visits
- meetings
- cost

Projected timescale:

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YOUTH FORUM WORKING GROUP
(Report of the Working Group)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Panel, at its meeting on 5th June 2007, established a Working Group to consider a proposal to establish a District Youth Forum. Councillors E R Butler, Mrs K E Cooper, P J Downes, Mrs P A Jordan and J S Watt were appointed to the Working Group. This report contains the Working Group's recommendations on the proposal and on a number of related matters.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During the last review of the Constitution Councillor P J Downes suggested the Council should establish a District youth forum. The Corporate Governance Panel, as the body responsible for overseeing the Council's constitutional arrangements and advising the Council of any changes, decided to request the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) to investigate the practical and financial implications of proposal and to report back.
- 2.2 The Working Group has held two meetings. Councillors Mrs K E Cooper, P J Downes, Mrs P A Jordan and J S Watt were present at the first meeting on 30th August 2007. The second meeting on 11th October was attended by Councillors Mrs K E Cooper, P J Downes, Mrs P A Jordan.

3. STUDY REMIT

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel, following discussion at it June meeting, gave the Working Group the task of considering and making recommendations on whether the Council should establish a district youth forum. Its purpose would be to bring together representatives of youth councils and youth forums created locally by Town and Parish councils and other youth organisations. It also would encourage Town and Parish Councils to establish their own youth forums to assist young people in becoming involved in civic life. The District Youth Forum would be attended by representatives of Town and Parish forums who would share information and best practice. The Panel further suggested that the youth forum could act as a consultative mechanism on scrutiny issues and might be invited to report quarterly to the Panel, which would give young people a voice within the Council and encourage an interest in local democracy.

2. YOUTH FORUM PURPOSES

- 2.1 On the basis of the study remit, the Working Group established the following potential purposes for a Youth Forum:
1. To ensure the views of young people inform the Council's corporate plans and priorities;
 2. To ensure the views of young people are incorporated into the Council's service planning process;

3. To encourage in young people an interest in and to provide experience of local democracy, and
4. To stimulate Town and Parish Councils to establish youth forums and to spread good practice.

3. STUDY WORK

- 3.1 Having established potential purposes of a youth forum the Working Group decided to discuss with representatives of organisations involved in youth work the extent to which these purposes are already being met. The Working Group agreed on the importance of the purposes but wanted to avoid duplicating existing arrangements in this area. Members, therefore, decided to speak to the District Council's Head of Policy and Strategic Services, Ian Leatherbarrow, and Senior Policy Officer (Young People), Gill Hanby, in the first instance.

4. FINDINGS

- 4.1 The Working Group has discussed with Mr Leatherbarrow and Ms Hanby existing arrangements for involving children and young people in decision-making in Huntingdonshire. The District Council previously has undertaken a three year Young People's Active Involvement project, the outcome of which was reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery and Resources) at its meeting on 4th April 2006. This project, since then, has been rolled out to partner organisations through joint funding from the District and County Councils and Huntingdonshire Regional College.
- 4.2 A Countywide model has been developed for involving children and young people in decisions. A pilot exercise has been carried out using the model as part of the review of the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Working Group has heard evidence that the model has successfully been used to achieve purposes 1 and 2 in section 2 of this report above. Furthermore, efforts are being made to try to encourage partnerships/groups at locality/ward level to develop actions based on work emerging from the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Working Group is of the view that the model for involving children and young people in decisions should be promoted to create greater awareness of it.
- 4.3 A bid is to be made to the national volunteering charity "V" which, if successful, will bring in £300k to the County and of that £100k over three years will be for Huntingdonshire specifically to work with 16-24 year olds. The Working Group has expressed its support for the bid and its intended use.
- 4.4 Investigations are being undertaken into developing a Countywide application to the Local Public Service Agreement Reward Money for funding in the region of £100k over three years for developing strategic work, including how the involvement of children and young people can be embedded into the work of organisations and coordinating/promoting partnership working. The Working Group also has supported this bid. In addition, officers are working with County colleagues to identify sources of funding to help support other areas of work such as that involving other age groups or specific settings.

- 4.5 With regard to the third purpose, the Working Group has been informed that the PARC toolkit is a good starting point for Town and Parish Councils who are considering engaging with young people. A “bitesized” session on this will be held in the New Year. While the toolkit has been demonstrated to be effective in achieving its aims, the Working Group has been made aware that it requires adult input and effort to ensure a succession of young people are involved. The Working Group is of the view that resources should be made available to support Town and Parish Councils’ in engaging young people. Members have suggested that application is made to the Local Public Service Agreement Board for funding for this purpose and that it should be used to provide training for members of Town and Parish Councils on involving young people and to provide “session” workers to support Town and Parish Councils.
- 4.6 Both of the initiatives that are the subject of funding bids could support the development of work with Town and Parish Councils but they are not solely aimed at developing work with them as the PARC project was. Another initiative available to Town and Parish Councils provides training on ‘involving young people’, which includes modular training and suitable for Councilors at all levels.
- 4.7 Funding for this area of work is crucial if the initiatives referred to above are to be developed. Work is being done to attract external funding but this cannot be guaranteed and tends to be time-limited. As a result consideration is being given to the possibility of including young people’s involvement in costings of work plans/action plans as they are developed. This would mean work was more sustainable and ensure it is embedded rather than bolted on.
- 4.8 The Working Group has noted that most schools in the District have school councils although no evidence was presented to indicate how effective these are. Members are satisfied that by this means and through that outlined in the previous paragraph the fourth purpose can be achieved.
- 4.9 In discussing the suggestions that a youth forum could act as a consultative mechanism on scrutiny issues and might be invited to report quarterly to the Panel for Service Delivery, the Working Group has recognised the value of having such input into the Scrutiny process. Members recommend that feedback is provided on the arrangements outlined above on the suggested frequency. Owing to the work that is still required it will not be possible to commence this reporting until 2008.
- 4.10 Given a general lack of awareness of the work that is going on in this field, the Working Group recommends that measures are taken address this situation. Members suggest that articles are placed in Districtwide, Team News and other Council publications on work with children and young people.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Working Group has considered a proposal to introduce a District Youth Forum. In order to do this a number of criteria have been identified that such a forum might fulfil, which have been set out. On the evidence presented, the Panel notes the arrangements currently

in place and recognises that they might have the potential to meet the criteria in 2.1. Members consider that the level of participation by young people at Town and Parish Council level is not yet sufficiently developed to justify the creation of a District Youth Forum in the format originally envisaged. However, this should remain an aspiration and a long-term target for those engaged in developing youth participation.

- 5.2 The Working Group is, however, of the view that the current arrangements need to be developed and put on a sustainable footing before they can be said adequately to meet the four purposes identified in paragraph 2.1 above. For the justifications given in the preceding paragraphs the Working Group has made a series of recommendations, which are intended to achieve this.

6. RECOMMENDATION

The Working Group

RECOMMEND

- a) that the Corporate Governance Panel notes the work being undertaken to involve young people, is advised not to introduce a Youth Forum at this time but remains open to re-considering this as and when circumstances permit;
- b) that measures are introduced to promote the Countywide model for involving children and young people in decision-making;
- c) that the submission of a bid for funding to “V” for work with 16-24 year olds is supported;
- d) that the bid to the Local Public Service Agreement Board Reward Money for funding for developing strategic work, including how the involvement of children and young people can be embedded into the work of organisations and coordinating/promoting partnership working is supported;
- e) that application is made to the Local Public Service Agreement Board for funding to provide training for members of Town and Parish Councils on involving young people and to provide “session” workers to support Town and Parish Councils
- f) that quarterly reports are submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) on the outcomes of the Council’s engagement work with children and young people; and
- g) that measures are taken to raise awareness of current work in this field including, but not limited to, those referred to in paragraph 4.7 above.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Notes of meetings of the Youth Forum Working Group.

Contact Officer: A Roberts  **01480 388009**

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STATE OF THE DISTRICT CONSULTATION WORKING GROUP
(Report of the Working Group)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The State of the District Consultation Working Group met on 18th October 2007 when Councillors Mrs M Banerjee, K J Churchill and P J Downes were present. I Brandstatterova, A Roberts and L Sboui were in attendance.
- 1.2 No declarations of interest were received.
- 1.3 Councillor K J Churchill was appointed as the Working Group's rapporteur.

2. STUDY REMIT

- 2.1 The Working Group has been given the task of considering and making recommendations on a suggestion that the Council should introduce measures to solicit the views of residents of the Huntingdonshire on the "state of the District". The suggestion arose during the last review of the Council's Constitution and, following discussion by the Corporate Governance Panel, the Council referred it to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) for detailed consideration.
- 2.2 The proposal was that every two years a "state of the District" half-day conference should be held on the second Saturday in September. The public would be invited to attend and would be able to speak. Specific invitations would be sent to Parish Councils, local business and various representative bodies, including those for young people. The following Council meeting, at the end of September, would consider the views expressed. These views also would inform the budget and MTP processes. In addition, the Conference might generate issues for the Scrutiny Panels to consider.
- 2.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel acknowledged the difficulty in engaging with the public on a District-wide level and, as a result, asked the Working Group to investigate the use of smaller area consultation groups involving all tiers of local government in the process. The Working Group also was asked identify potential subject areas for discussion at forums.

3. ENGAGEMENT EVENT PURPOSES

- 3.1 The Working Group discussed the potential benefits of holding events to engage Huntingdonshire residents in discussing the Council's strategies. In the course of this Members have reviewed the draft Consultation and Engagement Strategy. It has been concluded that engagement events could help to deliver the Strategy's aims and the Council's commitment under it by ensuring a strategic approach is taken to consultation and that the outcomes are used to inform policy and decision making by contributing to the variety of methods used to

enabling as many people as possible have the opportunity to give the Council their views. These events will fit with the emerging 'Engagement and Consultation Strategy'

3.2 In addition, the Working Group is of the view that holding engagement events will provide forums:

- for Councillors to obtain an understanding of the state of the District;
- for two way information exchange and mutual learning;
- to enable County, District, Town and Parish Councils to engage in a joint debate on local authority services; and
- for direct contact between Councillors and members of the public.

On the basis of these discussions the Working Group has concluded that there could be merit in holding engagement events. In order to ensure they are effective, however, Members are of the view that they should be introduced initially on a trial basis. The implication of this suggestion is that the Working Group does not recommend at this stage that the Council's Constitution is amended to include a state of the district consultation mechanism.

3.3 The Working Group has, however, asked that the Action Plan to the Consultation and Engagement Strategy is amended to include reference to Member state of the District engagement events. The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) will be consulted separately on the Strategy.

4. FURTHER STUDY

4.1 The Working Group, having agreed the principle of holding engagement events, will next consider a range of practical matters before it produces its final report.

4.2 Following initial discussions Members have suggested that engagement events will during the evening on weekdays in Huntingdon, St Ives, St Neots and Yaxley. Suitable venues have yet to be identified. Extensive publicity will be required prior to events being held, which is something that will be discussed further. A programme for events has been put forward but will be refined, including possible discussion topics. It also has been suggested that an independent Chairman might be appointed for events. Finally, the Working group will consider whether it might be necessary to provide facilitators to assist discussion groups.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The Working Group has been requested to examine a proposal for the Council to amend the Constitution to require measures to be introduced to obtain information on the state of the District. Having considered the proposal Members are of the view that there could be merit in holding engagement events; however, they feel that before the Council commits itself to amending the Constitution, a pilot should be held and the outcome evaluated.

- 5.2 The next meeting of the Working Group will be held on 12th November when Members will discuss a range of detailed matters, which are intended to make the engagement events successful.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Notes of meeting of the State of the District Consultation Working Group.

Reports and Minutes of the Corporate Governance Panel, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) and the Council.

Contact Officer: A Roberts
☎ 01480 388009

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ADOPTION OF ROADS AND SEWERS WORKING GROUP
(Report of the Working Group)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Adoption of Roads and Sewers Working Group met on 22nd October 2007 when Councillors Mrs C A Godley and P K Ursell were present. A Roberts was in attendance.
- 1.2 Councillor Ursell declared a personal interest as his employer is a developer.
- 1.3 Councillor Mrs Godley has been appointed as the Working Group's rapporteur.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery) previously has identified problems with adopting roads and sewers in the District as an area that should be subjected to study. Accordingly a Working Group was established comprising Councillors J D Ablewhite, Mrs C A Godley, D A Giles and P K Ursell and tasked with undertaking a study on "the process of adopting estate roads and sewers with an aim to put measures in place that could streamline the process and make the procedures more transparent, initially by an investigation of introducing a District-wide register of un-adopted roads and sewers".

3. STUDY PLAN

- 3.1 The Working Group has discussed how the study should proceed. As a result it has been decided to approach those listed below with the aim of obtaining their views and experiences of the adoption process:
 - the District Council's Planning section;
 - the District Council's Building Control section;
 - Anglian Water;
 - the Federation of Home Builders;
 - the Chartered Institute of Builders;
 - developers; and
 - local architects.
- 3.2 In addition, it has been agreed to take up a suggestion by Councillor L M Simpson to carry out a site visit at Falcon Drive, Huntingdon. It also has been decided to visit a site where development is planned, possibly involving developer representatives.
- 3.3 The County Council is an obvious omission from the above list of potential consultees. There is, however, a long standing agreement that the District Council will not scrutinise County Council services and *vice versa*. The study will, therefore, concentrate on the adoption of sewers. This is often (but not always) a necessary precursor to road adoption. Nevertheless, it is the intention to compile evidence on current road adoption procedures. Depending on the findings, this

evidence could be submitted to the County Council for comment and/or action.

3.4 The Working Group has been specifically requested to consider the feasibility and utility of introducing a register of unadopted roads and sewers in the District; however:

- the County Council has a statutory duty to maintain a register of adopted roads:
- a register of unadopted roads would very quickly become out of date as new developments are completed; and
- maintaining a register would have resource implications.

Members recognise the importance of the principle that underlies the purpose of such a register, which is that new roads that need to be adopted do not get lost or forgotten. It is considered preferable to ensure that the necessary procedures are in place so that roads and sewers are always adopted as soon as they become eligible under the respective statutory procedures. Despite this, should the evidence suggest a register of unadopted roads would prove useful, this matter will be revisited.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Adoption of Roads and Sewers Working Group has held an initial meeting to plan its programme of study. It will be apparent that extensive work will be involved. Given this and in the absence of any other factors that might necessitate an earlier completion, Members have set themselves the goal of completing their work by August 2008.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Notes of meeting of the Adoption of Roads and Sewers Working Group.

Report and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery).

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Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
4/07/06	<p><u>The Health Implications of the Council's Activities.</u></p> <p>Final report of the Working Group considered. Recommendations endorsed for submission to the Cabinet. Reports requested on the Cabinet's decision and progress with the implementation of measures contained in the report.</p>	<p>Further meeting to be arranged.</p> <p>Further reports to be submitted.</p>	<p>Meeting held.</p> <p>The Cabinet noted the report and asked for further information on the operational and financial implications of the recommendations before coming to a decision.</p>	
3/10/06	<p>Working Group requested to meet to discuss the submission of further information to the Cabinet.</p>	<p>Meeting held on 8th November 2006.</p> <p>Further meeting scheduled for 27th November 2006.</p>	<p>Costing of the proposals in relation to the leisure centres requested. Further meeting arranged to discuss the next report with appropriate Heads of Service.</p> <p>Report to be submitted to the Cabinet on 4/10/07 to include appendices by the Heads of Administration and of Environmental and Community Health Services on the financial implications of the Panel's recommendations.</p> <p>Subject to clarification of the Council's financial commitment for the pilot programme of exercise for older people the Cabinet approved the Panel's recommendations.</p>	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
1/11/05	<p><u>Town Centre Cleaning Regimes</u></p> <p>Cleaning regimes in town centres added to the programme of studies.</p>	<p>Scoping report requested.</p>		
3/10/06	<p>Presentation by Head of Operations. Working group formed to look at Sunday cleaning and enforcement.</p>	<p>Meeting of Working group held on 13th November 2006. Further meeting to be held to consider a possible pilot of new cleaning arrangements in St Ives.</p>		
3/07/07	<p>Update received from Head of Operations.</p>	<p>Report requested from the Head of Operations.</p> <p>Further meeting of Working Group to be arranged.</p>		

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
7/03/06	<p><u>Recycling Credits – Payments to Other Organisations</u></p> <p>Recommendations made on the content of a future report to the Cabinet. Sight of the report requested prior to its submission to the Cabinet.</p>	Report requested.	Report to be submitted to a future meeting.	
7/11/06	<p><u>Disability Access.</u></p> <p>Preliminary report considered. Further information requested on the Council's existing policies in relation to disability equality and access and on research carried out in this area.</p>	Further reports submitted.		
5/12/06	<p>Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan endorsed.</p> <p>Further research to be undertaken within Members' wards and officers of the County Council and of the Police requested to attend future meetings to discuss the study.</p>	Representatives of the County Council and of the Police invited to future meetings.		

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
6/02/07	<p><u>Disability Access (Contd.)</u></p> <p>Panel met with representatives of Speaking Up and G Morris. A number of matters were identified for further consideration. – improved enforcement of disabled parking bays, extending bus pass hours for disabled users, Council paperwork, advertising of disabled facilities at leisure centres and advocacy services at Council offices.</p>			
5/06/07	<p>Meeting attended by County Council's Access Officer. A number of avenues identified for further investigation. Cabinet to be requested to consider providing high dependency toilets.</p>	<p>Report submitted to the Cabinet on high dependency toilets on 28/06/07.</p> <p>Survey sent to Town and Parish Councils and District Councillors. Returns being received.</p>	<p>The Cabinet decided to approach Papworth Trust for their advice on the need for high dependency facilities for people whose disabilities are so severe as to prevent them from using conventional toilets designed for the disabled and in particular on the possibility of extending the availability of facilities at Saxongate, Huntingdon for such use.</p> <p>Report summarising responses to questionnaire to be submitted to a future meeting.</p>	4/12/07

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
5/12/06	<p><u>Home Energy Efficiency</u></p> <p>Study to be undertaken into the promotion of services provided for improved home energy efficiency.</p>			
6/03/07	<p>Presentation by Environment team Leader and Home Energy Efficiency Officer. Agreed to discuss the remit of the study following consideration of the Environment Strategy at the next meeting.</p>			
3/4/07	<p>Recommendations made on the draft Strategy.</p> <p>Requested that:</p> <p>a) a methodology to assess the environmental benefit of projects against their cost is developed, and</p> <p>b) the final Strategy document, including costings, is submitted to the Panel prior to its publication.</p>			

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
5/12/06	<p><u>Adoption of Roads and Sewers</u></p> <p>Study to be undertaken into the processes and procedures involved with the adoption of roads and sewers.</p>	Information requested.	<p>Scoping report to be submitted to a future meeting.</p> <p>Representative of the Anglian Water to be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the study.</p>	
5/06/07	Report deferred to next meeting.			
3/07/07	<p>Working Group established comprising Councillors J D Ablewhite, D A Giles, Mrs C A Godley and P K Ursell, to undertake a review on the process of adopting estate roads and sewers with an aim to put measures in place that will streamline the process and make the procedures more transparent, initially by an investigation of introducing a District-wide register of un-adopted roads and sewers</p>	Meeting to be arranged.	First meeting held on 22/10/07. See report elsewhere on the Agenda.	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
5/12/06	<p><u>Grant Aid</u></p> <p>Study to be undertaken into the processes in applying for grant aid and the effectiveness of grant schemes.</p> <p>Details of all grant schemes requested.</p> <p>Review of Small Scale Environmental Improvement schemes to be undertaken.</p>	Information requested.		
3/4/07	<p>Details of all grant schemes considered. With the exception of Shopmobility, the Working Group undertaking the review of the Small Scale Environmental Improvements scheme was requested to examine the schemes' criteria, publicity, application process, officer involvement and approval process.</p>	Meeting to be arranged.	Meeting held on 24/10/07 to plan further study work.	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
5/12/06	<u>Markets Service</u> Information requested on uptake of pitches, the promotion and operation of the markets and best practice.	Information requested.	Information to be submitted to a future meeting.	
4/09/07	Item deferred.			
2/10/07	Information noted. Further details requested on the budget and on the Ramsey market. Study concluded subject to no further issues being raised by Councillor J D Ablewhite.	Information requested from Head of Operations.	Information circulated to Members.	
5/06/07	<u>Huntingdonshire Partnership</u> Study to be undertaken on the role and achievements of the Strategic Partnership.		Report to be submitted to a future meeting.	6/11/07
5/06/07	<u>Youth Forum</u> Working Group established comprising Councillors E R Butler, Mrs K E Cooper, P J Downes, Mrs P A Jordan and J S Watt to investigate the proposal in detail	First meeting held on 30/08/09. Further meeting held on 11/10/07.	See item elsewhere on the Agenda.	

Panel Date	Decision	Action	Response	Date for Future Action
3/07/07	<p><u>State of the District Conference</u></p> <p>Working Group established comprising Councillors K J Churchill, P J Downes and Mrs M Banerjee to discuss the concept of local area forums, together with potential subject areas, for discussion at a future meeting of the Panel</p>	Meeting to be arranged.	Meeting held on 18/10/07. Further meeting to be held on 12/11/07. See item elsewhere on the Agenda.	

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